

# St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School 6<sup>th</sup> Form



## Year 11 into 12 Transition Task

Subject: Religious Studies

SMRT 6<sup>th</sup> Form takes students from a wide range of schools, who have studied a variety of GCSE syllabuses. We want to ensure that everybody is equally able to access the content of Year 1 of the A Level and so the following tasks give you a chance to ensure you are fully prepared.

At SMRT we have used the Eduqas syllabus at GCSE, unit 2 (Christianity, Islam and Christian responses to moral issues) but if you have done something different or not done RE at all that is not a problem. Religious Studies is a great subject to help you build a wide range of skills, including improving your skills as a writer, speaker and thinker. This will help across all your subjects and give you skills for life and future employment.

**The first transition task on here is to read the 'Proofs for the existence of God' article and complete the tasks. We'll go through this work when we start the course.**

However, as you have more time between the end of GCSE and start of A Level, you can still practice and develop Religious Studies skills at home. You can read, watch and listen to interesting ideas and think about the opinions expressed. How far do they match your own views? What might someone who disagrees say? Keep up your writing skills by putting your ideas down on paper – try, if you can, to handwrite, just to keep up the practice of handwriting so that your writing isn't completely illegible and you don't forget what it is like to have to write quickly!

**To ensure you are ready to fully access the A Level Syllabus you should attempt the following tasks:**

One focus in the Philosophy of Religion is the question of whether God exists. It approaches this question in the following ways: the cosmological argument (which you may have met at GCSE as the argument from cause) the Design argument, the Ontological argument, religious experience, and atheism and postmodernism. In the other half of the course you will be studying Ethical theory and practical problems. Towards the end of each year both teachers will cover the New Testament material.

This transition task aims to introduce you to some of the language and ideas that will be helpful for the course, as well as giving you the opportunity to read a text written for A level students by an important philosopher of religion.

Read the article ***Proofs for the Existence of God*** by Prof Keith Ward, then write your responses to the following questions and bring them along to your first lesson:

1. How would you describe your idea of God (whether or not you think he exists)? Write a short paragraph explaining your ideas.
2. What is meant by:
  - a. An inductive argument
  - b. A deductive argument
  - c. A perspectival argument?
3. Explain how two people could look at the same evidence in the universe and one could conclude that God exists (theist) and the other conclude that God does not exist (atheist).
4. What does Prof Ward conclude about the significance of proofs for the existence of God?

## Religion and Ethics

### Activity 1.

Questions to think about and/or write about – try to support your answers with reasoning:

1. Do you think there is a 'right' attitude and a 'wrong' approach to religious beliefs? What is it that makes these attitudes right or wrong?
2. Some people might argue that different cultures have different ideas about morality, and that these different cultural beliefs should be respected even if we don't agree with them. Do you think we should always respect the beliefs and attitudes of cultures different from our own, or should we try to persuade them to adopt our own beliefs instead?
3. What religious reasons do people sometimes give for why there is suffering in the world? How would you support or oppose these reasons?

### Christianity

We will be looking at different aspects of development in Christianity during the course. Whether you have covered this at GCSE or not, the podcasts below give a flavour of ideas useful to the course:

<https://www.therepodcast.co.uk/post/season-4-episode-6-the-one-about-the-history-of-christianity>

<https://www.therepodcast.co.uk/post/season-3-episode-1-the-one-about-feminist-theology>

### Research skills

There are all kinds of resources online and in books to help you, if you want to start to learn a little more about some of the philosophers you will meet in the A Level course. Use Wikipedia as a starting point and follow some of the links in the articles. You could do some research about:

Aristotle, Aquinas, Bentham, Mill, Hume, Kant

Practice using a range of sources to find out about a single person. When you have gathered together a range of information, try and turn it into a single piece of writing of your own.

**To get more into what this subject is about at a higher level :**

If you want to read further into the philosophy of religion syllabus, try these:

**Religious experience:** Read William James' classic account of mystical experiences.

<http://www.psywww.com/psyrelig/james/james12.htm>

**Psychology and religion:** Read about Carl Jung's development of ideas of the unconscious.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2011/jun/13/carl-jung-red-book-unconscious>

**Atheism and postmodernism:** Read a critical review of Richard Dawkins' book *The God Delusion* by another atheist.

<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n20/terry-eagleton/lunging-flailing-mispunching>

Hope that keeps you going and sets you up well for September. Any questions, please email Mr Noyce [noycep@smrt.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:noycep@smrt.bristol.sch.uk)

Credits:

BBC/TED talks/NATRE/Libby Ahluwalia for initial ideas that were adapted.