

Philosophy Knowledge Organisers

- Plato and Aristotle
- Soul, mind and body
- A posteriori arguments for God
- A priori arguments for God
- Problem of evil
- Religious experience
- Nature of God
- Traditional religious language
- Twentieth century religious language



Plato's understanding of reality – The Cave

1	Method?	Rationalism – our senses deceive us
2	Analogy?	The Cave and its prisoners
3	Symbolism: Cave	Our senses create a false and limited understanding of reality but we cling to it
4	Symbolism: Escapee	Their freedom is challenging and met with hostility. They 'see' truth outside the Cave
5	Symbolism: the Sun	The highest Form of the Good that is the source of all truth

Plato – what is truth?

1	World of Forms?	These ideal concepts never change and are truth
2	The Particulars ?	Known empirically, change, physical, imperfect archetypes. They are 'pale imitations'
3	The Forms?	Eternal, immutable, non-physical, perfect and single. They are the one over many
4	Form of Good?	The ultimate Form that all Forms have in common. Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The origin of goodness • Enables us to see Forms • It the end in itself

Aristotle's understanding of reality

1	Method?	Empiricism – there are no innate ideas beyond experience
2	Method?	Everything changes all the time, but always has Four Causes that tell us the 'why' of objects and the truth of the change. Everything moves from potential to actual
3	Material Cause	The matter of the thing that changes, Change begins with matter
4	Formal Cause	The structure of an object. Nothing to do with Plato's Forms!
5	Efficient Cause	The primary source of the change that changes the material into its form. E.g. a carpenter
6	Final Cause	The purpose of the change. <i>Telos</i> also means purpose

Aristotle – what is truth?

1	Change	Everything in this world changes. The Prime Mover is the changeless source of change
2	Prime Mover – Traits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eternal – will always exist • Perfect – state of actuality • Impassive – no emotion or experience
3	Analogy ?	The milk does not change, but draws the cat towards it, causing motion

Key Vocabulary

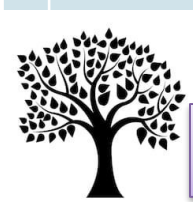
A posteriori	Knowledge learnt from experience
A priori	Knowledge learnt before experience/ from reason
Deductive	Arguments based on logical reasoning
Empiricism	A way of knowing via senses
Final cause	The purpose of something
Forms	Ideal concepts that exist in reality
Four causes	Aristotle's method of knowing things
Inductive	Arguments based on generalising experience
Immutable	Changeless
Perfect	State of completion and immutability
Philosophy	The love of knowledge
Prime mover	Aristotle's ultimate cause
Rationalism	The source of knowledge comes from reason
Reason	Using logical steps to reach a conclusion
Teleology	The end goal of something



*This is the first unit in **Philosophy**. Plato and Aristotle are named as the founding fathers of philosophy. Aristotle was Plato's student but came to radically different conclusions about the source and method of knowledge and truth*

A02 Comparisons....

- The Prime Mover and Form of Good
- Rationalism and empiricism
- What is truth about the world?

Plato's Dualism			Aristotle's Monism			Key Vocabulary	
1	The body's traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes and is temporal Physical and made up of parts 	1	The soul?	Is the 'form of the body', meaning its essence	Body	Physical self
2	The soul's traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immutable and eternal Non physical and simple 	2	The body?	It cannot be separated from its form. The soul gives purpose to the body and its change.	Category Error	When we talk about something in the wrong way.
3	Analogy?	The soul is like a chariot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reason = driver Spirit = white horse Desire = black horse 	3	Hierarchy?	All living beings have souls. Some are vegetative, appetitive and humans also have a rational part	Consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logical privacy to thoughts Subjective and first hand only Qualia – how an experience feels to the person feeling it Non-spatial
4	Aims?	The soul is imprisoned in the body and the body causes conflict. The soul should leave the body to know the Forms	4	Aims?	The soul creates the body's telos of <i>eudaimonia</i> (flourishing). There is no life after death as the two cannot separate	Dualism	There are two aspects to humans
Descartes' Dualism			Materialism			Ensouled	A body with a separate soul
1	Method?	What can we doubt? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can I trust my senses? Do I know I'm not dreaming? Is there an evil demon manipulating my experience? 	1	Dawkins:	Soul is a myth designed to help our evolutionary survival. There is no separate thing that is our personality and calling our intellect 'soul' creates the delusion that it is separate to the body	Immaterial	Matterless
2	Conclusion?	I only <i>know</i> that I exist; that's it. <i>Cognito ergo sum</i> means 'I think therefore I am,' ...this is all I know for certain.	2	Ryle	<u>Dogma of the Ghost in the Machine</u> – machines do not have souls and neither do bodies. <u>Category Errors</u> We walk around Oxford and ask to see the 'university' after seeing its buildings; this is an error of language. Looking for a 'soul' in the functions of the body is also erroneous	Materialism	Humans are made up only of physical matter
3	Body and soul are different because...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The body is separate because we can doubt its existence, unlike the soul, Wax argument: the soul gives meaning to matter The mind is immaterial, the body is material. 	3	Blakmore	Consciousness is currently a mystery but will be shown to be physical by science one day.	Metaphysics	Study of knowledge needed before physics
			A02 Comparisons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dualism vs monism Category error vs distinct 			Mind/body problem	How can immaterial minds interact with material bodies?
						Monism	There is one aspect to a human
						Soul	The immaterial element of a creature
<i>What is human identity and is there a distinct and immaterial element to ourselves? This unit is the second Philosophy unit and links to the DCT Life After Death unit.</i>						Substance dualism	There are two aspects of humans: physical and mental.

Aquinas' Teleological Argument			Aquinas' Cosmological Arguments			Key Vocabulary	
1	The Fifth Way: Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By design (intention), all things aim for their purpose Most things do not know their own purpose as they lack intelligence to know this 	1	The First Way	The unmoved mover: things move and change and something must have made this motion. Things go from potential to actual.	Analogy	Comparison between two similar things
2	Conclusions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an intelligent being that directs all natural things to their end This is God. God governs the world 	2	The Second Way	The uncaused causer: every effect has a cause.	A posteriori	Knowledge from experience
3	Analogy?	The archer guides an arrow to the bullseye and God guides natural bodies to their goal.	3	Third Way	Contingent beings rely on something else for their existence	A priori	Knowledge from reason
Paley's Teleological Argument			4	What does this show about God?	There cannot be infinite regression of motion, cause and contingency so there must be an unmoved mover, uncaused causer and necessary God	Contingent	Objects that rely on an external source/ cause to exist
1	Influences	Scientists (Isaac Newton) + Aquinas.	Hume's Challenges			Cosmology	Study of the universe and its causes
2	Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The world is regular e.g. seasons Purpose – eyes and birds' wings show design for a purpose 	1	Comparison to God?	Why would an infinite and immaterial God make a finite world?	Cosmological argument	Arguing that God exists based on causation (cause and effect)
3	Analogy?	A watch is designed to achieve its purpose but this cannot have come by chance. The world is even more complex than a watch and so must have a designer; God. Even if the watch is broken, we can still learn about the designer and recognise their skills.	2	Designers?	How can we disregard there being a team of designers, multiple designs of the world and a bad design for the world?	Empiricism	Learning from experience
			3	Perfect?	Even if the creation is perfect, we cannot be sure the designer is perfect	Evolution	Scientific theory that species have evolved over time by natural selection
			4	Fallacy of composition?	Cosmological arguments assume that we can explain the cause of all causes, because we can explain all causes	Fifth way	Aquinas' teleological argument
			5	Leap?	It is a leap of faith to go from there being causation to a first cause.	Logical fallacy	Incorrect logic and inferences
						Necessary	Opposite of contingent
						Teleological arguments	Arguing that God exists because of design
						Transcendent creator	God who designed and made the world.
						A02 Discussion/ Comparisons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A posteriori vs a priori arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cosmological vs teleological Scientific theories (Big Bang, evolution) 	

This philosophy unit aims to explore whether belief in God is rational and empirical. This unit contrasts with a priori arguments for God's existence and links to the philosophy unit, Nature of God.



Anselm's Ontological Arguments

1	Background	Lived 1033-1109 as a monk. He was the Archbishop of Canterbury
2	Book?	<i>Proslogion</i> . Anselm wrote it as a prayer
3	Starting point?	'The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' <i>Psalm 14:1</i> . This showed Anselm that atheists have an understanding of God when they deny existence.
4	God?	*'That than which nothing greater can be thought' Both theists and atheists agree on this

Formulations of the Ontological Argument

1	First Formulation:	Existence can be in the mind or in reality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By definition, God is the greatest possible being God* exists in everyone's minds, including atheists'. But it is greater to exist in reality than in the mind To be God*, God must exist in reality
2	Second Formulation	Some beings are contingent (we can imagine them not existing) and some beings are necessary (cannot not exist) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Necessary beings are better than contingent beings God* must be a necessary being God must exist
3	Quote	'...you cannot be conceived not to exist... it is so evident to a rational mind that you do exist in the highest degree of all.'

Gaunilo vs Anselm

1	Response ?	Wrote <i>On behalf of the Fool</i> challenging Anselm
2	Perfect Island	Imagine the greatest island possible... it exists in your mind. There is then no doubt the island exists as it is the greatest island, and existence in reality is greater This is logical fallacy!
3	Other points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of our ideas only exist in the mind We might have different definitions of God We know we exist but can conceive us not existing – why not the same for God
4	Anselm's reply	Gaunilo discussed a contingent and temporal island, God is necessary

Kant's Criticisms

1	Circular argument	Existence is part of being perfect. Having 3 angles makes something a triangle The triangle must exist to have 3 sides If God doesn't exist, God doesn't need to be perfect and exist
2	Existence is not a predicate	'Existence' is a different attribute than 'red' or 'good'. If I say something 'exists' I tell you nothing new about the object. Existence can't be shown a priori

Key Vocabulary

Analogy	Comparison between two similar things
A posteriori	Knowledge from experience
A priori	Knowledge from reason
Contingent	Objects that rely on an external source/ cause to exist
Deduction	Reaching a conclusion from logical deductions
Logical fallacy	Incorrect logic and inferences
Necessary	Opposite of contingent
Ontology	Study of the nature of existence
Ontological Argument	Arguing that God exists based on ontology
Predicate	Characteristic/attribute of something
Rationalism	Method of knowing by reason

This is the counterpart to the Philosophy unit on arguments from observation. This unit also links to the Nature of God unit.

A02 Discussion

- Compare a priori and a posteriori arguments
- Is existence a predicate?
- Necessary verses contingent existence and God.



The Problems of Evil

1	The problem	Evil causes suffering and evil is incompatible with God's attributes.
2	Logical problem	Epicurus: God's attributes are logically incompatible with evil. Either evil, benevolence or omnipotence must be wrong to resolve the inconsistent triad
3	Evidential problem	Rowe: the quality and quantity of evil in the world causes religious doubt.

Augustine's Theodicy

1	Original Perfection	God is perfect so made a perfect world. It lacked nothing
2	Privation	Evil is the absence of good. The world has lost some of its original divine goodness
3	Harmony	Angels and humans disobeyed God at the Fall and so harmony ended in the natural world – natural evil now occurs
4	Punishment	All humans are punished for Adam's sin because God is just
5	Grace	God sent Jesus out of love and to create to possibility of forgiveness and salvation
6	Freewill	God had to give us freewill as it is more loving, despite the evil that occurs with it.

Hick's reworking of Irenaean theodicy

1	Irenaean theodicy	Evil is an opportunity to grow from divine image to likeness. This is called 'soul-making' theodicy
2	Hick	Modern reworking of Irenaeus' theodicy
3	Epistemic distance	God intentionally hides from us to allow us to develop
4	Purpose	Evil in the world is instrumentally good as it causes soul-making
5	Freewill	Moral growth must be autonomous, not forced by God
6	Virtues	We only learn virtues like charity in suffering
7	Universal salvation	We all suffer and so are all saved and go to heaven. We will continue developing in heaven.

Key Vocabulary

Divine action	God controlling events in the world
Divine likeness	Irenaeus said we are created in God's image and develop to be his likeness
Dysteleological	Existence has no purpose
Freewill	Autonomous and free choices by the agent
Inconsistent triad	God's omnipotence and benevolence conflict with evil
Moral evil	Evil caused by human intention
Natural evil	Evil caused by natural events
Original perfection	God's creation was good and lacked nothing
Privatio boni	Absence of goodness (privation)
The Fall	Adam and Eve's disobedience of God
Theodicies	A theory to justify God's righteousness despite evil
Universal salvation	Everyone goes to heaven
Vale of soul making	A world with challenge that allows us to morally grow

A02 Discussion

Strengths and weaknesses of each theodicy	Comparing the evidential and logical problems
Does Augustine spare God the blame of evil?	Does Hick's soul-making justify the quality and quantity of evil?

This Philosophy unit explores challenges to God's existence. It pairs with the Religious Experience unit. You will also learn more about Augustine in DCT Human Nature and Hick in Pluralism units



Traits of Religious Experiences			Types of Religious Experience		Key Vocabulary	
1	William James	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passive: something acts upon the agent and the agent surrenders to this Ineffable – hard to describe Noetic – new information Transient – passes with time Further information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes are permanent The change makes a person better, calmer and kinder 	1	Conversion experience James: the divided/conflicted mind becomes focused on a new, religious goal. Conversion can be gradual or sudden. Example: St Paul (Acts 22:6-10)	Conversion experience	Produces a radical change in someone's belief system
2	Rudolph Otto	Numinous experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Mysterium: tremendum et fascinans.</i> Mysterious, terrifying and fascinating 	2	Mystical experience Absolute unity between the agent and divine. Ineffable, paradoxical and perennial (cross-cultural and underpinning all creation) Example: Teresa of Avila	Corporate experience	A group of people have a religious experience
3	Friedrich Schleiermacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essence of religiosity Self-authenticating Feeling of absolute dependence 	3	Corporate experience A group have the same religious experience. E.g. speaking in tongues or having a vision. Example: Toronto Blessing	Credulity	We usually believe what we experience
Richard Swinburne			Criticisms of Religious Experience		Divine Ground	Divinity underlies the physical world
1	Principle of Credulity	We generally trust our experience, and this applies to religious ones	1	Hume <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is more probable that the agent is wrong than a law of nature broken and falsified 	Illusion	Misinterpretation of sensory experience
2	Principle of Testimony	We generally trust people's accounts of events and this applies to religious ones.	2	Psychology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freud: religion is wish fulfilment and experiences are delusions. Feuerbach: God is the imagination of humanity 	Mystical experience	Extraordinary experience of the divine
3	Conditions	We may doubt someone if they have a reputation for lying, is a child or cannot interpret their experience properly	3	Physiology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dawkins: religious ideas have helped survival through evolution Hallucinatory drugs and conditions like epilepsy cause similar symptoms 	Numinous	Feelings of awe, worship and fascination from experiencing God
			4	Sociology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marx: Religion is the opium of the masses Mob mentality: people conform to the group and lose individuality 	Physiological	Study of the physical body and mental faculties
					Pragmatism	Philosophical movement that a theory must be true if it works in practice

This Philosophy unit pairs with the Problem of Evil unit, exploring the nature and challenges to the existence of God. It also links to DCT units, including Knowledge of God's existence, Life after death and pluralism units.



Omnipotence		
1	Issue	Can God create a rock too heavy to lift?
2	Descartes	Yes – God can do everything, including logically impossible things. God is not limited by logic and can perform miracles
3	Aquinas	God can only do what is logically possible. A square circle is meaningless
4	Vardy	God intentionally limits God's power to allow humans freewill.

Time		
1	God is eternal – Boethius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eternity is the 'simultaneous possession of boundless life'. We know this as different to temporal existence, as we live from moment to moment. God is infinitely present to himself and time has no meaning or influence on God.
2	God is eternal – Anselm	<p>Four Dimensionalist Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rejects the idea that the only time that exists is the present. Only humans experience time like this Time is a dimension, as is space God is present everywhere and <i>everywhen</i>. God is present at every moment of time, all the time.
3	God is everlasting – Swinburne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God engages with people in the Bible and so cannot be eternal as God changes. It is incoherent to suggest God is presently in the past, present and future. God is everlasting; there at the start of time and will be there until the end of time.

Omniscience		
1	Divine knowledge and temporal existence	<p><u>Can God know the future that hasn't happened yet?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geach: God is like the grand master of chess. Novices (humans) can make some moves but ultimately, the master is in control Schleiermacher: God knows us like a best friend and can accurately predict our future.
2	Divine knowledge and freewill	<p><u>If God knows the future, are my choices free or necessary?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boethius: God has knowledge of the future as his present. God knows our future choices as our future choice, hence we are free Anselm: God has time as a dimension, not a progression. The future changes for us but not God. We are still free

Benevolence		
1	Issue	Can God punish us and allow evil if benevolent?
2	Euthyphro Dilemma	<p>Does God command what is good because it is good, or does God's command make it good?</p> <p>The first separates goodness from God and the second allows arbitrary goodness</p>
3	Covenant	God formed the covenant out of love... does it exclude some people unfairly?

Key Vocabulary	
Attribute	Quality or descriptor
Arbitrary	Random
Benevolence	All-loving
Covenant	Legal and divine promise between God and Abraham
Divine fore-knowledge	God knows what will happen before it does
Eternity	Separate to time and timeless
Everlasting	Within time, but spanning from beginning to end
Four dimensionalist	God is everywhere, <i>everywhen</i>
Freewill	The agent is autonomous
Immutable	Changeless; implies perfect
Just	Fair; implies right and wrong
Omnipotence	All-powerful
Omniscience	All-knowing
Self-imposed limitation	God intentionally restricts God's power to allow human freedom
Temporal existence	Subject to time, change and decay



This Philosophy unit reinforces discussion from arguments for the existence of God. Remember that Plato and Aristotle also explored these issues with the Form of Good and Prime Mover.

A02 Discussion

- If God is 'that than which nothing greater can be thought'. which answer for the attributes fits this best?
- How far is this a game of language rather than a discussion around ontology?

The *via negativa*

1	Pseudo-Dionysius	God is beyond assertion. Any attempt anthropomorphises God. Negative language preserves the otherness of God.
2	Maimonides	The only positive statement we can make is 'God exists'.
3	Examples	God is different to humans: invisible, immortal, timeless.
4	Strengths	Prevents anthropomorphism and links to ineffable religious experience

If God is beyond everything we experience and know, how can we be sure that the words we use to discuss God are meaningful? The question of meaning is different to accuracy: this unit is about whether we can say anything, right or wrong, about God. The Philosophy unit is the prelude to religious language in the 20th Century and also links to the Nature of God and Plato's Form of the Good

Key Vocabulary

Analogy	Comparison between two things to aid understanding
Anthropomorphic	Describing something in human terms
Apophatic	Speaking negatively about God. <i>Via negativa</i>
Attribution	Something is caused by something else
Cataphatic	Speaking positively about God. <i>Via positiva</i>
Cognitive	Statements that are either true or false.
Equivocal	The same word has multiple meanings, e.g. 'flat'
Non cognitive	Statements that are opinion based.
Proportion	Something is measured in relation to something else
Religious language	Language about divinity
Symbol	A word or image represents something or sheds light on further meaning
Tautology	Statements that are true by definition
Univocal	A word only has one meaning.
Via negativa	Speaking negatively about God. Discussing what God is not
Via positiva	Speaking positively about what God is

The *via positiva* – Aquinas

1	Types of language	Religious language is not univocal or equivocal: it is analogical
2	Analogy?	Words when applied to God have a partial resemblance to their normal use
3	Analogy of attribution?	'If the urine is good, the bull is good.' God created us, and so there is a causal relationship between us and God. Human attributes of love and wisdom are pale reflections of divine attributes.
4	Analogy of proportion?	Qualities are relative to the object. A dog is as loyal as a dog can be, a human as loyal as a human can be and we infer that God is loyal is a greater sense. (Hick's example)
5	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids anthropomorphism and apophatic talk It allows learning and discussion through modes like parables

Symbolic Language - Tillich

1	Why?	We cannot speak literally about God because our language comes from experience of the physical world, but symbolic language can point beyond the physical
2	Sign or symbol?	Signs show information Symbols participate in that to which they point and have deeper meaning
3	How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We know God is the 'Ground of Being' – source of everything Symbols aren't arbitrary – they express subconscious belief Symbols have a limited lifespan and change in meaning over time Symbols unlock 'hidden depths of our own being' and culture.
4	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserves transcendence and mystery Recognises the contribution language has to our identity and understanding of the world.



Verification Principle			Wittgenstein's Language Games			Key Vocabulary			
1	Who?	A J Ayer and Logical Positivists: influenced by empiricism	1	The Problem	Philosophical issues arise when people use language out of context. Words don not have a fixed meaning and people make mistakes when they try to fix language.	Anti-realism	Theories should never be regarded as true		
2	1. Analytic statements	These tautological statements are meaningful as they are known a priori. E.g. a triangle has 3 sides				Blik	A basic, unfalsifiable belief		
3	2. Synthetic statements	These empirical statements are meaningful as they can be proven right by sense experience. E.g. I own a Porsche.				Cognitive	Statements that are true or false		
4	Meaningless	Opinion, history, ethics and metaphysics are neither 1. nor 2. so meaningless	2	Language Games	We all play many language games and our words have meaning when we know the rules and recognise meaning is contextual. E.g. in chess we discuss the movements of the 'King' but only when we play.	Falsification	Providing evidence to determine something is false		
5	Hick's criticism	Hick disagreed as he said we will be able to verify religious language in Heaven!				Form of life	Communities of language		
						Language games	Wittgenstein's theory that all language is contextual		
The Falsification Symposium			3	Forms of Life	Games are communities that we share with others – language is a community	Logical positivism	Philosophical movement claiming assertions must be empirically testable to be meaningful		
1	Popper	Scientific method is based on disproving a theory – this makes theory meaningful				4	Religious language	Non cognitive	Statements that are opinion
2	Flew	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Religious believers refuse to acknowledge evidence that falsifies their belief e.g. evil. This makes their language meaningless. Religion dies a death of ' a thousand qualifications'Used John Wisdom's example of the invisible gardener						Verification	Statements are only meaningful is their can be verified by the senses
3	R. M. Hare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Flew is wrong to apply scientific principle to religious languageWe have 'blik's that are reasonable but cannot be testedExample: lunatic and the dons	5	Conclusion	Religious language is non-cognitive and meaningful for those in the game	Tautology	A phrase that is true by definition		
4	Basil Mitchell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partial agreement with FlewThere is evidence that counts against religious belief but the believer does not allow it to decisively disprove God out of faithExample: the resistance fighter							



This philosophy unit is the second part of the religious language unit. Note how arguments that God is too complex to understand have been remodelled in the context of science and rigour of empiricism. Is religious language a different type of language to other forms and does that make it more or less meaningful? Remember we discuss meaning, not accuracy.