The History of Sexuality

1. What does Foucault mean by saying that sex was transformed into discourse in the 19th century, and particularly, in the Victorian era?
2. What are the reasons for, or the rationale behind this transformation?
3. What kind of codes governed sexuality until the end of the 18th century?
4. What was their focus?
5. Was their any difference between acts of sodomy and, let’s say, sex during pregnancy in a marriage?
6. What kinds of changes (2) occurred in the 19th century? What happened to “peripheral sexualities”?
7. What is the difference between seeing an illicit act as the violation of legislation or morality and seeing an illicit act as “unnatural”? What does Don Juan exemplify?
8. What are the consequences of medicine’s entry into the filed of pleasures?
9. What is the difference between the ancient condemnation of adultery and the severe surveillance of children’s sexuality?
10. Explain (this is the most often quoted passage from the book): “As defined by the ancient civil or canonical codes, sodomy was a category of forbidden acts; their perpetrator was nothing more than the juridical subject of them. The nineteenth- century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology. Nothing that went into his total composition was unaffected by his sexuality. I was everywhere present in him: at the root of all his actions because it was their insidious and indefinitely active principle….. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species”
11. What does Foucault mean by referring to the medicalisation of sexuality? What are the practices employed, what are their consequences, and what are their two basic aims? (688)
12. What is the “multiplication of sexualities” and how is it related to power?
13. Explain: bourgeois society did not exclude sexuality but rather included it in the body as a mode of specification of individuals?
14. What does Foucault mean by saying that we must abandon the hypothesis that modern industrial societies ushered in an age of increased sexual repression? I.e. what is the “repression theory” that he rejects and what does he propose instead?

Discipline and Punish:
1. What does Foucault mean by saying that "knowledge" of the body is "power" over it?
2. What does it mean that "power and knowledge directly imply each other"?
3. Can you explain in what sense discipline is related to knowledge? What is the "other" of discipline? What is it afraid of?
3. What is the difference between the handling of the plague and that of the leper? How do the two get intertwined in the 19th century?
4. What is the relationship between binary oppositions and control/authority? (553-554)
5. Draw an image of Bentham's Panopticon. Explain, using Foucault's key-words, why it is such a perfect model for power relations. What are the necessary attributes of control/power? (enumerate as many as you can).
6. What does F. mean by "fictitious relation"?
7. What is the difference between the old type of prison and Bentham's Panopticon?
8. What is the difference between the plague stricken town and the Panopticon? (556-7)
9. What is the relationship between discipline understood as "control" and discipline understood as "a field of knowledge"?
10. How did the function of discipline change around the Revolution?
11. How did the function of disciplinary institutions extend? (schools, hospitals, charity organisations?)
Summarize the most important argument on p. 561.
12. What is discipline and what are its three criteria?
13. How are schoolchildren, or employees, for instance, made complicit in the maintenance of power and discipline?