

1. Highlight all words you do not know and find their meaning in a dictionary.
2. Match the numbered explanations at the bottom to the ideas found in the quote.
3. Summarise Ayer's ideas in TWO sentences at the bottom of the sheet.

"We begin by admitting that the fundamental ethical concepts are unanalysable, inasmuch as there is no criterion by which one can test the validity of the judgements in which they occur. So far, we are in agreement with the absolutists. But, unlike the absolutists, we are able to give an explanation of this fact about ethical concepts. We say that the reason why they are unanalysable is that they are pseudo-concepts. The presence of an ethical symbol in a proposition adds nothing to its factual content. Thus if I say to someone, "You acted wrongly in stealing that money," I am not stating anything more than if I had simply said, " You stole that money." In adding that this action is wrong I am not making any further statement about it. I am simply evincing my moral disapproval of it. It is as if I had said, "You stole the money" in a peculiar tone of horror, or written it with the addition of exclamation marks. The tone, or the exclamation marks, adds nothing to the literal meaning of the sentence. It merely serves to show that the expression of it is attended by certain feelings of the speaker.. It is clear that there is nothing said here which can be true or false. Another man may disagree with me about the wrongness of stealing.. in saying that a certain type of action is right or wrong, I am not making a factual statement, not even a statement about my own mind. I am merely expressing certain moral sentiments. And the man who is ostensibly contradicting me is merely expressing his moral sentiments. So there is plainly no sense in asking which of us is right. For neither of us is asserting as genuine moral proposition." (A. J. Ayer Language, Truth and Logic)

1. If someone thinks the opposite to me, then all they are doing is showing their personal approval/disapproval.
2. There is no way of testing what the word 'good' means.
3. The presence of the word 'good' in a sentence adds nothing to the meaning of the sentence.
4. You cannot analyse an ethical idea like 'good' to find out what it means.

*Source: Sarah Mullin, used by permission*