

Year 8 Theology and Philosophy

Our intent is to engage, inspire, challenge and encourage our students, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to attempt to formulate answers to life's 'Ultimate Questions'. Theology and Philosophy enables students to engage in a systematic inquiry into deep and often searching questions about their own existence and purpose, faiths and beliefs, as well as appraise the beliefs, faiths and world views of others regarding pertinent contemporary philosophical and moral issues.

In Year 8, a large concentration of the curriculum deals with deepening understanding of the fundamental theological insights encountered and taught within the two monotheistic Abrahamic religions of Judaism and Christianity that were taught in Year 7. Links and contrasts will be made between the beliefs, practices and value systems of these two monotheistic Abrahamic religions building upon what was studied at fundamental theological belief level in Year 7. In the final term, students will begin an introduction to philosophy and delve into classical arguments for the existence of God, and the problem of evil and suffering. These philosophical insights also are contrasted and evaluated alongside humanist/atheist world views. This will act as a bridge into Year 9 Philosophy. The Theology and Philosophy curriculum develops responsibility and respect for all aspects of diversity, whether it be social, cultural or religious/non-religious, and prepares students well for life in contemporary British society.

All philosophical and theological learning is grouped in 3 units:

- Jewish Practices (A people living the ancient covenant)
- Christian Practices (A people of the new covenant)
- Metaphysics of God and the Turin Shroud Investigation (Introduction to Philosophy)

Year 8 learning themes are focused on building up subject-specific knowledge required for Key Stage 4 and beyond, deepening and extending the knowledge acquired in previous Key Stages as well as empowering those students who might have gaps in their knowledge. Key Questions are based on believing, expressing, and living.

Methods of deepening and securing knowledge:	
Theology and Philosophy aims to use low-stake quizzing, various means of feedback, collaboration, and student-centred resources to close gaps that our students have from previous Key Stages and to further enrich knowledge.	
Retrieval Practice	Retrieval practice is evident through starter and plenary tasks to link prior learning and current learning, as well as in retrieval knowledge organisers by way of examination preparation.
Elaboration	Table-Team challenges allow for incremental levels of knowledge to be secured and encourage enthusiastic, collaborative learners.
Language for Learning	Subject-specific vocabulary is monitored through 'Word Decoding' etymology/morphology exercises, embedding literacy and reading into every learning theme, building opportunities for extended writing and enabling students to fully explore complex theological and philosophical systems and ideas that evolve from them. Reading independent learning with associated tasks.
Concrete Examples	Concrete examples in the form of 'Language for Learning Reading Independent Learning' extend and deepen knowledge acquired within the classroom.
"Becoming the Examiner"	Post-examination exercises enable students to review their examination papers alongside sample answers and mark schemes in order to improve their examination script in green ink; and students are aware that, even if top marks have been awarded, there is always room for a furthering of knowledge.

	Autumn term 1	Autumn term 2	Spring term 1	Spring term 2	Summer term 1	Summer term 2
Topic(s)	<p>Jewish Practice: A People Living the Ancient Covenant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The nature and purpose of Jewish food laws - The nature and purpose of prayer - The nature, features, and importance of Jewish birth ceremonies - The nature and importance of Shema and Amidah 	<p>Jewish Practice: A People Living the Ancient Covenant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of marriage - The importance of Bar-Mitzvah and Bat-Mitzvah - Life after death: mourning ceremonies <p>Retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge organiser 	<p>Christian Practice: A People of the New Covenant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Prayerful People: The “Our Father” and other forms of prayer - Ritual, sign, and <i>Sacramentum</i>: Christian initiation - The sacrament of Holy Baptism and the cleansing of Original Sin (which restores eternal life to mankind) - Comparing infant and believers’ Baptism ceremonies 	<p>Christian Practice: A People of the New Covenant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sacrament of confirmation and its link to infant Baptism - Origins of the Holy Eucharist - εὐχαριστία (the Seder Meal and the Last Supper) - The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in Catholicism today and the Doctrine of Transubstantiation <p>Retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge organiser 	<p>Metaphysics of God, I: Introduction to Philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to Metaphysics of God: Theism (Θεός), Atheism (α-Θεός), Agnosticism (α-γνώσις), proof and evidence - Cartesian ‘Trademark’ argument for God, and Humanist/ Atheist responses from Hume, Freud, Durkheim, and Marx - Kalam argument of Islamic philosopher Imam al-Ghazali - The design arguments for the existence of God 	<p>Metaphysics of God, I: Introduction to Philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do miracles prove God’s Existence? - The problem of evil and suffering and related Theodicies justifying God (<i>theos</i> - Θεός; <i>dikē</i> - δίκη) - The Turin Shroud investigation: Is it the Shroud of the Holy Sepulchre? <p>Retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge organiser
Assessment	- Mid-unit mini exam	- End-of-unit exam	- Mid-unit mini exam	- End-of-unit exam	- Mid-unit quiz	- End-of-unit quiz
CEIAG (<i>Careers that are linked to that topic</i>)	Teaching Professions, Medical and Caring Professions, Law and the Police Service, Community Liaison, Welfare and Social Work, Civil Service and Ministry of Defence, Journalism, Recruitment, Counselling					

Independent Learning:

Independent learning is integral to learning and it is planned to be challenging and relevant to each programme of study, with tasks used for a variety of purposes including consolidating learning, preparation for a following class, deepening the knowledge gained in learning themes, and preparation for examinations (using specific retrieval knowledge organisers). Independent learning is shared and discussed in Table Teams in the deadline lesson, and relevant links are made to prior and future learning. Independent learning receives generous time in verbal feedback from both Table Teams and teaching staff along with strategies for improvement. Each half term, Year 8 students receive a 'language for learning reading Independent Learning' that covers themes in human equality ranging from racial segregation in the USA, anti-Apartheid in South Africa, and anti-Semitism and the struggle against hatred. It is crucial that independent learning is completed so that students can exhibit their knowledge and understanding as fully as possible to peers and teaching staff.