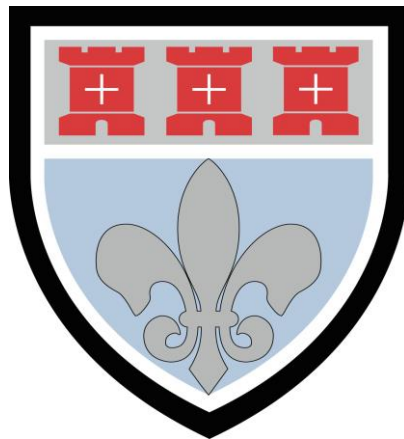


St Mary's - Religious Education Department



A Level Religious Studies: Edexcel

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion (4)

Name: _____

Year group: 13 Teacher _____

Overview of Paper 1:

In this paper, you will explore some of the main contemporary philosophical issues and questions about religion, such as belief in God or the conviction that life has both meaning and purpose. It provides a relevant and challenging context for exploring the particular beliefs, values and practices that characterise religious communities. In turn, the paper provides a sound basis for understanding and reflecting on the contemporary influence of religion, the views of those who do not share a religious belief and the impact of these factors on people's lives. You will be engaging with arguments and debates on religious and non-religious views of life, which focus on some key areas of controversy that shape modern views of the world, such as the problem of evil and suffering. You will extend your understanding through engagement in debates on issues such as the value of evidence based on accounts of religious experience. You will also analyse and evaluate particular viewpoints of thinkers who have contributed to these debates.

Throughout the course you will be practising exam style questions to help you develop your skills in preparation for your A Level examination at the end of Year 13.

Lesson number:	Topic being studied:	Page number:
0	Guide on A Level questions	3 - 4
0	Key words	5
1	What is an analogy and how can it help us to understand God?	6 - 9
2	The Via Negativa	10 - 12
3	Myths and Symbols	13 - 17
4	The Verification Principle	18 - 21
5	Evaluation of the Verification Principle	22 - 23
	Exam style questions to practise (without a Section B style question)	24 - 30
6	The Falsification Principle	31 - 33
7	Language Games	34 - 37
	Model answers	38
	Revision notes to be completed	39 - 45

Please note the End of Paper 1 Assessment will be provided on a separate sheet

Types of Questions at A Level (there are four questions to answer at A Level):

Section A1

Q1 is worth **8 marks** and will ask you to **explore**. The question wants you to show specific knowledge and understanding of the topic being asked about. You are required to demonstrate understanding by investigating different reasons, concepts and ideas. **Full marks are given for showing a wide range of knowledge, using key terms throughout correctly, a broad range of ideas are looked at and key religious beliefs and ideas are developed to show the depth of knowledge.**

Examples:

(A1) Explore key ideas about Language Games (8)

(A1) Explore the strengths and weaknesses of the Verification Principle (8)

Section A2

Q2 is worth **12 marks**. They are open-response "**Assess**" questions. The marks are allocated as **A01 is worth 3 marks and A02 is worth 9 marks**. The A02 marks are divided between analysis and evaluation. This style of question requires you to move beyond explanation of a concept and demonstrate the A02 skills of evaluation and come to a conclusion about an issue, concept or argument.

Examples:

(A2) Assess the strengths of using symbols when speaking about God. (9)

(A3) Assess the strengths of the Falsification Principle. (9)

Section B - this involves a two part question.

Q3a is a **10 mark "Clarify" question where you are to identify key ideas and explain key concepts. (10 marks for A01)** You are provided with an extract from one of the four extracts from the anthology. For this question you are to demonstrate your understanding of the issue in the question.

Examples:

(B3a) Clarify the ideas shown in the passage about the Falsification Principle. (8)

(B3a) Clarify the ideas shown in the passage about the Verification Principle. (8)

Section B - second part of the question

Q3b is a **20 mark extended response which asks you to "analyse"**. This requires you to deconstruct information or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning in order to make judgements regarding their importance / relevance to the question context. **This question focuses more on A02. (5 marks for A01 and 15 marks for A02)** **These questions are linked to the topic asked in 3a.** You will be rewarded for finding relations or links to other areas of the specification, although this is not necessary to attain full marks. There are 5 A01 marks in order to reward you for information you use to underpin your analysis.

Examples:

(B3b) Analyse the implications for religious language from this passage. (20)

(b3b) Analyse the implications of Ayer's view that God dies a "death of a thousand qualifications". (20)

Section C

Q4 is a 30 mark extended response which asks you to "Evaluate". This requires you to deconstruct information or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning in order to make judgements regarding their importance / relevance to the question context. **This question focuses more on A02. (5 marks for A01 and 25 marks for A02)** You must be find relations or links to other areas of the specification, such as Ethics or Christianity. There are 5 A01 marks in order to reward you for information you use to underpin your analysis.

Examples:

(Q4) Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of models and qualifiers. (20)

(Q4) Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Via Negativa. (20)

KEY WORDS!

You will learn about the nineteen key words below in different lessons within this Chapter. These key words are very important and it is important that you learn these key words so that you can use them in your exam answers.

Analogy - an approach to religious Language that compares the normal use of a word to its religious use. To say God is good means a similar thing as saying John is good.

Analogy of Attribution - there is a causal relationship e.g. the bull is healthy so the urine is healthy (Aquinas' example)

Analogy of Proportion - refers to a quality a thing possesses in proportion to the kind of reality it possesses

Analytic statements - statements that are logical / fact

Anthropomorphism - conception of God as having form, personality or attributes of man

Anti-realism - a notion that either denies objective reality or that transcendent statements can be verified as true or false

Blik - Hare's term for a basic belief that it not altered despite empirical evidence

Cognitive - statements that are believed to contain meaningful objective and factual content

Falsification Principle - the philosophical theory that a statement is meaningless if there is no way that it can be disproved

Grammar - the field of linguistics that covers the rules governing the use of language

Models and qualifiers - a way of qualifying an attribute relating to God compared to a human

Myth - a story with a hidden truth.

Non-Cognitive - statements that can be interpreted in some way or another, as symbols, metaphors, ethical commands or non literal modes of expression

Symbol - something that represents and means something else. Often a symbol generates feelings.

Synthetic statements - statements that need to be verified with evidence

Syntax - the study of the principles and rules for constructing sentences

Tautology - a statement that can be confirmed or falsified based on observation. Tautologies are analytical propositions.

Verification - refers to the concepts of demonstrating the truth or falsity of a statement or fact using empirical evidence. Statements that cannot be assessed are meaningless.

Via Negativa - Speaking of God in negative terms. Saying what he is not rather than what he is. This is also known as the Apophatic way particularly in the Eastern Orthodox Church

Religious Language Lesson 1

Lesson Topic What is analogy and how can it help us to understand God?

Outcomes To understand how analogies may help us to express an understanding of God.

Key Terms

Analogy - an approach to religious language that compares the normal use of a word to its religious use. To say God is good means a similar thing as saying John is good.

Anthropomorphism - Conception of God as having the form, personality or attributes of man.

Via Negativa - Speaking of God in negative terms

Starter

What is it like?
Someone emails you asking what it is like to visit to visit the cinema.

How would you respond to this question? Use only analogies.

Main activity 1



We frequently use analogy in everyday speech to describe something that is unfamiliar to us by making a comparison with something that we already know.
"Her face was like thunder" seems odd when taken literally. However, it does communicate something to us about her anger.
Analogies are helpful to a point.
Religiously, they are the only option available given the difficulties of making univocal or equivocal statements about God.

What is a Univocal Term?

Univocal Term: A term that has only one meaning. That is, it signifies only one thought, and therefore corresponds to only one definition. Words mean the same thing even when applied in different contexts, for example, black shoes, black hair, black car. Such a term invariably has an equivalent import where it's used. E.g. the term "entomology" signifies the study of insects.
In terms of religious language, this could mean that when we say 'God is good' we have exactly the same meaning of 'goodness' as when we say 'man is good'. William Alston argues that there are some

concepts that can be applied univocally to God and to human beings, but he rejects a completely univocal solution.

What is an Equivocal Term?

Equivocal Term: A term that has a variety of different meanings. An associate equivocal term has completely different intentions once it's used. For instance, the term "Chihuahua" will signify (a) a breed of dog; (b) a state of Mexico.

The term 'bat' could also be seen as an equivocal term. You could be talking about a 'cricket bat' or a 'flying bat' (the animal).

The words 'good' and 'jolly' can mean different things to different people.

With regards to religious language, when God is described as good, this is not in the same way that a dog or a man is good. God's goodness is different to man's goodness.

Tasks

- (1) Explain the word analogy and provide an example
- (2) Define univocal and equivocal
- (3) Write a paragraph explaining the difficulties of suggesting that language used to describe God is univocal or equivocal.

Review 1	Create two sculptures, one for equivocal and one for univocal.
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Main Activity 2	<p>Aquinas and Analogies</p> <p><u>The use of analogy, symbol and myth to describe God</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Something that we use in everyday talk. An analogy is describing unfamiliar things to us using things we are familiar with. ✓ It is also language used to inspire a sense of the meaning intended, rather than being used with a literal intention. ✓ Religiously, analogies are the only option available given the difficulties of making univocal and equivocal statements about God. <p><i>"It seems that no word can be used literally of God." (Aquinas, Summa Theologica)</i></p> <p>Aquinas: 1) R.L. is meaningful, 2) rejected the approach of the Via Negativa (explaining what God isn't), because it did not say enough about what God is.</p> <p>He argued that we can never speak about God without using everyday language, because that's all we have.</p> <p>We are imperfect beings using imperfect language to describe a perfect God, but that's all we have, so we have to do that.</p> <p>As well as the Equivocal and Univocal language, Aquinas believed there was also Analogical language. E.g. Emily is good, God is good. The use of language in one context is understood – it points to the meaning in the other context.</p> <p>Aquinas argued that univocal lang not applied to God because it limits him, and he isn't limited.</p> <p>Argued against equivocal lang as its not good because it communicates nothing about God.</p>
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Aquinas distinguished between two different types of analogical language:

Analogy of Attribution: we ascribe a quality to one thing because it is caused by another
e.g. human wisdom is a reflection of divine wisdom.

Analogy of Proportion: we ascribe a quality to one thing because it points towards another thing which has that quality e.g. human love points beyond itself to divine love.

Assessment of Analogy:

- ⇒ Seems to show that R.L is not absurd and can actually give some understanding of God, it avoids anthropomorphism of God.
- ⇒ Scotus argues that analogy is too vague and leaves us unable to understand God and his actions.
- ⇒ Hick: the incarnation is the thing that allows us to make some statements about God, because Christ was on earth, who Christians say was God on earth.
- ⇒ However, if God is supposed to be different from humans it is difficult to see how words can be used in a way to compare him.
- ⇒ Does analogy tell us anything? – we cannot fully know what a word means for God. E.g. if we cannot know what God being Just means this suggests that 'God being just' is actually meaningless.
- ⇒ Aquinas rejects the literal usage of words. But Swinburne says that some words are univocally used for God. For example God is Good isn't meant as how humans are but its meant as God is Good but to a greater degree.

Task

Complete the overview about Aquinas and Religious Language using the notes you have been given.

Main activity 3

Evaluation of Aquinas' analogy

- (1) What criticisms can you find with Aquinas and using analogies?
- (2) Do you think the idea of analogies are good but not when speaking of God? Why?

Read these strengths and weaknesses of Aquinas and Religious Language

Ian Ramsey

He supports Aquinas's idea of using analogies in religious language. Ramsey argues that words like 'kind' and 'caring' cannot be used univocally or equivocally, so we have to qualify the model with words such as 'infinitely' or 'eternally'. By qualifying our terms, we can use analogies to express God.

This avoids difficulties of understanding Religious Language univocally or equivocally + via Negativa as we can say something positive about God's nature

Knowing what qualifier needed requires we can know & speak about God's nature directly

Criticisms

•Some argue that by using analogy we lose the meaning and purpose behind what we are trying to communicate - so perhaps it is meaningless as opposed to meaningful

•St. Paul argued that we cannot accurately express God - even through analogy - until we 'see' him
Says nothing about God's existence

- Avoids twin pitfalls of agnosticism and anthropomorphism
- Hick - make some statements about God but still preserve degree of mystery in JC theology
- Scotus - too vague and leaves us unable to understand God and his action

Plenary	<p>"Analogy is not much use when it comes to describing something nobody has ever seen"</p> <p>What arguments could you give which would support / not support the statement?</p>
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Homework	<p>Applying Aquinas' theory of religious language</p> <p>(1) Explain with an example, what Aquinas means by Analogy of attribution (2) Explain with an example, what Aquinas means by Analogy of Proportion (3) Complete the table below. Which is an Analogy of attribution and which is an Analogy of Proportion?</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #d1c4e9;"> <th style="width: 33%;">Phrase applied to God</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Ways the analogy is valid when phrase is applied to God</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Reason why the analogy shouldn't be used literally</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A shepherd</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A rock</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Love</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A personal being</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Phrase applied to God	Ways the analogy is valid when phrase is applied to God	Reason why the analogy shouldn't be used literally	A shepherd			A rock			Good			Love			A personal being		
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Lesson Topic	The Via Negativa
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Outcomes	To understand how some thinkers have solved the problem of speaking meaningfully about God by making negative statements about what God is not.
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Key Terms	Via Negativa - speaking of God in negative terms. Saying what he is not rather than what he is. This is also known as the Aphatic way particularly in the Eastern Orthodox Church.
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Starter	<p>What is it? Describe the list of objects you have been given using only negative statements. Your partner has to guess what it is. Use statements such as "it is not tall", "it is not green", "it does not have a tail"</p>
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Main activity 1	<p>What are the benefits of saying nothing?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) God is greater than anything we can comprehend - therefore statements about Him cannot be made accurately (2) Language applied to God is equivocal. Saying "God is good" and "John is good" are two very different things. We still do not know what God is. (3) Instead we say what God is not! (4) By making a number of negative statements we may arrive at a knowledge, albeit limited of what God is. <p>Task Summarise the information above in your own words</p>
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Main activity 2	<p>The Aphatic Way / Via Negativa The Via Negative is what Aquinas originally attacked with his use of analogy in religious language.</p> <p>Via Negativa suggests that people can only talk about God in negative terms. God is transcendent so you cannot say what God is. However you can clearly say what God is not; God is not a human being because God is transcendent. Equally Christians believe that God is good, SO for example they may not know exactly what they mean when they God is good, but they know for sure that God is not evil.</p> <p>The title Via Negativa reflects this approach to describing God. It literally means the negative way because God can literally only be describe in terms of what God is not. The idea of Via Negativa comes from the philosophy of Plotinus in the second century CE. Plotinus was at the centre of the movement that revived philosophical interest in Plato. In Plato the Form of the Good is linked with God. Because of this link God is seen as being completely separate and beyond the world, just as the Form of the Good is separate from other Forms.</p> <p>The key idea of people who support Via Negativa is that ultimately language cannot describe God. God is beyond human comprehension, totally ineffable. The problem is that language cannot tell people about God, because our knowledge of goodness is that of a human being. God's goodness is greater</p>
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than human concepts. If we talk about God being all-knowing we can debate what this means, but in the end we cannot know for certain what it means to be all knowing.

Pseudo-Dionysius (late 5th/ early 6th century) agreed that words limit our understanding of a transcendent God; he is so vastly different to what we know that human terms limit him. Pseudo-Dionysius suggested that if we talk about God being for example Good, we then have to say that God is not good, because we do not really know what it means to say that God is Good. The philosopher Brian Davies quoting Pseudo-Dionysius stated that:
"He [God] is beyond assertion since he is the perfect and unique cause of all things. He is beyond denial by virtue of his pre-eminently simple and absolute nature, free of every limitation and beyond every limitation."

Therefore, instead of saying what God is, Pseudo-Dionysius states that we should state what God is not (which is the words such as immortal, immutable and timeless are often used) in order to come closer to understanding God. Positive terms may be misleading, because they are rooted in our language.

Moses Maimonides as a Jewish Philosopher. He agreed with Pseudo-Dionysius, arguing that religious language is meaningful when used negatively. He used the example of a ship - by describing what a ship is not, we get closer to understanding what a ship is.
He argued that human beings can know that God exists but not know anything about God, because God is not like human beings. For example God does not feel emotions. He suggested that this way of talking about God is found in the Jewish scriptures where God is described as being 'I am who I am' he is beyond description

Brian Davies criticises this point, saying that by eliminating negatives we have no idea whether what remains is God or not.

Within Christianity the idea of a Via Negativa to talk about God has been very influential. Not only does it emphasise the transcendence and otherness of God: the language has been used by many mystics and people who have religious experiences to describe the ineffable nature of their experiences. Teresa of Avilla used this type of language in her description of religious experience.

Review 1

Using your whiteboard pen, on the whiteboards at the front of the classroom, describe God using the Via Negativa.

Main Activity 3

Strengths and weaknesses

Can you identify any strengths and weaknesses about using this process to speak about God?

Strengths of Via Negativa/Apophatic Way

It isn't misleading, whereas positive language may be

It avoids being too anthropomorphic (human-based) and focuses more on a transcendent God

It applies to every culture in every time, unlike symbols and analogies

It doesn't limit God, and allows for what William James calls the 'mystical approach'

It comes the closest to meeting the challenge of the falsification principle. (e.g. if we found God's body then it would falsify the statement that God is immortal)

Stiver has argued in support of the Via Negativa identifying the following characteristics:

- There is a move beyond words to denying them; this is not scepticism, but designed to lead to the truth and the experience of God.

Weaknesses of Via Negativa/Apophatic Way

- How can we describe what God isn't if we have no idea of what he is?

- How can we make judgements of something we haven't experienced?
- Maimonides's ship example has been criticised because it compares God to an inanimate object rooted in human understanding
- Negative statements aren't helpful or useful in describing things
- Antony Flew argues that the negatives amount to nothing - so we are told nothing of God. It could be argued that a definition of God that speaks only of negative attributes 'dies the death of a thousand qualification' (Flew)
- How do you know the God you are worshipping if you can only reliably say what he isn't?
- We understand people through actions - if we don't know what God is, how should we act?
- For religious believers, via negativa contradicts certain statements in holy scripture that describe God positively

Brian Davis criticised Maimonides by say that only saying what something is not gives no indication of what it actually is.

- How useful is it to say what God is not
- Can language of this negative nature be valuable?
- It is based on a contradiction in the sense that we do naturally speak the unspeakable even if it is in a negative way.
- Christianity is based on revelation, which reveals the divine nature, surely this militates against an Apophatic way.
- Does it really say nothing? Even in saying 'God is not this, God is not that' aren't we really asserting something?
- Used on its own, the Via Negativa way does not distinguish theism from atheism. To speak only negatively of God is to deny him altogether.
- If we never speak positively of God we will never get a clear picture of what he is.
- Believers would want to speak positively of God, not negatively.

Plenary	Draw and annotate a symbol for the Via Negativa
Homework	Write a two-page essay answering the following question: "Religious Language is meaningless" Do you agree? Evaluate with reasons for and against the statement with a justified conclusion. NB: This is not an exam style question but is an extended writing piece.

Lesson Topic Myths and Symbols

Outcomes To understand what a myth and a symbol is. To have evaluated their usefulness with regards to speaking about God.

Key Terms

Symbol - something that represents and means something else. Often a symbol generates feelings.

Myth - a story with a hidden truth

Models and qualifiers - Way of qualifying an attribute relating to God compared to a human

Cognitive - Statements that are believed to contain meaningful objective and factual content

Non-Cognitive - Statements that can be interpreted in some way or another, as symbols, metaphors, ethical commands or non-literal modes of expression.

Starter

Let's get thinking about symbols

Name some symbols.

What do they represent and who uses them?

Are they helpful to people and in what way?

Main activity 1

Read the following information

Religious language is symbolic & communicates most significant beliefs as it opens up new levels of reality e.g. flag

- Symbol expresses that beyond rational recognition.
- Only non-symbolic statement that can be made about God is that 'God is the ground of being' - which can only be known through symbols
- Symbols also cognitive statements 'a symbol participates in that to which it points' we can learn something about God but our words are symbolic rather than literal
- Views symbols as having both positive & negative aspects - can't adequately describe God their meaning is always partially negated by that to which they point + by pointing to God it's a credible alternative to analogy and can transcend knowledge of him
- The Bible makes use of symbol e.g. God as rock, shepherd etc.

Tasks

- (1) Create a detailed spider diagram about the information above
- (2) Explore the key ideas of symbols used in religious language (8)



PAUL TILLICH

20TH Century philosopher

Argues that religious language is symbolic. By this he means religious symbols can communicate the most important beliefs and values of human beings. Symbols communicate something which is often difficult to put into words. The meaning of symbols derive from the culture in which they originate. Non-religious symbols communicate in the same way.

God in Tillich's understanding was defined as the "ground of being". For Tillich God is the basis of all that exists and also the meaning behind all that exists. For this reason, Tillich argues that the ground of being must be the ultimate concern of people; material possessions and ideas cannot replace God.

The ground of being cannot be understood or known in a personal way but is known through symbols.

Tillich suggested that just as the meaning of a symbol originates in a particular society, it can also lose its meaning in a society. He argued that you cannot destroy a symbol; this may be seen clearly in the efforts of dictators to destroy religious symbols.

However, symbols do lose their meaning or they can be reinterpreted and come to mean something different. The Hindu symbol of the swastika is normally associated with Nazis rather than Hindu beliefs.

Tillich uses the example of the Virgin birth. He suggested that it showed the purity of Mary from sin, but for Protestants it had lost its meaning.

Problem – Symbols can interpret in different ways by different ages, groups. (Adam and Eve)

Tillich suggests that symbols take part in the thing they point to. By this he means the symbol somehow represents the event and gives access to a deeper level of understanding of the event. Tillich suggested that one way to understand this is to think of music which can communicate with people on a different level compared to words. Music can be a form of expression; it can capture the mood of the moment as well as communicating feelings and beliefs.

How can a symbol participate in something? (Problems with symbols)

- ✓ Some have suggested that it is not clear what Tillich means.
- ✓ Many Christians do not think language is symbolic.
- ✓ Words can have powerful meaning but not be symbolic.
- ✓ Some Christians take religious stories to be literal and so they are more than symbols.
- ✓ Too much interpretation is allowed with this.
- ✓ Christians argue that stories are true as well as communicating beliefs in a symbolic way.

Read the essential information on myths and religious language and answer the questions. Remember to highlight information as you read.

A Myth is a story which communicates the values or ultimate beliefs of a culture of society such as the stories of King Arthur and the round table.

The word myth is used in a variety of ways. For some people, a myth indicates that a story is fictional or untrue, the type of story we tell to children. However, the religious thinking of myths is more significant than the idea of a fictional story. For religious people, a myth communicates a particular worldview - the set of beliefs and values a person or group have about the world. This world view will cover a particular group's response to the ultimate questions about life, death, goodness and evil.

The importance of myths is that they communicate truths - the values of a society. There are myths found in most cultures around the world.

There are many different myths. Peter Vardy has observed that the same ideas and values are communicated in myths from all sorts of different cultures around the world. Creation myths, stories of virgin births and great floods are found in many cultures.

For Christians today, myths communicate the values of Christianity as well as the response of Christians to some of the ultimate questions in life and to God. Myths such as the Genesis creation stories communicate a deep and real awareness of God as Creator and of human beings' place in creation. Myths are important, as they preserve and hand on the cultural identity of a group in a story form. The fact that a myth is a form of a story makes it re-tellable and easier to communicate than for example, a philosophical theory.

Since myths communicate the identity, experience and values of a community, they are not concerned with the literal truth of the story. There is much debate among Christians today concerning the literal truth (or not) of the Genesis creation stories. The mythological nature of the story means that the values it communicates are what are really important. Whether a myth is literally true is an interesting question about the historical origins of the myth, but in some way overlooks the function of myths - to communicate values that preserve identity.

However, if a myth is just a made-up story then it does not communicate any truths about God. If on the other hand, a myth is the expression of values in story form then myths point to like symbols, beyond themselves to a different reality. In the case of religious myths, the myth may point to and reveal something about God, in like manner to a symbol.

During the 19th Century, work was carried out to try to remove the mythological elements and imagery with the aim of revealing the eternal truths. Rudolph Bultmann carried out such work on the New Testament. This was stopped as the significance of myths came to be seen as the fact that they communicate values and beliefs in story form. The truths re expressed through the story; they are not so clearly separated from the story.

Myth

Myths do not solve problems or questions, but they express an attitude in the presence of mystery. So, like religious experience they are not meant to be verifiable. Religious myth is non-cognitive and according to Macquarie, not meant to be rationalised.

It seeks to explore humanities relationship to God, and humanities place in the cosmos, human destiny, and the place of humankind and the universe in God's plan of salvation and judgment; it does not posit any cosmological truths.

The myth could be a story that is not true but has some other value for example Braithwaite argued that religious stories are inspirational to us, and they provide us with the motivation to lead a moral life.

Sarah Tyler

Sarah Tyler defines myth as a literary form describing otherworldly matters in this world's terms; myth is a linguistic method of interpreting ultimate reality. She also said that myths are vehicles for conveying complex religious truths in cosmic dimensions, in a manner that this world's descriptions could not convey.

Macquarie

Macquarie argues that we should not ignore the meaningfulness of myth. They answer not the how questions, but the why questions concerned with human existence. They give an insight into what man's relationship with God ought to be.

	<p>Bultmann Bultmann was the theologian who tackled the problem of how to make the New Testament relevant in the 20th century. Bultmann, in <i>Demythologising the New Testament</i>, argued for interpreting the New Testament in existentialist terms. He held that people today found it difficult to believe the stories of the NT. Influenced by Heidegger, he went on to include the resurrection and the miraculous stories in his classification of stories that need to be demythologized. The resurrection should be understood as a spiritual experience which left the disciples newly motivated to continue Jesus' work Bultmann was arguing that people focused on the myth rather than the real meaning behind it. The real meaning was in danger of becoming obsolete. At best, he argues that we should address religious truths in new methods that are more appropriate to our own age.</p> <p>Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The danger in too much interpretation is that the resurrection may be understood as myth and this is the risk believers have to face when facing the challenge of falsification. •The Verification Principle would argue, that if myths are the product of emotions then they are particularly meaningless and non-cognitive. •Fundamentalist conservatives reject outright Bultmann's work seeing the religious language contained in the Bible in a more univocal way. •A fundamental difficulty with interpreting religious stories as myths is that it undermines their status as true accounts of the events. •Alvin Plantinga argues that to claim that "God exists" is to make an existential assertion. It is not to talk symbolically of mythological of to adopt a certain attitude <p>ISSUES RAISED BY MYTHS</p> <p>1. What is a myth? If myths communicate the value system of a community, the myth that is strongest is then passed on. A problem is if there are competing myths that all claim to communicate the truth. There are no agreed criteria for judging which myth communicates the truth. Also, saying that something is a myth is identifying the story as being important. What actually a myth is something of great debate.</p> <p>2. How do myths communicate values and truths? Myths can change over time and so this can affect what they are communicating. For example, the Genesis creation story has been interpreted as humans being given power over the earth so they could "dominate" it. More recently, this has been taken to mean "stewardship". If the myth can change, can a myth really communicate a value that is an eternal truth?</p> <p>Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) What are myths? (2) How are myths related to religious language? (3) How do myths communicate truths about God? (4) Who is Rudolph Bultmann? (5) What are the possible problems with using myths to describe God?
Review 1	Using play-doh, create a sculpture to represent the use of symbols in religious language.
Main activity 3	<p>Group activity - read the information and complete the following task on A3 paper.</p> <p>Information RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE - MODELS AND QUALIFIERS Ian Ramsey suggests that words and titles applied to God function as "models". (Ramsey agrees with Aquinas) By this Ramsey meant that words tell us something about God, but not the whole story, just as models in everyday life help us to understand something. However, models by nature tend to be simpler than</p>

the original on which they are based. Ramsey said that models always need to be qualified. By this, Ramsey means that every model has limits and does not always communicate all of the depth of the original.

For example, the brain could be likened to a computer. (Hardware, software - information uploaded)
 Analogy can help us understand things like the brain.

Ramsey suggests that eventually a model can help a person gain real insight into what is being talked about. He called this "disclosure".

Ramsey applies models and qualifiers to religion to suggest that when we use language to describe God, the language functions as a "model". For example, "The Lord is a warrior" = a model. The "qualifier" is that the Lord is not a warrior as a human may be. Ramsey argues that using this people can come to understand more. The titles and images of God function as models that can eventually lead us to an understanding of God.



Give your own example of a model and qualifier

Do you think models and qualifiers are helpful when understanding language about God? (Religious Language)

What are the strengths of using models and qualifiers

What are the weaknesses of using models and qualifiers?

Exam question
 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of using myths to convey religious truths (12 marks)

Plenary	Create five quiz questions and answers on what you have learnt this lesson.
Homework	<p>(1) Divide your page into four with the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analogy - Via Negativa - Symbols - Myths <p>Read the information in this lesson / booklet and complete your table in detail</p>

Religious Language Lesson 4

Lesson Topic	The Verification Principle
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Outcomes	To be able to explain the Verification Principle
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Key Terms	<p>Verification - refers to the concepts of demonstrating the truth or falsity of a statement or fact using empirical evidence. Statements that cannot be assessed are meaningless.</p> <p>Tautology - a statements that can be confirmed or falsified based on observation. Tautologies are analytical propositions.</p>
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Main Activity 1

Read this information

The key role of "Religious language" is God-talk, that is, being able to talk about God in a meaningful and coherent manner. The problem arises when we consider "what can be said about God?"

The religious language debate is not concerned with whether or not God exists, or what God is like or why there is evil in the world. It is solely concerned with working out whether or not religious language means anything.

On the one side of the debate, you have the centuries old tradition of religious believers who believe that you can speak and write about God, because God is a reality.

On the other side, are the Logical Positivists and those that they influenced who claim that statements about God have no meaning because they do not relate to anything that is real.

Some philosophers have argued that religious statements such as "God exists", "God is love" and so on are neither true or false but meaningless. There is no point according to some thinkers, of even raising these questions because there is nothing to talk about. Philosophical discussion about meaning often identifies two different ways in which a word or phrase might mean something.

In the 1920s a group of philosophers that are known as the Vienna Circle (A. J. Ayer, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Paul Tillich) studied the use of the language and specifically religious language. They asked to what extent can truth and meaning be found in language. They are known as Logical Positivists. They concluded that a statement is true if it can be verified. They formed the Verification Principle.

They accepted two forms of verifiable language.

- (1) Analytic
- (2) Synthetic

Analytic is knowledge gained through logical reasoning e.g. All bachelors are married = wrong

Synthetic is knowledge that is proved true or false. This is verified through experience.
e.g. Songs of Praise is great!

The Verification Principle: If a statement is neither analytic nor empirically verifiable, it says nothing about reality and is therefore meaningless.

Task

Summarise this information in your own words

Main activity 2

Check your understanding of the Verification Principle.
Apply the Verification Principle to each of these statements.
Are they meaningful?

- Mr Allen's car is silver
- There is a small hobbit say under my fan that becomes invisible when anyone looks at it. It can move quicker than any human who tries to touch it and never makes a sound.
- All humans are mortal.
- There is life on other planets
- It is currently snowing at the South Pole

Stretch

For each statement decide whether they are cognitive or non-cognitive

Cognitive (Realist) language

- Factual statements
- Proved true or false via empirical evidence

Non-Cognitive (Anti-Realist) language

- Cannot be verified but nor can they be falsified
- Context dependent and can include symbols, myths, metaphors etc

Main activity 3

Read the following information and complete the task

Describe Ayer's distinction between strong and weak verification

Ayer also sets out two notions of verification, propositions can be either strongly or weakly verified. Strong verification is only possible 'if, its truth can be conclusively verified in experience' (LTL, p.18) The class of propositions which can be strongly verified is relatively small. For example, general propositions such as 'arsenic is poisonous' cannot be conclusively verified, since such general propositions are designed to cover an infinite number of cases. This seems to lead to propositions only being strongly verifiable are ones concerning our direct phenomenal experience. It also seems to rule out propositions about the remote past can never seem to be strongly verified.

Propositions can be weakly verified 'if it is possible for experience to render it possible' (LTL, p.18). The notion of weak verification allows a much larger number of propositions to be literally significant. We can see the proposition arsenic is poisonous can be verified as experience can lead us to conclude that it is highly probable and it also seems to allow through propositions about the remote past to be meaningful if we can conclude it was probable for them to have occurred. There are some observations that are relevant such as Columbus discovered America; this was affirmed at the time. We can read about it in books.

Review

Create a meaningless and a meaningful statement according to the Verification Principle

What is the Falsification Principle?

- Falsification is to prove something false
- A statement is verifiable if we know what empirical evidence would count against it or prove it wrong
- Anthony Flew in the 1950's applied the falsification principle to religious language
- Religious statements are meaningless
- There is nothing that can count against them

Information to highlightVERIFICATION

The Verification Principle states that sentences are only meaningful if we can explain in what circumstances they could be verified by sense experience:

"The criterion, which we use to test the genuineness of apparent propositions of fact, is the criterion of verifiability. We say that a sentence is factually significant to any given person, if, and only if, he knows how to verify the proposition which it purports to express - that is, if he knows what observations would lead him under certain conditions, to accept the proposition as being true, or reject it as being false."

Language, Truth and Logic

A. J. Ayer

FALSIFICATION

Anthony Flew suggested an alternative but related test of meaningfulness - Falsification. Based upon the thought of Karl Popper, a philosopher of science, he asserted that a statement is meaningful if you knew what observation would show the statement to be false. He cited the parable by **John Wisdom** of the two visitors to the forest clearing. One believes there is a secret gardener, the other does not. Both are able to explain their findings without denying their central conviction that the gardener does/does not exist. Therefore, he asks the question:

"Just how does what you call an invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener differ from an imaginary gardener or even from no gardener at all?"

"Theology and Falsification"

Anthony Flew

He expands this idea to ask the same sorts of questions about the meaningfulness of claiming that God exists when no experiences could possibly be imagined that would count against it:

"Now it often seems to people who are not religious as if there was no conceivable event or series of events the occurrence of which would be admitted by sophisticated religious people to be a sufficient reason for conceding 'There isn't a God after all' or 'God does not really love us then.' Someone tells us that God loves us as a father loves his children. We are reassured. But then we see a child dying of inoperable cancer of the throat. His earthly father is driven frantic in his efforts to help, but his Heavenly Father reveals no sign of concern. Some qualification is made - God's love is 'not a merely human love' or it is 'an inscrutable love,' perhaps and we realise that such sufferings are quite compatible with the truth of the assertion that 'God loves us as a father (but, of course...).' We are reassured again. But then perhaps we ask, what is this assurance of God's (appropriately qualified) love worth; what is this apparent guarantee really a guarantee against? Just what would have to happen...to entitle us to say 'God does not love us' or even 'God does not exist?'"

New Essays in Philosophical Theology

Anthony Flew

Again, the same question can be asked: what is the experiential difference between a God that loves, a God that does not love and no God at all? **Flew** claims that religious claims suffer "death by a thousand qualifications," because they can never state any conditions of falsifiability.

- The strong form of the verification principle excludes perfectly meaningful statements, such as, "All people spend part of their lives asleep"; "All cats are mortal"; "Hitler invaded France."

- Many religious statements are verifiable in the weak sense if we allow what John Hick (in a

book called Faith and Knowledge) called 'eschatological verification'. That is to say, they could be verified 'in the end' - when we die and confront whatever, if anything, comes after. He uses the example of the two travellers on the road to the celestial city. One of them believes that the road ends at the city, one that there is no celestial city. When they reach the end they both will find out which was right and which was wrong!

- The verification principle excludes nothing, since all experiences are allowable because of the criterion 'verifiable in principle':

"If I were God, I would be able to check the truth of my own existence."

Holding Fast to God

Keith Ward

- The Verification Principle does not satisfy its own criteria of meaningfulness. That is to say, is the verification Principle obviously meaningful, or meaningful by sense experience? If it is not the VP is itself, by its own definition, meaningless.

- Richard Swinburne points out that many statements are meaningful even though they are not falsifiable. He gives us two examples:

"Some of the toys which to all appearances stay in the toy cupboard while people are asleep and no one is watching, actually get up and dance in the middle of the night and then go back to the cupboard leaving no traces of their activity."

"A man can understand the statement 'once upon a time, before there were men or any other rational creatures, the earth was covered by sea', without his having any idea of what geological evidence would count for or against this proposition."

The Coherence of Theism

Richard Swinburne

- A statement can in principle be verifiable even if it cannot in principle be falsifiable. For example, the proposition that there are three consecutive sevens in the number π . This could never be falsified but could, if it were true, be verified. The same claim can be made regarding propositions about God (if we think again about Hick's parable of the travellers on the road to the Celestial City.)

- Basil Mitchell stated that religious statements were in principle falsifiable too but it just happened to be the case that religious believers have such a faith in God that almost any evidence that is supposed to falsify their belief can be explained in other ways. He compares this to someone who belongs to a revolutionary terrorist movement. The person has complete trust in the rebel leader. Sometimes the rebel leader seems to do things that are against the interests of the group but the person still trusts the rebel leader because he is told that "it is all part of a secret plan." If his belief in the rebel leader were strong enough this would be enough, sufficient. This does not mean that his trust is not.

Exam style question

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the verification principle (12 marks)

Plenary

Create a spider diagram overview in your book of the key thinkers we have studied today.

Homework

- (1) Read pages 13-22 of the Anthology
- (2) Highlight and annotate both
- (3) Write a 50 word summary of each

Date this is due for is _____

Religious Language Lesson 5

Lesson Topic	Evaluation of Verification Principle
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Outcomes	To be able to explain Ayer's response through direct and indirect verification. To be able to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Verification Principle. To be able to evaluate the Falsification Principle
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Key Terms	Analytic statements - statements that are logical / fact Synthetic statements - statements that need to be verified with evidence
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Starter 1	Sort the following statements into Analytic or Synthetic Statements a) The table in the kitchen is round b) All bachelors are unmarried c) Daises are flowers d) All men are arrogant e) The President is dishonest f) Triangles have three sides g) Two halves make a whole
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Main activity 1	<p>What is direct and indirect verification?</p> <p>When Ayer first published <i>Language Truth and Logic</i> it was criticised. To solve the problem with strong and weak verification, in his second edition of <i>Language, Truth and Logic</i> Ayer suggested two new criteria:</p> <p>Directly verifiable statements are ones that are verifiable by observation. For example, we can directly verify the statement 'post-boxes are red' by observing them.</p> <p>Indirectly verifiable statements are ones which are not directly verifiable. For example, scientists predicted and demonstrated the existence of black holes in space. However, they cannot be directly observed. But by measuring the speed of a gas cloud, there is indirect verifiable proof that it exists.</p> <p>NB: He changed his definition of the Principle of Verification from, "A statement is held to be literally meaningful if and only if it is analytically or empirically verifiable."</p> <p>Task Give your own example of a direct and indirect verifiable statement.</p> <p>Explain why Ayer would classify each one as such.</p> <p>Extension - Are you convinced that Ayer has made a strong improvement on his Verification theory?</p>
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Review 1	What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Verification Principle?	
	Strengths	Weaknesses

Copy and complete the table using the statements that have been provided on your tables.

Main activity 2	<p>You have been provided with an example essay on Ayer's Verification Principle.</p> <p>Tasks</p> <p>Must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Read and highlight the example essay (2) Bullet point all philosophers mentioned and explain whether or not they are in favour of the verification principle and why. <p>Should</p> <p>Make a note of any new information you have learnt from the essay</p> <p>Could</p> <p>Do you agree with the conclusion? Explain your point of view.</p>
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Plenary	How successful do you consider the Verification Principle is in showing religious language to be meaningless?
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Homework	<p>When you are at home, go to "YouTube logical positivism Radio 4". Listen and make notes on logical positivism (Verification Principle)</p> <p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heTZPZh2k0</p>
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A large rectangular area containing 25 horizontal lines, intended for writing or drawing.

A large rectangular area with a double-line border, containing 20 horizontal lines for writing.

A large rectangular area with a double-line border, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.

A large rectangular area with a double-line border, containing 20 horizontal lines for writing.

Result:

Student response:

Grade:

Teacher comment:

Student targets:

Lesson Topic The Falsification Principle

Outcomes To have developed an understanding of the Falsification Principle
To be able to evaluate its effect on Religious Language

Key Terms **Falsification Principle** - The philosophical theory that a statement is meaningless if there is no way that it can be disproved.
Blik - Hare's term for a basic belief that is not altered despite empirical evidence.

Starter If the gardener was invisible, intangible (and liked weeds), would we be able to tell the difference between the work of this gardener and there being no gardener at all?



Main activity 1 **Stu and Lou's Garden**

Lou: That gardener you hired hasn't shown up Stu.

Stu: He started work three days ago, my friend.

Lou: I haven't seen him, I don't believe you.

Stu: You won't see him, he's invisible.

Lou: I knew you would say that. That's why I had a trip wire installed. If he existed, he would have set it off by now.

Stu: You misunderstand the nature of the gardener, he is also intangible. We cannot detect him via our senses. Look how well the flowers are doing.

Lou: Maybe, but wouldn't they have grown anyway? In any case, the weeds are still there are there is no sign of the gardener.

Stu: As I said, there is a gardener who is invisible, intangible and not detectable by human senses. He comes to the garden secretly and works here.

Lou: well I'm guessing he likes weeds too.

How do we persuade Stu there is no gardner?

How does this dialogue link to reliquious language?

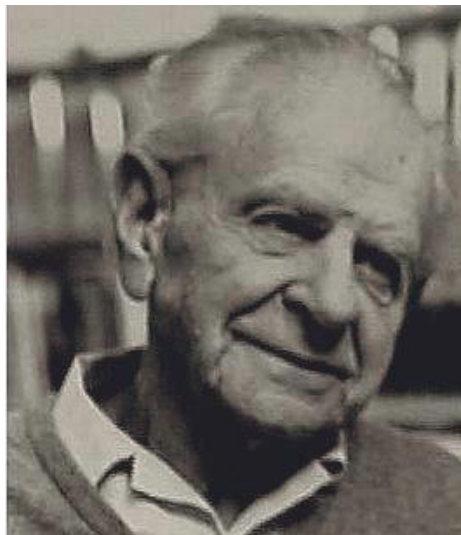
Read John Wisdom's Analogy of the Gardener

Two people return to their long neglected garden and find among the weeds a few of the old plants surprisingly vigorous. One says to the other, "It must be that a gardener has been coming and doing something about these plants." Upon inquiry, they find that no neighbour has ever seen anyone at work in their garden. The first man says to the other: "He must have worked while people slept." The other says, "No, someone would have heard him, and besides, anybody who cares about plants would have kept down those weeds." The first man says, "Look at the way these are arranged. There is purpose and a feeling for beauty here. I believe that someone comes, someone invisible to mortal eyes. I believe that the more carefully we look, the more we shall find confirmation of this." They examine the garden ever so carefully and sometimes they come on new things suggesting that a gardener comes, and sometimes they come on new things suggesting the contrary, even that a malicious person had been at work. Besides examining the garden carefully, they also study what happens to gardens left without attention. Each learns all the other learns about this and about the garden. Consequently after all this, one says: "I still believe a gardener comes," while the other says: "I don't," their different words reflect now no difference as to what they have found in the garden, no difference as to what they would find in the garden if they looked further, and no difference about how fast unattended gardens fall into disorder. At this stage, in this context, the gardener hypothesis has ceased to be experimental, the difference between one who accepts it and one who rejects it is not now a matter of the one expecting something the other does not expect. What is the difference between them? The one says, "A gardener comes unseen and unheard. He is manifested only in his works with which we are all familiar," the other says, "There is no gardener," and with this difference in what they say about the gardener goes a difference in how they feel towards the garden, in spite of the fact that neither expects anything of it which the other does not expect.

Create a three-caption comic strip that outlines the analogy.

Main activity 2

The Falsification has its origins in Karl Popper's philosophy of Science.



"In so far as a scientific statement speaks about reality, it must be falsifiable; and in so far as it is not falsifiable, it does not speak about reality."

Karl Popper

Antony Flew applies this principle to religious language:

- Flew believed that a statement is meaningful if it is known what **empirical evidence could count against it**
- e.g "All swans are white". This can be falsified if we were to see a black swan
- **Religious believers do not give the condition which will count against their claim.** Christians say "God is Good" no matter what disaster strikes.
- "It is a test" or " He moves in mysterious ways" are constant qualifications rendering religious statements worthless because they die the "death by a thousand qualifications."

Summarise the Falsification principle of Antony Flew in at least 60 words.

Review

On your post-it note:

1. What is the Falsification Principle?
2. How is it different from the Verification Principle?
3. What is a Blik?

Main Activity 3

Religious Language stories

John Wisdom's Parable of the Gardener

R.M. Hare - Parable of the Lunatic

Basil Mitchell - The Partisan and the Stranger

Richard Swinburne - Toys in the Cupboard

In groups you will be given one of the stories. You must do the following:

- Summarise it
- Explain its meaning
- Produce a presentation

Plenary

On a scale of 1 - 5 how do you feel about this topic?



Awful



Not very good



Good



Really good



Brilliant

On a post-it note:

- (1) Ask me a question...
- (2) Tell me what you are confident with...

Lesson Topic Language Games


Outcomes To understand and be able to explain clearly what is meant by the term Language Games

Key terms
Grammar - the field of linguistics that covers the rules governing the use of language
Syntax - the study of the principles and rules for constructing sentences
Anti-realism - a position that either denies objective reality or that transcendent statements can be verified as true or false

Starter **Taboo**
 In pairs, deal the cards. Each person must get their partner to say the word at the top of the card within 30 seconds.
 You **MUST NOT** use a Taboo word on the list or proper nouns (e.g. names)

Main activity 1 **Who was Wittgenstein?**

- Ludwig Wittgenstein (1886-1951) is often heralded as one of the greatest philosophers of the Twentieth Century.
- Born to a rich family, both of his parents were Jewish.
- He was the youngest of 8 children.
- 3 of his 4 brothers took their own lives, the other, despite losing an arm during WWI was a world famous pianist.
- He attend school with Hitler and it is believed that they did not get on.
- It has been suggested that Hitler's dislike of Jews was sparked by his conflict with Wittgenstein.
- He spent the majority of his life lecturing Philosophy at the University of Cambridge.
- He was a firm believer that there are something's in life that intelligible to us and other that are not and it is important to accept this.



Forms of Language
Cognitive (Realist) Language

- Factual Statements
- Prived true or false via empirical evidence

Non-Cognitive (Un- Realist) Language

- Cannot be verified but nor can they be falsified
- Context dependant

Analytic statements

- True by definition (tautology) and cannot be false
- A priori statements which are true because the wording of the statement verifies its truth e.g. "The widow was once married"

Synthetic statements

- A posteriori statements which can be verifiable or falsified through empirical evidence e.g. "It is currently snowing at the South Pole"
- These statements are considered meaningful as they can, in theory, half verifiable or falsifiable truths.

Group task

- (1) Do you know the rules / how to play chess?
- (2) How is language similar to a game of chess? Explain on A3 paper in at least 40 words.

Main activity 2

Further information

- Throughout his life he was heavily involved in the study of Language, how it changes over time, its usage and how we understand it.
- Wittgenstein also advocated that we should not talk about what we cannot understand, famously sayings: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must remain silent."
- In short, while things we may not be able to sense or conceptualize some things, they may still have truth or reality, but to conjecture on such points is ultimately meaningless.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1886-1951) saw language in terms of a game.

To use language is to participate in game where we know and accept the rules.

This is not to say language is trivial, rather the analogy of a game best highlights the nature of Language.

Read the following information

The meaning of words is determined by the Language Game of which the words are a part.

A word's meaning comes from the circumstance in which they are spoken.

Words perform a function in a language; they do not just signify an object.

Famous comparison was using Chess to show how language works. In Chess, the rules explain how all the pieces can move. To say that the queen can move in any direction and for any number of squares but the King can move in any direction but only one square at a time. Chess also speaks of "Castling". Wittgenstein claims that the rules of syntax and grammar of a language could function like that of Chess.

Syntax = rules that govern how words are arranged in a particular order to form a sentence.

Grammar - rules governing how words are used in a language.

If you use language in a way that does not follow the rules of language then you are speaking "nonsense".

"Language games" was a way of expressing the idea that language only makes sense in the context of a background of other words that all belong to the same "Language Game."

The Language Game is the reality of our understanding of the world. We cannot escape the language games. He is referring to the way language can be used. Language games are a way of expressing the idea that words have meaning only in the context of other words and the context in which they are uttered. Speaking is an activity according to Wittgenstein which he called "A form of life". He also says that words function rather like "tools" meaning that they work in the world and can change it. An implication of Language Games is that language is not private. Language games are used and shared by groups of people. They can evolve, adapt and change. Wittgenstein rejects the view that statements are only meaningful if they can be verified.

Religious terminology is a Language Game and as such the language of belief such as "God", "Omnipotence" etc. is understandable and meaningful to those people who take part in the religious belief Language Game. There is no reason to suppose that one Language Game is more preferable to another.

If a religious believer says, "God exists and is a reality in my life" this has meaning and significance to the person who says it. However, a person who does not share this belief will find it difficult if not impossible to understand.

Implication is that you need to be a member of a religious tradition to understand the meaning.

The problems with Verification when applied to religious statements is that they are applying a

	<p>Language Game that is more appropriate for discussing the physical world than believers' statements about God. Therefore, verificationism is of no use to help us understand religious belief.</p> <p>A strength of Language Games is that it gives believers a way to express the meaningfulness of religious language at the same time as explaining why talk of God's love or God's existence does not have the same significance or meaning for an atheist.</p> <p><u>CHALLENGES TO WITTGENSTEIN'S LANGUAGE GAMES</u></p> <p>Removes the link between claims made with language and empirical evidence. Does this lead religious beliefs to being understood in an antirealist manner? (Anti realism is the denial of fact) Some people would claim that their statements are true and refer to how things are.</p> <p>BUT it could be argued that religious belief is an activity. It involves sharing a way of life. Wittgenstein does capture what it is to be religious.</p> <p>Tasks to complete</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Read and highlight the information on Language games (2) Summarise the information in at least 60 words <p>Extension</p> <p>Do you think language is a tool that can change the world? Explain your view.</p>
Review	<p>Create a set of three quiz questions on Wittgenstein and Language Games</p> <p>Quiz at least three other people in the room.</p> <p>In pairs complete the following:</p> <p>One person describe God</p> <p>One person describe faith</p> <p>Were there any difficulties? What were they?</p>
Main activity 3	<p><u>Information</u></p> <p>In Religious Language is extremely colourful, it has many different forms and expresses multiple meanings encompassing a variety of situations such as worship, practice, dogma/doctrine, morality and expression. Religious language can be...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unique in the description of God e.g Omnipotent, omniscient - Description of religious belief such as The Second Coming or Salvation - Specifically religious terminology such as "grace" or "Sin" or even "Washed in the blood of the Lamb" - Everyday terminology given a religious meaning e.g. "God is...love" or "...good" <p>Religious Language is difficult because human language is not sufficient to describe a transcendent God above human comprehension. Humanity has attempted to use language with reference to God but this has caused problems and misunderstanding leaving some scholars to suggest talking of God is impossible and even meaningless.</p> <p><u>What do you think about this statement?</u></p> <p>"We should stop using language altogether on the topic of God"</p> <p>Discuss the statement and record your own thoughts.</p> <p><u>Review</u></p> <p>On a Post-it note record whether or not you believe that language creates limitations to our understanding</p>

Advantages of Language Games

- Highlights non-cognitive nature of religious language.
- Distinguishes it from other types of language
- Language games provide boundaries for correct use of language
- Believers can be initialised into the rules of language
- Defends language against criticism from other forms of life as truth is to be understood as relative and statements judged against their context, not on whether they are inherently or objectively true or false.

Weaknesses of Language Games

- Doesn't allow for believers claims to be empirically tested.
- Religious Language alienates those outside the game.
- Rules of game cannot be changed to allow outsiders in.

Exam style question

Assess how useful Wittgenstein's theory of Language is to a religious believer (!2 marks)

Plenary

What does Wittgenstein mean when he talks of language games?

Do we really need to rules to understand the meaning of language?

Can we have meaningful interactions with other people without language games?

BELOW ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF ANSWERS TO SOME EXAM QUESTIONS AND SOME EXAM TIPS FOR YOU:
SECTION B

A fine brash hypothesis may be killed by inches, the death by a thousand qualifications... It seems to people who are not religious as if there was no conceivable event the occurrence of which would be admitted by religious people to be a reason for conceding 'There wasn't a God after all.' Someone tells us that God loves us as a father loves his children. But then we see a child dying of inoperable cancer of the throat. His earthly father is driven frantic in his efforts to help, but his heavenly Father reveals no signs of concern. Some qualification is made - God's love is 'not merely human love'. But then we ask: Just what would have to happen to entitle us to say 'God does not exist'? A believer's statement has been so eroded that it is no longer an assertion at all.

3a) Clarify the ideas illustrated in this passage about falsification in religious language. You must refer to the passage in your response (10 marks)

AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.

Candidates may refer to the following.

- The believer in the passage qualifies his views because of the absence of evidence.
- The sceptic tries to build up a cumulative case.
- The sceptic sets up various tests and these do not produce evidence to support a belief in God.
- The process of qualification by the believer dissipates the original assertion about the existence God.
- The end result is that the original hypothesis becomes so qualified that it dies as a meaningful claim, 'the death of a thousand qualifications'.
- The argument of Flew is that the religious believer will not allow anything to falsify the religious claim.

(b) Analyse the implications for religious language from this passage.

AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.

Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.

- Religious language has many uses with an assumption that it communicates sense.
- However, religious language is so different from normal speech, such as speech used in discussion about God who is believed to be beyond space and time.
- Religious language has been criticised in many ways, including logical positivism and its allied view of language - falsification.

AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.

Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.

- Logical positivism argues there are tests to determine whether or not claims are meaningful, including support from experience. When this is applied to religious language there seems to be no empirical evidence and therefore the claim is said to be meaningless.
- A further test as to whether religious language is meaningful or meaningless is that it is not analytic and true by definition and therefore is meaningless.
- Hare argues that religious language is like a 'blik' because people believe in them and act on them even though they are not readily supported by evidence and therefore this type of claim, including religious language can be argued to be meaningful.
- Mitchell builds up a case for the use of evidence when claims may appear to be ambiguous and may therefore be meaningful.
- There can be criticisms of the falsification stance on the grounds of its reliance on empirical evidence, this weakens the falsification technique because these are based on the limitations of the verification principle.
- There are alternative models for assessing religious language claims, such as Wittgenstein's language games, and therefore these may limit the strength of falsification.

Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.

Year 13 Revision Notes

Religious Language

Lesson 1

Title of topic: Analogies

What is an Analogy?

What is the difference between univocal and equivocal?

What does Aquinas say about analogies? What are the two different types of analogy?

Strengths and weaknesses of analogy:

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What I still need to improve:

Religious Language

Lesson 2

Title of topic: The Via Negativa

What is the Via Negativa? What is it also known as?

What did Pseudo-Dionysius and Moses Maimonides say?

What are some strengths and weaknesses of this approach?

What does Brian Davies?

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

Lesson 3

Title of topic: Myths and Symbols

Outline what Tillich says about symbols?

What are some problems with symbols?

What is a Myth? What does Bultmann say about myths?

What does Ramsey say about Models and qualifiers?

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

What is the Verification Principle?

What is the difference between strong and weak verification?

What is the Falsification Principle? Who is linked to the approach?

Key terms:

How confident are you?

Had a look



Nearly there



Nailed it!



What do you need to improve?

What is direct and indirect verification?

What are some strengths of the verification principle?

What are some weaknesses of the verification principle?

Key terms:

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

What is the Analogy of the Gardener?

What is a Blik according to Hare?

What does the Partisan and the stranger show?

What does Swinburne mean through the "Toys in the cupboard"?

How confident are you?

Had a look Nearly there Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

Give a brief fact file about Wittgenstein

What does Wittgenstein mean by Language Games? What does he believe language and words are / do?

What are the challenges to Language Games?

What are the advantages of using Language Games?

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?
