



## Fundamentals –Year 12 Philosophy

Key knowledge by the end of Year 12

### **PHILOSOPHICAL LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT:**

#### ANCIENT PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCES

- Plato's reliance on reason as opposed to the senses
- the nature of the Forms; hierarchy of the Forms
- details of the analogy, its purpose and relation to the theory of the Forms
- Aristotle's use of teleology
- material, formal, efficient and final causes
- the nature of Aristotle's Prime Mover and connections between this and the final cause
- comparison and evaluation of Plato's Form of the Good and Aristotle's Prime Mover
- comparison and evaluation of Plato's reliance on reason (rationalism) and Aristotle's use of the senses (empiricism) in their attempts to make sense of reality

#### SOUL, MIND AND BODY

- Plato's view of the soul as the essential and immaterial part of a human, temporarily united with the body
- Aristotle's view of the soul as the form of the body; the way the body behaves and lives; something which cannot be separated from the body
- the idea that mind and body are distinct substances
- Descartes' proposal of material and spiritual substances as a solution to the mind/soul and body problem
- the idea that mind and consciousness can be fully explained by physical or material interactions
- the rejection of a soul as a spiritual substance
- materialist critiques of dualism, and dualist responses to materialism
- whether the concept of 'soul' is best understood metaphorically or as a reality
- the idea that any discussion about the mind-body distinction is a category error

### **THE EXISTENCE OF GOD:**

#### ARGUMENTS BASED ON OBSERVATION

- details of this argument including reference to:
  - o Aquinas' Fifth Way
  - o Paley
- details of this argument including reference to:
  - o Aquinas' first three ways
- details of Hume's criticisms of these arguments for the existence of God from natural religion
- the challenge of evolution
- whether a posteriori or a priori is the more persuasive style of argument
- whether or not teleological arguments can be defended against the challenge of 'chance'
- whether cosmological arguments simply jump to the conclusion of a transcendent creator, without sufficient explanation
- whether or not there are logical fallacies in these arguments that cannot be overcome



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### ARGUMENTS BASED ON REASON

- details of this argument including reference to:
  - o Anselm
  - o Gaunilo's criticisms
  - o Kant's criticisms
- whether a posteriori or a priori is the more persuasive style of argument
- whether or not existence can be treated as a predicate
- whether or not the ontological argument justifies belief
- whether or not there are logical fallacies in this argument that cannot be overcome

### GOD AND THE WORLD

#### RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

the nature and influence of religious experience, including:

- o mystical experience
- o conversion experience
  - different ways in which individual religious experiences can be understood
  - examples of mystical and conversion experiences and views about these, including:
    - o views and main conclusions of William James
      - as union with a greater power
      - psychological effect such as illusion
      - the product of a physiological effect
      - whether personal testimony or witness is enough to support the validity of religious experiences
      - whether or not corporate religious experiences might be considered more reliable or valid than individual experiences
      - whether or not religious experience provides a basis for belief in God or a greater power

#### THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

-its logical (the inconsistency between divine attributes and the presence of evil) and evidential (the evidence of so much terrible evil in the world) aspects

- Augustine's use of original perfection and the Fall
- Hick's reworking of the Irenaean theodicy which gives some purpose to natural evil in enabling human beings to reach divine likeness
- whether or not Augustine's view of the origins of moral and natural evils is enough to spare God from blame for evils in the world
- whether or not the need to create a 'vale of soul-making' can justify the existence or extent of evils
- which of the logical or evidential aspects of the problem of evil pose the greater challenge to belief
- whether or not it is possible to successfully defend monotheism in the face of evil

### SKILLS

#### KEY SKILLS DEVELOPED IN YEARS 12 AND 13

- critical analysis of key texts and philosophical views
- evaluation of different viewpoints
- analysis of philosophical outlooks
- essay writing skills



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-advanced literacy skills including the use of technical language  
-the use of quotes to support statements