



**Year 8**

**Philosophy and Ethics 1:**

***Arguments for the Existence of God***

**Knowledge Organiser & Homework Booklet**

**Name.....**

## Philosophy and Ethics 1: Arguments for the Existence of God – Knowledge Organiser

Key Words			
Analogy	A comparison between one thing and another, to help explain something.	Prayer	A message addressed to God, through words or thought.
Conversion Experience	When something happens which causes someone to develop particular religious beliefs	Principle of Credulity	Swinburne's idea that we ought to believe that things are as they seem unless we have evidence to suggest otherwise
Creationism	The belief that the universe and the various forms of life were created by God out of nothing as stated in the Bible.	Recurrent Laryngeal Nerve	Nerve which transmits messages from the brain to the muscles of the larynx. Evidence for evolution.
Infinite Regress	An endless line of causes with no beginning.	Religious Experience	An encounter between people and the divine.
Intelligent Design	Belief that the universe is so complex that it must have been designed by a higher intelligent being.	That than which none greater can be conceived	Saint Anselm of Canterbury's definition of God.
Miracle	An event that cannot be explained naturally, so is seen as an act of God.	The Big Bang Theory	The idea that the universe began as just a single point, then expanded and stretched to grow as large as it is now.
Myth	A story that is not historically accurate but contains spiritual truth.	Theologian	People who study of the nature of the Divine and religious belief.
Perfection	When something is as good as it is possible to be.	Uncaused cause	The belief that God is the first cause of the Universe, but was not caused himself.

Key Ideas	
<b>Philosophical Argument</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An argument that tries to prove a point through reasoning and logic. It tries to convince someone that the conclusion is right by showing how they got there. It is made up of multiple premises (a logical step) which lead to a conclusion. For example:  Premise 1: Munchie is a cat  Premise 2: All cats have whiskers  Conclusion: Munchie has whiskers</li> </ul>
<b>The Teleological Argument</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Also known as 'The Design Argument'; The argument follows that there is clear evidence that the universe was designed, as there is evidence of design, this suggest that there must be a designer, which is God.</li> <li>The argument was originally proposed by <b>Saint Thomas Aquinas</b> and was later developed by <b>William Paley</b> using his Watchmaker Analogy.</li> <li>The argument has received support from various philosophers, but has also been criticised by some philosophers such as <b>David Hume</b></li> </ul>
<b>The Cosmological Argument</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Saint Aquinas'</b> Cosmological Argument states that everything which exists was caused by something else which already existed, this includes the universe, which must also have a cause, which must be God</li> <li><b>Al-Kindi, Al Ghazali</b> and <b>William Lane Craig</b> developed the '<b>Kalam Cosmological Argument</b>', which specifies that anything that begins to exist must have a cause</li> <li>The argument has been criticised by scientists as The Big Bang Theory is said to offer an alternative explanation for the cause of the universe, though some philosophers argue that this discovery can be compatible with religious belief</li> </ul>
<b>Evolution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the book 'On the Origin of Species', <b>Charles Darwin</b> suggested that all life on earth had developed (evolved) from a common ancestor (a single cell), over a long time, these cells developed into humans. This is seen as an alternate explanation to intelligent design.</li> <li>There is a great deal of scientific evidence which supports the theory of evolution, such as from studying the anatomy of humans and animals. Some religious believers argue that you can believe in both God and evolution as they are compatible with each other, even when interpreting the Bible literally.</li> </ul>
<b>The Ontological Argument</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An argument by <b>Saint Anselm</b> and developed by <b>Descartes</b> that if we define God as being the greatest possible being, then it is impossible for God not to exist. As something existing in reality is better than something that only exists in our minds, defining God as the greatest possible being means we are admitting that God exists.</li> <li>The logic of this argument was criticised by <b>Gaunilo</b> and <b>Aquinas</b>. The argument has also been criticised by <b>Bertrand Russell</b> and <b>Richard Dawkins</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Religious Experience and Miracles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some people may believe in God as they believe they have experienced something supernatural, which provoked a feeling of being in the presence of a greater power. The individual may claim to have personally 'seen', 'heard' or 'felt' God (e.g. prayer, conversion experiences.)</li> <li><b>Richard Swinburne</b> argues that we should believe peoples' accounts of religious experiences, if someone perceives something to have happened, it probably has, and we should believe what people tell us, unless there is a good reason not to. Other philosophers argue that we should not believe people's accounts of religious experience, as these may be delusions or the individual may have a reason to lie.</li> <li>There is also record of 'miracles' occurring, which are events which cannot be explained through the laws of nature (e.g. healings, so they must be explained as the work of God). <b>Paul Tillich</b> argues that the purpose of these events is to tell us about the nature of God.</li> <li><b>Hume</b> has been critical of the accounts of miracles, arguing that there are more convincing reasons to believe that they didn't happen than to believe that they did.</li> </ul>

## Homework 1:

Due:

Read the following passage and make notes of the key points in the bullet-points below the text. You will be quizzed testing your knowledge of this text in your next lesson.

### Paley's Design Argument

Along with Saint Aquinas, William Paley also argued that there is clear evidence that the world has been designed.

Paley's argument is based on three particular observations about the world:

- **Its complexity.** Paley goes into great detail concerning his observations about the complexity of the natural world. He looks at the complexity of biological organisms and organs, such as the eye. He also looks at the complexity of the laws of nature by which everything is governed.
- **Its regularity.** Paley observes in particular the regularity of the orbits of comets, moons and planets and the regularity of the seasons of the year. (E.g. planets take the exact same amount of time when they orbit the sun, a season always lasts the same amount of time from one year to the next).
- **Its purpose.** Paley observes that the machines we make are built for a purpose. We know when we see a watch that it has a purpose (to tell us the time), due to its complexity and regularity. As we can also see that the world is complex and regular, we can see that the world must have a purpose too (it must be here for a reason, suggesting it's been designed).



*Based on his observations, Paley constructed the following philosophical argument:*

P1: Some objects in the world show clear evidence that they were designed because they exhibit complexity, regularity and purpose.

P2: The universe appears to exhibit complexity, regularity and purpose.

C: So it is likely that the universe was designed.

Key Points:

\*  
\*  
\*

---

Knowledge Quiz:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| 1. | 2. |
| 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. |

## Homework 2:

Due:

Read the following passage and make notes of the key points in the bullet-points below the text. You will be quizzed testing your knowledge of this text in your next lesson.

### The Cosmological Argument – the Fallacy of Composition

To recap, Aquinas' cosmological argument goes:

P1: Everything in the Universe has a cause

P2: If everything in the universe has a cause, the universe itself must have a cause

C: The cause of the universe must be God.

One critic of Aquinas' argument was 18<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish philosopher, David Hume.

He claimed that the First Cause argument was based on a logical fallacy (meaning it's based on a statement which is logically flawed). This logical fallacy is the 'fallacy of composition', this is when one claims that what is true of something's parts must be true of the whole. It would be like saying that because every player on a Football team is good, that means the team is good, however this is not always the case. Or, if you were to say that 'All the bricks in the wall are small, so the wall is small,' this is clearly a logically flawed argument.

In the same way, Hume argues that just because everything in the universe is caused, this doesn't mean that the Universe itself must have a cause.

This point was also made by Bertrand Russell in a radio debate with Frederick Copleston in 1948:

*'I can illustrate what seems to me your fallacy. Every man who exists has a mother, and it seems to me your argument is that therefore the human race must have a mother, but obviously the human race hasn't a mother.'* – Bertrand Russell, 1948

Russell's argument is: by saying that, *'because everything in the universe has a cause, this means that the universe itself must have been caused'* would be as ridiculous as saying that, *'because every human has a mother, then the human race must also have a mother.'*

Key Points:

\*

\*

\*

---

Knowledge Quiz:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.