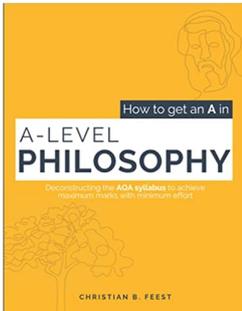


## Philosophy transition project

At A-Level we follow the **AQA Specification** and will study the following topics:

- **Epistemology**
- **Moral Philosophy (or Ethics )**
- **Metaphysics of God**
- **Metaphysics of Mind**



**Click on the textbook image**



<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/philosophy/as-and-a-level/philosophy-7172/specification-at-a-glance>

The A level course has a balance between the four areas, two of which (Ethics/Metaphysics of God) will have similar elements to your GCSE RS course, but will also contain content which is new to you. So, to help prepare you for the step up and keep you engaged with the many aspects of Philosophy over the summer, choose one or more of the activities outlined below.

The number of thinkers indicates the level of difficulty of each task. These mirror the progression which you will experience over the course.



Small step-up from GCSE – builds on knowledge & skills you already have



Larger step-up from GCSE – builds new knowledge & skills



Complex ideas & concepts

Developing the habit of studying independently is essential if you are to perform well at A Level. In Philosophy you will regularly be set independent study which is relevant, challenging and extremely beneficial. To prepare you for Year 12 Philosophy, you need to challenge yourself by completing the following tasks in preparation for commencing the course this September. We do not expect these to be done perfectly but we do expect to see evidence that you have thought deeply and tried your best.

We'd like you to bring your investigation(s) to enrolment in August, but if you'd like to get in touch about the work, get some feedback or find out more about the course, please email me, Adrian Brockless, at [abs@woking.ac.uk](mailto:abs@woking.ac.uk)

Very best,  
Adrian

## **TASK 1: PREPARATORY READING**

Read Thomas Nagel's *What Does It All Mean?* and note down anything that strikes you as important (there are no right or wrong answers here, but I do want you to engage with the text. This will help you prepare for the next tasks.

Link to book here: <http://practicalphilosophy.in/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/WHAT-DOES-IT-ALL-MEAN.pdf>

## **TASK 2: Epistemology**

Find and print the following chapter from Bertrand Russell's book *'The Problems of Philosophy'* entitled 'Appearance and Reality'. This can be found at

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/5827/5827-h/5827-h.htm#link2HCH0001>

a) You need to conduct a 'close reading' of this text. This means you...:

- ✓ read it through once and look up any words/terms you are unfamiliar with and make a note of them in the margin
- ✓ learn the meaning of new vocabulary and attempt to use this in the future
- ✓ highlight key words and information
- ✓ take detailed notes on the chapter, summarising the main points, ideas and any conclusions

b) Write a response to the following question:

***'Why, according to Russell, can we not be certain of the table's existence?'***

Think about how Russell builds his argument and reaches his conclusions.

What examples does he use?

What is the evidence?

**TASK 3: Philosophy of Religion – this content you may recognise from your GCSE**

course: Print and read Aquinas' cosmological argument:

<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1002.htm>

**Aquinas *Summa Theologica*** 'Question 2. The existence of God, Article 3. Whether God exists?'

Read his first 3 ways.

1) You are to conduct a 'close reading' of these texts. (See above for a reminder of how to do this)

2) Then –

Either –

Write around 1 A4 side in answer to the following question:

***'Explaining Aquinas' arguments for the existence of God. To what extent is Aquinas' argument convincing?'***

Justify your conclusion through your own ideas as well as argument from research. If you need additional help or want to include other ideas see the links below.

Or

Design a resource in whatever format you wish, on the topic. This could be a handout/leaflet/article/powerpoint but should be created with the aim of being accessible to the reader whilst focusing on detailed content and structured argument which finishes by clearly answering the question.

**Research Opportunities**

<http://peped.org/philosophicalinvestigations/handout-cosmological-argument/>

David Hume Dialogues concerning Natural Religion, Pt 9 – read paragraph 9

[http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/hume1779\\_3.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/hume1779_3.pdf)

<http://peped.org/philosophicalinvestigations/handout-david-humes-criticisms-of-the-cosmological-argument/> - additional help.

Bertrand Russell and Frederick Copelston on the cosmological argument.

[http://www.scandalon.co.uk/philosophy/cosmological\\_russell\\_copleston.htm](http://www.scandalon.co.uk/philosophy/cosmological_russell_copleston.htm)

[http://www.scandalon.co.uk/philosophy/cosmological\\_radio.htm](http://www.scandalon.co.uk/philosophy/cosmological_radio.htm)