

Transition work → A Level Religious Studies

Christianity, Philosophy and Ethics

Here is something to be working on during your extended summer which will ease your transition in to year 12. Even more importantly it will hopefully give you lots of interesting and engaging things to think about and confirm that you are doing the right subject!

GCSE topics worth revisiting

Many of the topics you may have studied at GCSE will be highly relevant, whilst others will be less so. In year 12 Philosophy you will study the existence of God. So topics such as the **Cosmological argument, Religious Experience** and the **Problem of Evil** are well worth revisiting.

In Year 12 Ethics we will consider methods of making moral decisions and a number of ethical dilemmas. It will be worth revisiting your study of **Conscience, Homosexuality, Marriage** and the **role of authority in decision making**. In year 12 Christianity we will study the formation of many beliefs within the Christian Church so it will be worth looking at key beliefs such as the **Trinity, Salvation and Eschatology**.

There will be many areas of Christianity, Philosophy and Ethics that you will probably never have studied before. With this in mind it is worth doing some reading!

Articles for you to read

I have put some articles together from Dialogue magazine which cover some of the topics that we will study during our A-Level.

Please do not be put off by any of the language that is used. See it as a challenge! If the writers use a word you don't recognise then get on Google rather than just giving up.

For each article here are some questions for you to consider and perhaps try and answer.

Who Belongs in the Moral Community?

Do you consider all living things to be equal?

If not, WHY? How do you justify this? (Intelligence, God given rights?)

Should animals be part of our moral considerations? All of them?

Are all humans equal in moral consideration?

For example → Does an unborn baby have the same rights as you? Should they have?

God and the Problem of Evil

Why does the existence of Evil pose a problem for belief in God?

(Particularly the Christian God)

What sort of evil and suffering do you think causes the biggest problem for belief?

Are there any possible solutions to this problem? So, how is it possible to believe in God whilst accepting that there is evil and suffering in the world?

Good Without God?

Does our morality come from God? (Do the rules we live by come from a God?)

If not then what are the other alternatives?

Does morality even exist in any real sense?

Is there any reason to be moral if there is no God?

Doing without freewill

What is your understanding of freewill?

Has the article caused you to reconsider your position on this?

Does it matter if freewill is an illusion? Are there any consequences for religion?

How convincing do you find the evidence in the article?

Just War- War Against Iraq

Is it possible to think of violence as 'Just'? (Meaning 'right' or 'fair')

In what situations might it be right or fair for a country to go to war?

Was the Iraq war a 'Just War'?

Further reading→

A book well worth buying is the 'Thinkers Guide to God' By Peter Vardy. It is pitched nicely and covers many of the topics you will study in Philosophy.

In addition to this it is really important that you take an interest in the news surrounding ethical issues that we will study. Topics such as Euthanasia, Animal rights, War, Abortion, Homosexuality and Capital Punishment are often in the news.

Scholars worth a Google

We will study lots of historical thinkers, many of who you may never have heard of. This might be a good opportunity to look in to some of them and put them in an historical context.

Some interesting examples are....

Socrates

Plato

Aristotle

St. Thomas Aquinas

David Hume

William Paley

St. Augustine

Sigmund Freud

Carl Gustav Jung

Immanuel Kant

Pope Francis

Pope Benedict

Richard Dawkins