Dennett’s Why Everyone is a Novelist

1. Dennett makes an analogy between the self and x? What is the x? (p. 466)
2. What is the theory or study to which the self belongs? (p. 467)
3. What is a fundamental property of fictional objects? (p. 468)
4. What might a logician say about fictional objects? (Be able to cite Dennett’s example.) (p. 468)
5. What might a materialist philosopher or neuroscientist ask? To look for the self in the brain is to do what? How is the self, different from the centre of gravity? (p. 470)
6. What is auto-hermeneutics? (p. 471)
7. What does Dennett claim about contradiction when it comes to fictional characters? What do we typically do to resolve the conflict? (p. 471)
8. How is the case of Sybil relevant to our selves? (p. 471)
9. What does Gazzaniga’s research reveal about the right hemisphere? What is the experiment Dennett cites? What is the case with split-brain subjects and normal subjects? (p. 473)
10. How are ordinary tactile sensations represented in the brain? Pain signals? How do these facts figure into what Dennett calls “a devious solution” to the problem of communication in split-brain patients? (p. 473)
11. What genre is our story? Who or what is the chief character? How might one commit a category mistake with respect to the self? (p. 473)
12. What is the best hermeneutical story we can tell about an individual when her behavioral control system becomes seriously impaired? (p. 473)

Cooney

13. What is the parallel with the human organism and its self that Dennett wants us to note? (p. 474)
14. What does Hume proclaim with certainty and how is what Hume proclaims relevant to what Dennett is claiming? (p. 474)
15. Dennett’s way of analyzing the two centres raises what metaphysical question? His thesis that the self is a fiction is meaningful only insofar as what? (p. 474)
16. What is the origin of the word “atom?” Who coined the word? What was his theory? (p. 475)
17. What were atoms in Aristotle’s language? How would they fit in the theory of Demokritos? (p. 475)
18. When was philosophical atomism especially influential? What is one major implication of this view of reality? (p. 475)
19. Who presents a good example of philosophical atomism? What is Boyle’s law? What does Boyle’s atomist image of nature make him confident about? What then is the metaphysical status of rocks, trees and animals for Boyle? Given this, what is a tree? If one were to try to find in the tree “something simple and continued” corresponding to the single word “tree” what would one’s error be comparable to? (p. 475)
20. Advocates of atomism, like Boyle and Newton were inspired to do what? (p. 475)
21. What did Hume apply the atomist image to? What did he argue with respect to unity? (p. 476)

22. What is the makeup of atoms? What is its mass? Its chemical properties are a function of what? What then is the atom? On what grounds can we claim that selves and minds are systems? What questions does this raise then according to Cooney? [hint: could Hume be right?] What, on such a picture, according to current theory would be the one real thing? Why? (p. 476)

23. What might be wrong with the atomist image of reality? Who was a famous proponent of this principle? What is Ockham’s razor? Be able to cite Cooney’s example. What is Dennett’s addition to this hierarchical perspective? (p. 476)