THE MACHINE STOPS
E.M Forster
Consider these things:

What piece of technology can you not do without?

What must humanity absolutely have if it is to survive?

What senses (i.e. smell, touch, taste, hearing, vision) do you most associate with emotional memories?
As you read, consider some of the following points:

PART ONE: THE AIRSHIP
Traditionally, emotional intelligence has been considered inferior to logical intelligence. Emotions were linked to insanity, creativity, and were associated with women rather than men. Because of their lack of control over emotions, women were seen as the “weaker sex”.

How does the story take this idea to its logical conclusion?
Notice the contrast between the way Forster describes the richness of the landscape, and Vashti’s typical response to it. What is the author trying to suggest?

Notice the religious language used. What does the quote, “all unrest was concentrated in the soul,” suggest about mankind’s need for religious belief.
On reading Part 1, do you believe Forster is optimistic about humanity and its ability to preserve itself despite all odds? Why/why not?

Consider your explanation carefully, and make direct reference to the text.
1. This the first comparison to bees and hives. What are some of the shared characteristics of the social structures of the world and that of bees? Do you think this comparison is significant?

2. Consider the first description of Vashti. How does Forster succeed in dehumanising her?

3. “In certain directions human intercourse had advanced enormously”. Comment on the similarities between Vashti’s social circle and the phenomenon of “Facebook friends” and other social networking websites.

4. Despite the fact that parental duties “cease at the moment of birth,” Vashti still feels something special for Kuno. What do you think Forster is trying to suggest about human nature?

5. What does Part 1 reveal about mankind’s relationship with the machine?

6. How do you think Vashti would describe her understanding of the “soul”? Do you think this would be logical?
PART 2: THE MENDING APPARATUS
1. Explain what is meant by the line, “In these days it is a demerit to be muscular.” (p72)

2. Why is Vashti shocked at what Kuna has done?

3. Describe Vashti’s aversion to direct experience. What does it help the reader understand about her character?

4. Protagoras the Greek philosopher said, “man is the measure of all things.” It was controversial when he said it, because it meant that reality was subjective. Why is it controversial when Kuno says it?

5. Do you think Forster shows us a picture of humanity evolved or devolved?
Forster is fond of using irony to make a point. Perhaps the greatest irony is in the way people glorify the Machine with religious zeal. They say the Machine did away with all need for religion, but they hold the religion up as a God.

Write a paragraph analysing what you think EM Forster is trying to tell people about the role technology and/or religion play in people’s lives.
1. Why do you think people were unable to save themselves?

2. Do you think Forster is trying to warn his readers about something or condemn us for something we have done?
Go through the quotes. You have the quotes and the techniques provided for you. Using the examples, come up with a definition for the following techniques:

- Paradox
- Irony
- Imperative
- Anaphora
- Biblical allusion
- Understatement
- Oxymoron
- Inversion
- Antithesis
- Hyperbole
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paradox</td>
<td>A group of statements that lead to a contradiction</td>
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<td>Irony</td>
<td>deliberate use of language that states the direct opposite of the truth, or which drastically and obviously understates a factual connection.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>Command or order</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anaphora</td>
<td>Repeating a series of words at the beginning of neighbouring clauses to add emphasis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biblical allusion</td>
<td>Referring to something in the bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antithesis</td>
<td>A contrasting statement used for emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperbole</td>
<td>Poetic exaggeration</td>
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<td>Understatement</td>
<td>A form of speech which contains an expression of less strength than what would be expected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxymoron</td>
<td>Two words put together that contradict each other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inversion</td>
<td>Reversing the natural order of a phrase</td>
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Locate each quotation in the story and highlight.

Fill in the effects column.

N.B: An effect is what the author intends the reader to understand or feel. He has constructed the sentence deliberately to help you understand or feel this way.
You have 40 minutes.

Identify an important decision made by a character in the texts you have studied AND show how this decision changed his or her life.