

corresponds to *good*) or *mischief*, or *inconvenience*, or *disadvantage*, or *loss*, or *unhappiness*, and so forth.

## KEY TERM

Principle of utility

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. At the beginning of this selection, Bentham says that pain and pleasure “govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think.” Does this seem right? How important a role do pain and pleasure play in human life?
2. Bentham repeatedly asserts that increasing the sum of pleasure is the same thing as diminishing the sum of pains. Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. Can you think of any other aspects of pleasure and pain besides those that Bentham lists (intensity, duration, certainty, and propinquity) that add or subtract from the value of the pleasure or pain?
4. How might someone who believed in the principle of utility recommend that we go about “summing up” the values of pleasures and pains? Does it even make sense to talk about pleasures and pains having numerical values?

## Utilitarianism