Introduction to Social Ethics

1. **What** is social ethics and how is it approached?
2. **How** do the approaches to social ethics work?
3. **Why** are social ethics and its approaches important?

1. **What** is social ethics and how is it approached?

Ethics is a large field that can be divided into three branches: applied ethics, meta-ethics, and normative ethics. To understand social ethics, it is necessary to understand where it is located in the field of ethics. Write definitions for "applied ethics" and "social ethics".

Applied Ethics	Social Ethics

There are two significant approaches to social ethics, and most human beings adopt one of them. There are important differences between the two approaches, because they are influenced by different interpretations of the principle of equality. Make a note about the two approaches (i.e. pre-Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment).

Approaches to Social Ethics	
Pre-Enlightenment	Post-Enlightenment

2. **How** do the approaches to social ethics work?

The approaches to social ethics are inspired by different interpretations of the principle of equality. The pre-Enlightenment approach is inspired by the belief that the principle of equality can be satisfied by numerical equality or proportional equality, which does not require all human beings to be treated equally in society. This contributes to

types of discrimination like sexism, racism, and ableism. The post-Enlightenment approach is inspired by the belief that the principle of equality can only be satisfied by moral equality, which requires all human beings to be treated equally because they are human (but contributes to speciesism). Make a note about these three key terms.

Sexism	Racism

Ableism	Speciesism

3. **Why** are social ethics and its approaches important?

In brief, social ethics and their approaches are very important, because they affect how human beings are treated in society. Consider the differences between pre-Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment approaches to social ethics, and make a note about why they are important.

Why the Approaches to Social Ethics Are Important		
Approach	How	Why
Pre-Enlightenment	Consider some human beings equally in ethical decision-making.	
	Consider most human beings equally in ethical decision-making.	
Post-Enlightenment	Consider all human beings equally in ethical decision-making.	