

Religious Studies is a fascinating subject that develops a wide range of skills, including improving your skills as a writer, speaker and thinker. Here are some tasks to help you prepare for September.

It's really important to be organised in your studies and so your first task is an organisation one!

TASK 1

Course details: You will be studying Religious Studies A-Level. The exam board is **AQA** and your main religion is **Christianity**. A brief overview of the course is here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/as-and-a-level/religious-studies-7062/specification-at-a-glance> You can also have a look at the full spec and examples of the exam papers on the AQA website too.

The course is very different to the GCSE. It is split into 3 sections;

- Philosophy of Religion (eg existence of God, miracles, problem of evil)
- Ethics (eg where so we get our morals from, what do we mean by 'evil' and 'good', different moral problems)
- Christianity (eg beliefs about God, life after death, gender issues)

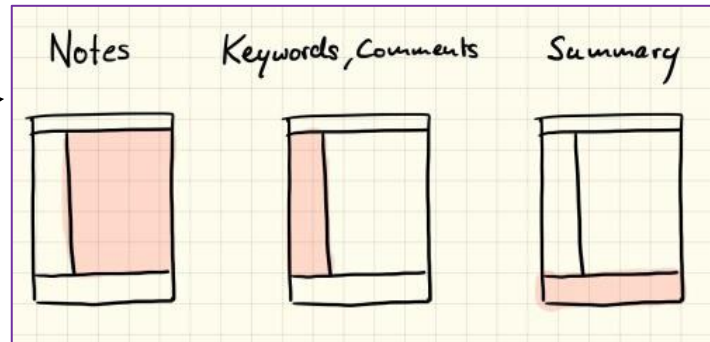
So you will need a file split into these three sections.

Task 2

Watch this video clip from crash course philosophy (YouTube) and make brief notes. He talks very quickly so you will need to keep pausing it!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAkYt3GY&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtNgK6MZucdYldNkMybYIHKR&index=2

Write notes to summarise your understanding. A really good method for note taking is the **Cornell method**. This picture gives a brief overview of how to set up Cornell notes.



Task 3

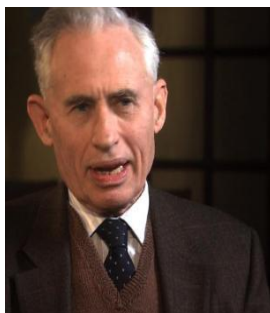
Watch this video clip from crash course philosophy, this time about ethics (YouTube) and make brief notes. He talks very quickly again so you will need to keep pausing it!

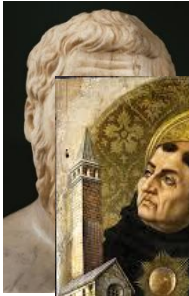
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOoffXFpAIU&list=PLa_ZSYFnmJvvtPCcfY-xQljsJDyhMtWe

Task 4

Research key thinkers we will meet:

- Aristotle, St Thomas Aquinas, Jeremy Bentham, JS Mill, Peter Singer, Joseph Fletcher, St Augustine of Hippo, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, William Paley, Bertrand Russell, John Hick, Richard Dawkins. --Find out who they are, what their background was, do they believe in God, what did they argue?
- Collect or bookmark articles dealing with ethical issues that crop up over the summer; look out for topics such as theft, voluntary euthanasia, abortion, right to life, use of animals for food, medical research, blood sports.





Task 5

There will be many key terms that you'll be expected to use in this area of your studies. Some of the terms can have more than one meaning depending upon the context, but for now, we will stick to their basic philosophical use.



Research the following terms and see if you can not only explain what they mean but also create a sentence to put them into. One of them has already been completed for you as an example.

Term	Meaning (in your own words!)	Sentence / Context
A posteriori		
A priori		
Analytical statement	<i>A statement which is true by definition. It does not need someone to go and find any evidence to support it or disprove it (in terms of it being true). It must be true. It cannot not be true.</i>	<i>2 + 2 = 4</i> <i>'All bachelors are male'</i> <i>'All bachelors are unmarried men.'</i>
Synthetic statement		

Empiricism / Empirical		
Rationalism / Rational		
Inductive argument		
Deductive argument		
Logical		

Omnipotent		
Contingent being		
Necessary being		
Infinite Regression		
Premise		

Extension activities

Watch TV! Or listen to a Podcast;

Useful websites:

- <http://www.philosophyexperiments.com/> - pick 3 or 4 of these and make a note of how you get on...
- <https://io9.gizmodo.com/9-philosophical-thought-experiments-that-will-keep-you-1340952809> - these are philosophical puzzles

Podcasts / YouTube / TED talks:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qk11/episodes/player> - 'The Moral Maze'
- <https://thepanpsycast.com/episodes-by-category> - pick a selection from the Ethics and Philosophy of Religion sections.
- <https://www.ted.com/topics/morality> - look out for talks by Daniel Dennett and Peter Singer
- [https://philosophynow.org/podcasts/Beyond Right and Wrong](https://philosophynow.org/podcasts/Beyond_Right_and_Wrong)
- [https://philosophynow.org/podcasts/Free Will and the Brain](https://philosophynow.org/podcasts/Free_Will_and_the_Brain)

Netflix:

- The Story of God with Morgan Freeman (3 seasons)
- The Good Place – funny as well as ethical!

iPlayer:

- Young, Welsh and pretty religious
- The Big Questions with Nicky Campbell – ethical debates
- Sacred Wonders – spectacular documentary.

Read a book! Kindle have made access to all of their books free while we are off school.

Choose one of the following;

- Sophie's World by J Gaarder – this is a fantastic fiction novel that introduces philosophy – a really good way to start the course.
- The Puzzle of Ethics by P Vardy. Peter Vardy has written many books to help at A Level, have a look at his other books too.
- The Philosophy Files by Stephen Law
- The God Delusion by Richard Dawkins. He is a militant atheist, so this book is very anti-religion (especially Catholic and Islam) but it gives us plenty to think about and he does feature in the A Level quite a bit. He's good to watch on YouTube as he does annoy people a lot!

If you have any questions about the course or any of the work do email the RE dept at hfsre@holyfamilyschool.uk. 😊