

Religious Studies Department

Philosophy and Ethics Year 12

Summer Work

Deadline: 6th September 2021



There are four parts to your summer work:

1. Assignment one: watching a film
2. Assignment two: reading a book and making notes of the key sections
3. Assignment three: an essay on Philosophy
4. Assignment four: an essay plan mind map on Ethics

**Assignment one**

You need to watch the 1999 comedy film *Dogma* starring Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, Alan Rickman, Chris Rock and Salma Hayek among others. The film's irreverent treatment of Catholicism and the Catholic Church triggered considerable controversy, even before its opening. The Catholic League denounced it as “blasphemy.” Organized protests delayed its release in many countries and led to at least two death threats against the director of the film. The plot revolves around two fallen angels who plan to employ an alleged loophole in Catholic dogma to return to Heaven, after being cast out by God.

**Assignment two**

****Over the break you need to read *Knowledge of Angels* by Jill Paton Walsh (ISBN 0552997803). You should be able to get hold of this from your local library or, if you prefer your own copy, it costs about £3 from Amazon. The book is a medieval philosophical novel which was shortlisted for the 1994 Booker Prize I know it now sounds really boring but go with it. Read it as a novel and then make yourself **a summary of all the arguments used both for and against God’s existence within the book**. The book covers some adult themes so shouldn’t be left around for younger brothers or sisters to read. We will be using these summaries in the first few lessons of the year, resulting in an essay so the more detailed your summary the better.

Jill Paton Walsh describes the novel:

At opposite ends of a remote pre-reformation Christian island, shepherds find a creature with strange footprints stealing their lambs, and fisherman find a swimmer near exhaustion struggling towards the shore. The child cannot stand, eat or speak like a human being; the swimmer says he is a prince in an unheard of land, and declares himself to be an atheist. The Prince of the island is confronted by a double conundrum. Could an atheist be in good faith? Not if the knowledge of God is inborn; then the atheist must once have known God, and reneged on the knowledge. How could it be found out whether everyone has inborn knowledge of God?

**Assignment three**

**Evaluate the claim that the universe has too many flaws for it to be designed.**

You need to write an essay response to this question. Use all your English and RS GCSE skills to help you. Remember to try and show different points of view.

Some things to consider when writing this question:

\*Theories of design – e.g.: Newton’s thumb, Paley’s Watch.

\*References to particular examples (for either side of the argument) – e.g.: natural disasters such as volcanoes, earthquakes or beauty and complexity of nature.

\*Relevant religious arguments and quotations – e.g.: Genesis, chapters 1 & 2



**Assignment four**

**‘War should not be allowed even as a last resort.’ Discuss.**

You need to create an essay plan for this question.

Things to consider when planning this question:

\*Arguments for and against going to war – including and explaining concepts such as ‘Just War’, ‘Holy War’, Sanctity of Life, Quality of Life.

\*References to particular examples – e.g.: Gulf War, conflict in Afghanistan, conflict in Gaza/Israel, First World War, Second World War etc.

\*Relevant religious arguments and quotes.

Your plan should be in clear sections outlining what arguments you would use in each one – *I would prefer for this to be in a mind map format*.



**ALL WORK MUST HAVE A HEADER/FOOTER WITH YOUR NAME ON IT.**