



**Year 8**

**Philosophy and Ethics 1:**

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

**Term 4**

**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	
Philosophical Argument	<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>
The Teleological Argument	<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>
The Cosmological Argument	<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>
Evolution	<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>
The Ontological Argument	<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>
Religious Experience and Miracles	<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>

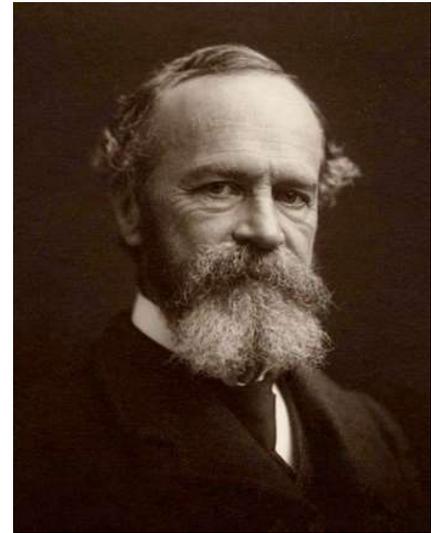
## Homework 1:

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.

### William James – Religious Experiences

William James was a philosopher and a psychologist who claimed that religious experiences occur in different religions and have similar features. People who have and try to have religious experiences are often called 'Mystics' and their experiences are intense and totally immersive. Their experiences are called 'Mystical'.



James' four criteria which characterise all mystical religious experiences:

- Ineffable – the experience is beyond language and cannot be put into words to accurately described.
- Noetic – some sort of knowledge or insight is gained
- Transient – the experience is temporary
- Passive – the experience happens to a person; the person doesn't make the experience happen.

James' argument is that there must be some objective explanation of the cross-cultural similarity of religious experiences being defined by these four criteria, since it is astronomically improbable that it is due to chance. James' explanation is that religious experiences are the core of religion, whereas religious teachings and practices were 'second hand' religion, i.e. not what religion is really about.

This makes James a pluralist, meaning he thinks all religions are true in that they point to a higher spiritual reality. All religious experiences have similar features no matter the religion of the experienter. The 'differences' between religions are more superficial cultural additions onto that core.

Key Points:

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Knowledge Quiz:

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- 2.
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- 5.
- 6.