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Knowledge A Very Short Introduction Very Short In

Some people are cleverer than others, but how and why do people differ in their thinking powers?

Drawing on the latest psychological data Ian Deary considers some of our most burning questions about intelligence, such as how genes, environment, age, or gender can affect our intelligence. He also asks whether intelligence is increasing.

'What is real?' has been one of the key questions of philosophy since its beginning in antiquity. But it is

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not just a question that philosophers ask. This Very Short Introduction discusses what reality is by looking at a variety of arguments, theories, and thought-experiments from philosophy, physics, and cognitive science.

The tradition of ancient philosophy is a long, rich and varied one, in which a constant note is that of discussion and argument. This book introduces readers to some ancient debates to engage with the ancient developments of some themes. Getting away from the presentation of ancient philosophy as a succession of Great Thinkers, the book gives readers a sense of the freshness and liveliness of

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ancient philosophy, and of its wide variety of themes and styles. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

From the schools of ancient times to the present day, Gary Thomas explores how and why education has evolved has it has. Examining education worldwide, he explains the way schools work, noting

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how curricula are remarkably consistent around the world. Delving into some of the big questions, Thomas explores the history of education in this Very Short Introduction. Considering various styles such as progressive versus formal, he also explores the ideas of some of the big theorists, including Piaget and Vygotsky. Looking at different forms of education and styles of teaching, he considers the ways in which education is being improved by matching styles of learning to teaching, and ensuring that schools are more inclusive and meaningful for a broader range of students. He finishes by considering the ways in which education

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may develop over the coming century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Trust: A Very Short Introduction

Foucault: A Very Short Introduction

Free Will: A Very Short Introduction

Nothing: A Very Short Introduction

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Thinking and Reasoning: A Very Short Introduction

Explores the relationship between the contemporary world and the ancient one.

In this Very Short Introduction, John Holland presents an introduction to the science of complexity. Using examples from biology and economics, he shows how complexity science models the behaviour of complex systems.

This Very Short Introduction explores the history of the 18th-century Enlightenment movement. Considering its intellectual commitments, Robertson then turns to their impact on society, and the ways in which Enlightenment thinkers sought to further the goal of human betterment, by promoting economic improvement and civil and political justice.

Teeth are a vital component of vertebrate anatomy and a fundamental

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part of the fossil record. It was the evolution of teeth, associated with predation, that drove the evolution of the wide array of fish, amphibians, reptiles, and then mammals. Peter S. Ungar looks at how, without teeth, none of these developments could have occurred.

Reality: A Very Short Introduction

Knowledge

Metaphysics: A Very Short Introduction

Teeth: A Very Short Introduction

Philosophy of Science

Metaphysics is one of the traditional four main branches of philosophy, alongside ethics, logic and epistemology. It is also an area that continues to attract and hold a fascination for many people yet it is associated with being complex and abstract. For some it is associated with the mystical or

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religious. For others it is known through the metaphysical poets who talk of love and spirituality. This Very Short Introduction goes right to the heart of the matter, getting to the basic and most important questions of metaphysical thought in order to understand the theory: What are objects? Do colours and shapes have some form of existence? What is it for one thing to cause another rather than just being associated with it? What is possible? Does time pass? By using these questions to initiate thought about the basic issues around substance, properties, changes, causes, possibilities, time, personal identity, nothingness and emergentism, Stephen Mumford provides a clear and simple path through this analytical tradition at the core of philosophical thought. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short

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What is knowledge? How does it differ from mere belief? Do you need to be able to justify a claim in order to count as knowing it? How can we know that the outer world is real and not a dream? Questions like these are ancient ones, and the branch of philosophy dedicated to answering them - epistemology - has been active for thousands of years. In this thought-provoking Very Short Introduction, Jennifer Nagel considers these classic questions alongside new puzzles

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arising from recent discoveries about humanity, language, and the mind. Nagel explains the formation of major historical theories of knowledge, and shows how contemporary philosophers have developed new ways of understanding knowledge, using ideas from logic, linguistics, and psychology. Covering topics ranging from relativism and the problem of scepticism to the trustworthiness of internet sources, Nagel examines how progress has been made in understanding knowledge, using everyday examples to explain the key issues and debates

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facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. Foucault is one of those rare philosophers who has become a cult figure. Born in 1926 in France, over the course of his life he dabbled in drugs, politics, and the Paris SM scene, all whilst striving to understand the deep concepts of identity, knowledge, and power. From aesthetics to the penal system; from madness and civilisation to avant-garde literature, Foucault was happy to reject old models of thinking and replace them with versions that are still widely debated today. A major influence on Queer Theory and gender studies (he was openly gay and died of an AIDS-related illness in 1984), he also wrote on architecture, history, law, medicine, literature, politics and of course philosophy, and even

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managed a best-seller in France on a book dedicated to the history of systems of thought. Because of the complexity of his arguments, people trying to come to terms with his work have desperately sought introductory material that makes his theories clear and accessible for the beginner. Ideally suited for the Very Short Introductions series, Gary Gutting presents a comprehensive but non-systematic treatment of some highlights of Foucault's life and thought. Beginning with a brief biography to set the social and political stage, he then tackles Foucault's thoughts on literature, in particular the avant-garde scene; his philosophical and historical work; his treatment of knowledge and power in modern society; and his thoughts on sexuality. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of

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titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

This Very Short Introduction provides a concise overview of the main themes of contemporary philosophy of science. After a short history, the author goes on to investigate the nature of scientific reasoning, scientific explanation and more.

Minerals

Plato

Derrida: A Very Short Introduction

A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy

What Does It All Mean?

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In this cogent and accessible introduction to philosophy, the distinguished author of Mortal Questions and The View From Nowhere sets forth the central problems of philosophical inquiry for the beginning student. Arguing that the best way to learn about philosophy is to think about its questions directly, Thomas Nagel considers possible solutions to nine problems--knowledge of the world beyond our minds, knowledge of other minds, the mind-body problem, free will, the basis of morality, right and wrong, the nature of death, the meaning of life, and the meaning

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of words. Although he states his own opinions clearly, Nagel leaves these fundamental questions open, allowing students to entertain other solutions and encouraging them to think for themselves.

Every day we seem to make and act upon all kinds of free choices - but are these choices really free? Or are we compelled to act the way we do by factors beyond our control? This book looks at free will.

Logic is often perceived as having little to do with the rest of philosophy, and even less to do with real life. Graham Priest explores the philosophical roots of the subject,

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explaining how modern formal logic addresses many issues.

Our extraordinary capacity to reason and solve problems sets us aside from other animals, but our evolved thinking processes also leave us susceptible to bias and error. The study of thinking and reasoning goes back to Aristotle, and was one of the first topics to be studied when psychology separated from philosophy. In this Very Short Introduction Jonathan Evans explores cognitive psychological approaches to understanding the nature of thinking and reasoning, problem solving, and decision making. He shows how

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our problem solving capabilities are hugely dependent on also having the imagination to ask the right questions, and the ability to see things from a completely new perspective. Beginning by considering the approaches of the behaviourists and the Gestalt psychologists, he moves on to modern explorations of thinking, including hypothetical thinking, conditionals, deduction, rationality, and intuition. Covering the role of past learning, IQ, and cognitive biases, Evans also discusses the idea that there may be two different ways of thinking, arising from our evolutionary

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history. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The Enlightenment

Rhetoric: A Very Short Introduction

Hermeneutics: A Very Short Introduction

Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction

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Perception

This book introduces readers to the concepts of political philosophy. It starts by explaining why the subject is important and how it tackles basic ethical questions such as 'how should we live together in society?' It looks at political authority, the reasons why we need politics at all, the limitations of politics, and whether there are areas of life that shouldn't be governed by politics. It explores the connections between political authority and justice, a constant theme in political philosophy, and the ways in which social justice can be used to regulate rather

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than destroy a market economy. David Miller discusses why nations are the natural units of government and whether the rise of multiculturalism and transnational co-operation will change this: will we ever see the formation of a world government? ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and

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challenging topics highly readable.

Throughout history scepticism and the urge to question accepted truths has been a powerful force for change and growth. Today, as we are bombarded by adverts, scientific studies praising the latest superfoods, and political rhetoric, a healthy amount of scepticism is widely encouraged. But when is such scepticism legitimate - for example, as a driver of new ideas - and when is it problematic? And what role might adopting a sceptical outlook play in leading an intellectually virtuous life? In this Very Short Introduction Duncan Pritchard explores

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both the advantages of scepticism, in challenging outdated notions, and also how it can have unhelpful social consequences, in generating distrust. He considers the role of scepticism at the source of contemporary social and political movements such as climate change denial, post-truth politics, and fake news. Pritchard also examines the philosophical arguments for a radical form of scepticism which maintains that knowledge is impossible, and explores some of the main responses to these arguments. Finally, he considers the part scepticism might play in applying better thinking and learning to

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achieve a more meaningful life. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

How much faith should we place in what scientists tell us? Is it possible for scientific knowledge to be fully "objective?" What, really, can be defined as science? In

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the second edition of this Very Short Introduction, Samir Okasha explores the main themes and theories of contemporary philosophy of science, and investigates fascinating, challenging questions such as these. Starting at the very beginning, with a concise overview of the history of science, Okasha examines the nature of fundamental practices such as reasoning, causation, and explanation. Looking at scientific revolutions and the issue of scientific change, he asks whether there is a discernible pattern to the way scientific ideas change over time, and discusses realist

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versus anti-realist attitudes towards science. He finishes by considering science today, and the social and ethical philosophical questions surrounding modern science. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. Consciousness, "the last great mystery for

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science," remains a hot topic. How can a physical brain create our experience of the world? What creates our identity? Do we really have free will? Could consciousness itself be an illusion? Exciting new developments in brain science are continuing the debates on these issues, and the field has now expanded to include biologists, neuroscientists, psychologists, and philosophers. This controversial book clarifies the potentially confusing arguments, and the major theories, whilst also outlining the amazing pace of discoveries in neuroscience. Covering areas

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such as the construction of self in the brain, mechanisms of attention, the neural correlates of consciousness, and the physiology of altered states of consciousness, Susan Blackmore highlights our latest findings. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

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Intelligence

Logic: A Very Short Introduction

*Political Philosophy: A Very Short
Introduction*

Complexity

The Brain: A Very Short Introduction

How does the brain work? How different is a human brain from other creatures' brains? Is the human brain still evolving? In this fascinating book, Michael O'Shea provides a non-technical introduction to the main issues and findings in current brain research, and gives a sense of how neuroscience addresses questions about the relationship between the brain and the mind. Chapters

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tackle subjects such as brain processes, perception, memory, motor control and the causes of 'altered mental states'. A final section discusses possible future developments in neuroscience, touching on artificial intelligence, gene therapy, the importance of the Human Genome Project, drugs by design, and transplants.

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Perception is one of the oldest and most deeply investigated topics in psychology, and it raised some profound philosophical questions. It is concerned with how we use the information reaching our senses to inform our behaviour, and to create our subjective experience of the surrounding world. Brian Rogers discusses the philosophical question of what it means to perceive, and describes how we are able to perceive the particular characteristics of objects and scenes such as their lightness, colour, form, depth, and motion. He argues that perception should not be seen as a separate process but rather as part of a 'perceptual system', involving both the extraction of perceptual information

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and the control of action--Amazon.com.

Rhetoric is often seen as a synonym for shallow, deceptive language, and therefore as something negative. But if we view rhetoric in more neutral terms, as the 'art of persuasion', it is clear that we are all forced to engage with it at some level, if only because we are constantly exposed to the rhetoric of others. In this Very Short Introduction, Richard Toye explores the purpose of rhetoric. Rather than presenting a defence of it, he considers it as the foundation-stone of civil society, and an essential part of any democratic process. Using wide-ranging examples from Ancient Greece, medieval Islamic preaching, and modern cinema, Toye considers why we

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should all have an appreciation of the art of rhetoric.

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Causation is the most fundamental connection in the universe. Without it, there would be no science or technology. There would be no moral responsibility either, as none of our thoughts would be connected with our actions and none of our actions with any

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consequences. Nor would we have a system of law because blame resides only in someone having caused injury or damage. Any intervention we make in the world around us is premised on there being causal connections that are, to a degree, predictable. It is causation that is at the basis of prediction and also explanation. This Very Short Introduction introduces the key theories of causation and also the surrounding debates and controversies. Do causes produce their effects by guaranteeing them? Do causes have to precede their effects? Can causation be reduced to the forces of physics? And are we right to think of causation as one single thing at all? ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short

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Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction

Philosophy of Science: A Very Short Introduction

Information: A Very Short Introduction

Causation: A Very Short Introduction

Thought: A Very Short Introduction

What are philosophers trying to achieve?

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How can they succeed? Does philosophy make progress? Is it in competition with science, or doing something completely different, or neither? Timothy Williamson tackles some of the key questions surrounding philosophy in new and provocative ways, showing how philosophy begins in common sense curiosity, and develops through our capacity to dispute rationally with each other. Discussing philosophy's ability to clarify our thoughts, he explains why such clarification depends on the development of philosophical

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theories, and how those theories can be tested by imaginative thought experiments, and compared against each other by standards similar to those used in the natural and social sciences. He also shows how logical rigour can be understood as a way of enhancing the explanatory power of philosophical theories. Drawing on the history of philosophy to provide a track record of philosophical thinking's successes and failures, Williams overturns widely held dogmas about the distinctive nature of philosophy in comparison to the sciences,

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demystifies its methods, and considers the future of the discipline. From thought experiments, to deduction, to theories, this Very Short Introduction will cause you to totally rethink what philosophy is. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and

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challenging topics highly readable.

**Previously published in hardback as Doing
Philosophy**

**How ought we to live? What really exists?
How do we know? This book introduces
important themes in ethics, knowledge, and
the self, via readings from Plato, Hume,
Descartes, Hegel, Darwin, and Buddhist
writers. It emphasizes throughout the point
of doing philosophy, explains how different
areas of philosophy are related, and
explores the contexts in which philosophy
was and is done. ABOUT THE SERIES: The**

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An exploration of the concept of "nothing" journeys from ancient ideas and cultural traditions to the latest scientific research, discussing the history of the vacuum,

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theories on the nature of time and space, and other discoveries.

Objectivity is both an essential and elusive philosophical concept. This Very Short Introduction explores the theoretical and practical problems raised by objectivity, and also deals with the way in which particular understandings of objectivity impinge on social research, science, and art.

Scepticism

Education: A Very Short Introduction

Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction

Philosophical Method: A Very Short

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Introduction

Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction

What is knowledge? Is it the same as opinion or truth? Do you need to be able to justify a claim in order to count as knowing it? How can we know that the outer world is real and not a dream? Questions like these have existed since ancient times, and the branch of philosophy dedicated to answering them - epistemology - has been active for thousands of years. In

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this thought-provoking Very Short Introduction, Jennifer Nagel considers the central problems and paradoxes in the theory of knowledge and draws attention to the ways in which philosophers and theorists have responded to them. By exploring the relationship between knowledge and truth, and considering the problem of scepticism, Nagel introduces a series of influential historical and contemporary theories of knowledge,

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incorporating methods from logic, linguistics, and psychology, using a number of everyday examples to demonstrate the key issues and debates.

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new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The Earth contains a vast array of minerals, many with highly complex arrangements of atoms of several elements. David Vaughan explores the structure of minerals, the conditions under which they form and transform, their properties, and their interaction with microbes, as well as their importance in human health.

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Introduction; 1 The information
revolution; 2 The language of
information; 3 Mathematical
information; 4 Semantic information; 5
Physical information; 6 Biological
information; 7 Economic information; 8
The ethics of information; Conclusion;
References.

Simon Critchley's Very Short
Introduction shows that Continental
philosophy encompasses a distinct set
of philosophical traditions and

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practices, with a compelling range of problems all too often ignored by the analytic tradition. He discusses the ideas and approaches of philosophers such as Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Habermas, Foucault, and Derrida, and introduces key concepts such as existentialism, nihilism, and phenomenology by explaining their place in the Continental tradition. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions

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Ancient Philosophy: A Very Short
Introduction

Objectivity: A Very Short Introduction

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Classics: A Very Short Introduction

Memory: A Very Short Introduction

History: A Very Short Introduction

The influence of Aristotle, the prince of philosophers, on the intellectual history of the West is second to none. In this book Jonathan Barnes examines Aristotle's scientific researches, his discoveries in logic and his metaphysical theories, his work in psychology and in ethics and politics, and his ideas about art and poetry, placing his teachings in their historical context. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very

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Hermeneutics is the branch of knowledge that deals with interpretation, a behaviour that is intrinsic to our daily lives. As humans, we decipher the meaning of newspaper articles, books, legal matters, religious texts, political

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speeches, emails, and even dinner conversations every day . But how is knowledge mediated through these forms? What constitutes the process of interpretation? And how do we draw meaning from the world around us so that we might understand our position in it? In this Very Short Introduction Jens Zimmermann traces the history of hermeneutic theory, setting out its key elements, and demonstrating how they can be applied to a broad range of disciplines: theology; literature; law; and natural and social sciences. Demonstrating the longstanding and wide-ranging necessity of interpretation, Zimmermann

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reveals its significance in our current social and political landscape. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

This Very Short Introduction brings together the latest research in neuroscience and psychology - weaving in case-studies, anecdotes, literature,

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and philosophy - to explore and explain the science of memory - how it works, and why we can't live without it.

Starting with an examination of how historians work, this "Very Short Introduction" aims to explore history in a general, pithy, and accessible manner, rather than to delve into specific periods.

***Consciousness: a Very Short Introduction
A Very Short Introduction***

There is no denying that thinking comes naturally to human beings. But what are

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thoughts? How is thought realized in the brain? Does thinking occur in public or is it a purely private affair? Do young children and non-human animals think? Is human thought the same everywhere, or are there culturally specific modes of thought? What is the relationship between thought and language? What kind of responsibility do we have for our thoughts? In this compelling Very Short Introduction, Tim Bayne looks at the

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nature of thought. Beginning with questions about what thought is and what distinguishes it from other kinds of mental states, he goes on to examine various interpretations of thought from philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, and anthropology. By exploring the logical structures of thought and the relationship between thought and other mental phenomena, as well as the mechanisms that make thought possible and the cultural variations that may

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exist in our thought processes, Bayne looks at what we know – and don't know – about our great capacity for thought.

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interesting and challenging topics
highly readable.

Trust is indispensable, yet it can be dangerous. Without trusting others, we cannot function in society, or even stay alive for very long, but being overly-trustful can be a bad strategy too. Trust is pragmatic, but it also has a moral dimension: trustworthiness is a virtue, and well-placed trust benefits us all. In this Very Short Introduction, Katherine Hawley explores

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the key ideas about trust and distrust. Considerings questions such as 'Why do we value trust?' and Why do we want to be trusted rather than distrusted?', Hawley raises issues about the importance of trust in both the personal and public spheres, including family and relationships as well as politics and society. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every

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subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

"Julia Annas provides an incisive exploration of the many-sided and elusive genius whose wide-ranging, bold, and influential ideas continue to challenge, provoke, and inspire us

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today"--Page 4 of cover.

Jacques Derrida, the French philosopher, developed his critical technique known as 'deconstruction'. His work is associated with ideas surrounding both post-structuralism and post-modern philosophy, and he was known to have challenged some of the unquestioned assumptions of our philosophical tradition. In this Very Short Introduction, Simon Glendinning explores both the difficulty and

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significance of the work of Derrida. He presents Derrida's challenging ideas as making a significant contribution to, and providing a powerful reading of, our philosophical heritage. Defending Derrida against many of the charges that were placed against him, he attempts to show why Derrida's work causes such extreme reactions. Glendinning explains Derrida's distinctive mode of engagement with our philosophical tradition, and shows that

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this is not a merely negative thing. By exploring his most famous and influential texts, Glendinning shows how and why Derrida's work of deconstruction is inspired not by a 'critical frenzy', but by a loving respect for philosophy. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead

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in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.