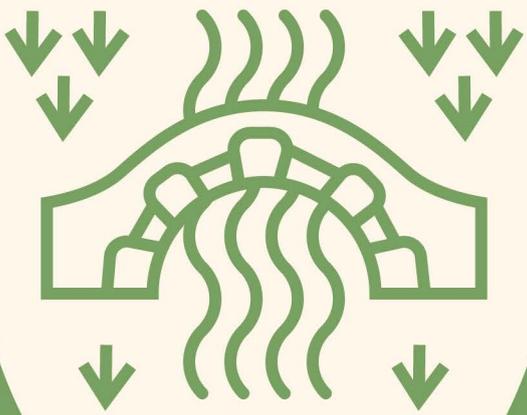




BLANCHELANDE
COLLEGE

Sixth Form Bridging Courses



Religious Studies



Blanchelande College

A-Level Bridging Work Religious Studies For Summer 2020



Philosophy of Religion

“The point of philosophy is to start with something so simple as not to seem worth stating and to end with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it.” – B. Russell. As we grow we lose the sense of wonder, because we are used to the world. Life becomes a habit. Philosophy tries to make us look beyond what we have learnt to accept, to go beyond our routine and get back to the sense of wonder.

Task 1:

Your task is to research the following names and make a Who’s Who Guide to Philosophy. This can then be printed out and put at the front of your folder next year.

For each name you should include the following:

- Name, Dates and a picture
- Famous books/ Writings
- A summary of the theory they are famous for (in brackets below)

Who to research:

Philosopher	✓	Philosopher	✓
Plato (Dualism/ Cave analogy)		Aristotle (4 causes/prime mover)	
Anselm (Ontological)		Descartes (Ontological)	
Aquinas (Cosmological, Ontological, Teleological)		Paley (Teleological)	
Darwin (Evolution)		Hume (Teleological and Cosmological)	
Epicurus (Problem of Evil)		JL Mackie (Problem of Evil)	
Augustine (Problem of Evil)		Irenaeus (Problem of Evil)	
Boethius (Nature of God – Omniscience)		Ayer (Religious Language)	

Task 2: Watch one of the following films and/or read one of the following books

Films/TV	Books
Waking Life directed by Richard Linklater – it is a cartoon and graphics do move around a lot however, it is great for covering all aspects of the course	Sophie's world – Jostein Gaarder - Great overview into the history of Philosophy as a novel
The Matrix – Plato's Cave modernized	The Sage Train – Nicky Hansell - Covers Nietzsche and Chesterton as a novel
Ex Machina – Body/Soul distinction	Knowledge of Angels – Jill Paton Walsh - Classical proofs for the existence of God
Humans – TV series on 4OD – Body/Soul distinction	The Brothers Karamazov – Fyodor Dostoyevsky - A long, complicated read however great for exploring the problem of evil. Listening on Audible may help you to get through it!

Task 3: Read Nigel Warburton 'A little history of Philosophy' Extract: The Man who asked questions' Socrates and Plato:

Answer the following

1. Write a brief summary of what Philosophy is about
2. Write a list of 10 interesting things you have learnt about Socrates and Plato

Religious Ethics

Ethics is the philosophical study of the moral value of human conduct and the rules and principles that should govern it (in other words, what is right and wrong behaviour and how do we know this!)

Task 1: Your task is to research the following names and make a Who's Who Guide To Ethics. This can then be printed out and put at the front of your folder next year.

For each name you should include the following:

- Name, Dates and a picture
- Famous books/ Writings
- A summary of the theory they are famous for (in brackets below)

Who to research:

Philosopher	✓	Philosopher	✓
Bentham (Utilitarianism)		J S Mill (Utilitarianism)	
Kant (Kantian Ethics)		Joseph Fletcher (Situation Ethics)	
Milton Friedman (Business Ethics)		Freud (Conscience)	
Cardinal Newman (Conscience)		Zimbardo (Conscience)	
Milgram (Conscience)		Skinner (Conscience)	
Pavlov (Conscience)		Aquinas (Conscience, Natural Law)	
GE Moore (Meta Ethics)		FH Bradley (Meta Ethics)	

Task 2: Watch one of the following films and/or read one of the following books

Films/TV	Books
Schindler's List – Kantian Ethics and the Problem of Evil	Z for Zachariah – Robert C O'Brien - Nuclear war and stewardship ethics
Extreme Measures – Utilitarianism	My Sister's Keeper – Jodi Picoult - Medical Ethics
Minority Report – Free Will and Determinism	The Puzzle of Ethics – Peter Vardy - Textbook about all theories – very accessible – would recommend all of his books!
The Experimenter or The Stanford Prison Experiment – Free Will and Determinism as well as Conscience	



Task 3: Listen to the following podcast:

<https://philosophybites.com/2019/10/james-wilson-on-real-world-ethics.html>

Answer the following questions:

1. What are thought experiments? Give an example
2. What is Wilson's view on the use of thought experiments?
3. What is meant by real world ethics?
4. How are real world problems different from thought experiments?
5. Why does context matter when thinking about ethical issues (according to Wilson)?
6. Aside from thought experiments, what other techniques or tools could be used to help make ethical decisions?
7. What does Wilson think about the use of principles in ethics (strengths and weaknesses)?

Developments in Christian Thought

Task 1: Your task is to research the following names and make a Who's Who Guide To Christianity. This can then be printed out and put at the front of your folder next year.

For each name you should include the following:

- Name, Dates and a picture
- Famous books/ Writings
- A summary of the theory they are famous for (in brackets below)

Who to research:

Philosopher	✓	Philosopher	✓
Bonhoeffer (Christian moral action)		Augustine (Augustine!)	
Dawkins (Secularism – Atheism)		Jesus (Person of Jesus)	
Cardinal Newman (Christian moral principles)		Karl Rahner (Inclusivism)	
Hick (Exclusivism)		Rosemary Radford Reuther (Gender)	
Mary Daly (Gender)		Karl Marx (Marxism)	
Gustavo Gutiérrez (Liberation Theology)		Oscar Romero (Liberation Theology)	
Hans Kung (Christian moral principles)		Stanley Hauerwas (Christian moral principles)	

Task 2: Watch one of the following films and/or read one of the following books

Films/TV	Books
God's not dead – Arguments for the existence of God	Theo's Odyssey – Catherine Clement - Development of Religion
Hacksaw Ridge – Pacifism	The Five People you meet in Heaven – Mitch Ablom The Afterlife
The Magdalene Sisters or the Stepford Wives – Gender Theology	The Puzzle of Christianity – Peter Vardy - Textbook about all theories – very accessible – would recommend all of his books!
The Two Popes – Catholic Church	

Task 3: Read the introductory chapter from *The Puzzle of God*: The chapter is ‘Unicorns, Numbers and God’.

Once you have read it answer the following questions:

1. What does it mean to say that God exists? Is God more like a spirit, a person, a prime number, an idea in people’s minds or none of these?
2. If religious believers hold fast to certain beliefs, does it matter if these are true?
3. Can it ever be right to believe in a particular way of looking at the world and not to think about one’s beliefs or not to listen to the points of view of others?
4. Are the beliefs of our parents and those beliefs with which we have been brought up necessarily right?