

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (OCR) transition work

We are really looking forward to welcoming you to the study of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics at Chesterton Sixth Form.

Why this work?

Before starting the course, it is really useful to have some background knowledge about what Philosophy and Ethics is so the first preparation for sixth form study will focus on this to help you understand how the approaches and ways of thinking in this subject are very different to what you might be used to. You might find that people are using vocabulary that you have never heard and ideas that you've never come across. Do not worry - remember we will go through all of this when we teach you! We just want you to begin to develop some knowledge and understanding in these areas.

Where should I complete it?

Please complete any notes either on paper or on your computer and save them to bring into school at a later date.

How long will it take?

The work has been divided up to ensure it is manageable. It should take about 8 hours in total.

If any of the work brings up questions, do make a note of these, ready to ask in our first lesson.

Task one: What is Philosophy?

- Go to the two links below and summarise the main ideas of each video using subheadings:

1. What is Philosophy (Crash Course)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAKYt3GY

- Ancient Greek times and the beginning of Philosophy
- What is the world like and Metaphysics
- How we know the answers to questions and Epistemology
- How we should act and Value Theory (Ethics)
- Logic – and reasoning
- The two-step system

2. Theory of Knowledge (Epistemology)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_Y3utleTPg

- What kinds of things can you know?
- Comparison of the words 'knowledge' and 'believe'.

- Confidence as a key feature of knowledge.
- Judgement needs a good basis to count as knowledge.

Task two: What is Ethics?

- Go to the link below:
 3. What is Ethics?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rr7U49RPPtS&t=302s>
- Write a list of 10 interesting things you have learnt about ethics. Include new vocabulary.

Task three: An introduction to Philosophy

‘The Man Who Asked Questions: Socrates and Plato’ by Nigel Warburton, *A Little History of Philosophy*

- Read the information (scanned pages – file 1) from start to finish.
- Write a summary of what philosophy is about – this should be approximately 20 lines.
- Copy and complete the table:

<i>What I have learnt about:</i>	
Socrates	Plato
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10

Task four: The Socratic Method

- Listen to the podcast: **MM McCabe on the ‘Socratic Method** (file 2) which deals with questions about the best ways to do practical ethics and how to behave. As you listen, write a list of possible answers to the questions below.
 - a. Who was Socrates?
 - b. How do we know about the life and views of Socrates?
 - c. What is the socratic method? What was Socrates trying to show people through using this method?
 - d. Why was the socratic method controversial to some people?

- e. What does McCabe think Socrates means when he says ‘the unexamined life is not worth living?’
- f. What might be the problems with examining all aspects of life?
- g. Is there something we can learn from Socrates today? Why is questioning and reflecting important?
- h. Are there any problems? (e.g. with exams, courses).

Task five: What is Ethics?

‘What is Ethics’

- Read the information (word document - File 3) from start to finish.
- Summarise each sub-heading in a maximum of 30 words.

Sub-heading	30 word summary
<i>Moral absolutism</i>	
<i>Moral relativism</i>	
<i>Consequentialism</i>	
<i>Non-consequentialism</i>	
<i>Virtue ethics</i>	
<i>Situation ethics</i>	
<i>Ethics and ideology</i>	

Task six: Real World Ethics

- Listen to the podcast: **Real World Ethics** (File 4) which deals with questions about different methods of practical ethics and working out how to behave. As you listen, write a list of possible answers to the questions below.
 - a. What are thought experiments? (Give an example). What is Wilson’s view on the use of thought experiments?
 - b. What is meant by real world ethics?
 - c. How are real world problems different from thought experiments?
 - d. Why does context matter when thinking about ethical issues (according to Wilson)?
 - e. Aside from thought experiments, what other techniques or tools could be used to help make ethical decisions?
 - f. What does Wilson think about the use of principles in ethics? (strengths/weaknesses)

Task seven: Key Scholar Research

In Philosophy and Ethics, you will be introduced to many scholars to support arguments you make in your essays.

- You are going to create a biography of three of the scholars listed below. Each biography should be one side of A4 and can include a maximum of two small pictures (see below for size).

As part of your biography, you should include responses to the following questions:

- When were they alive?
- What key books did they write?
- What key issues did they write about?
- Are there any key quotes?
- Do you find their work convincing?

Potential scholars for your biographies:

- Plato
- Aristotle
- St Augustine
- St Thomas Aquinas
- Richard Swinburne
- Mary Daly
- Joseph Fletcher
- Jeremy Bentham

- **Make sure that you include a list of the sources you used when putting your biography together**

Task eight: Critical analysis

As you will have noticed from the list above, most of the scholars we study are male. Write a paragraph explain reasons why this might be the case.

Task nine: Key Language

- Research the following terms and write an explanation linked to Philosophy and Ethics. You might want to start by reading the scanned pages (file 5 and file 6) for assistance.

TERM	EXPLANATION
LOGIC	
EPISTEMOLOGY	
METAPHYSICS	
ETHICS	
VALIDITY	
SYLLOGISM	
MAJOR PREMISE	

MINOR PREMISE	
A PRIORI	
A POSTERIORI	
SENSE EXPERIENCE	
PREDICATE	
TAUTOLOGY	
EMPIRICISM	
COSMOLOGICAL	
ONTOLOGICAL	
TELEOLOGICAL	
LOGICAL FALLACY	
TRANSCENDENTAL LEAP	
ANALYTIC STATEMENT	
SYNTHETIC STATEMENT	
NORMATIVE ETHICS	
APPLIED ETHICS	
META-ETHICS	
EMOTIVISM	
SUBJECTIVISM	
DIVINE COMMAND THEORY	
NATURAL LAW	
EXISTENTIALISM	
TELEOLOGICAL THEORIES	
DEONTOLOGICAL THEORIES	
RELATIVIST THEORIES	

Task ten: Making a Case

Philosophy and Ethics at A level will require you to make judgements about issues.

Create a for and against case for one of the following issues:

Being a philosopher

God does not exist.
Or
There is an afterlife.

Being an ethicist

Active euthanasia should be legal.

Or

The role of a business is just to make a profit.

Out and about in Cambridge?...

Ludwig Wittgenstein was an Austrian-British philosopher who worked primarily in logic and the philosophy of mind. He is considered by some to be the greatest philosopher of the 20th century. From 1929 to 1947 Wittgenstein taught at the University of Cambridge.

On his religious views, Wittgenstein was said to be greatly interested in Catholicism, and was sympathetic to it, but did not consider himself to be a Catholic. According to Norman Malcolm, Wittgenstein saw Catholicism more as a way of life than as a set of beliefs he held, considering that he did not accept any religious faith. Three of his four grandparents were of Jewish descent, and this fact was known to others.

Wittgenstein was given a Catholic burial at Ascension Parish Burial Ground off Huntingdon Road in Cambridge.

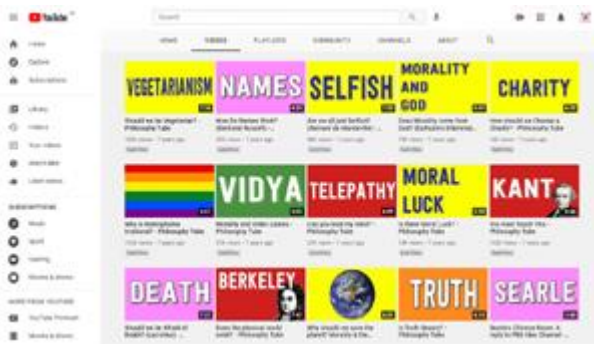
Your mission is to visit the burial ground and find Wittgenstein's grave. The ledger gravestone was refurbished by the British Wittgenstein Society in 2015.

While you are at the graveside please consider this question:

Should Ludwig Wittgenstein have been given a Catholic burial?

Extra: You might also want to try and find a plaque in central Cambridge to where the Philosophy society used to meet (including Wittgenstein) and have some heated debates!

Additional resources



Philosophy Tube

There are hundreds of episodes, but if you scroll back to the beginning, their introductory episodes cover many A Level topics and texts. Or, you can extend yourself by exploring other areas of Philosophy.



PanPsyCast



Listen: Philosophize This



Listen: Philosophy Talk



Listen: [Philosophy: The Classics](#)



Listen: [Philosophy Bites](#)



Listen: [The Partially Examined Life](#)



OCR Religious Studies Revision Notes

Philosophy of Religion

Religious Ethics

Christianity

Buddhism

List of possible exam questions

Read: a-levelphilosophyandreligion.com

Below are links to **philosophy revision notes** organized by module and topic.

The AQA philosophy syllabus is divided into four modules:

- Epistemology (theory of knowledge)
- Moral philosophy (ethics)
- Metaphysics of God
- Metaphysics of mind



Epistemology

Read: [philosophyalevel.com](https://www.philosophyalevel.com)