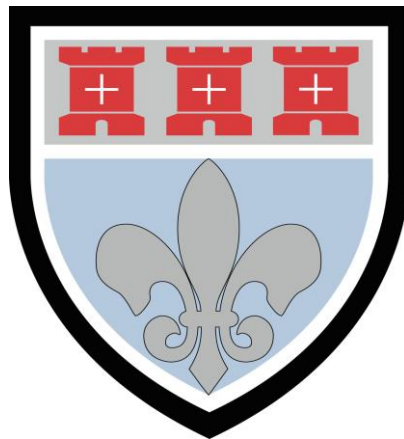


St Mary's - Religious Education Department



GCSE Religious Studies: Edexcel A

Area of Study 3: Philosophy and Ethics

*Chapter 1: Arguments for the existence of
God (Philosophy)*

Name: _____

Year group: 10

Class: 10

Overview of Chapter 1 - Philosophy:

In this chapter you will explore key different Catholic arguments to prove the existence of God. You will explore traditional Christian ideas on miracles, revelation, visions and religious experiences. You will also consider and learn about the philosophical arguments of design and cause and how they attempt to prove that God exists. With all the arguments we look at in this topic it is so important that we also learn about the strengths and weaknesses of these arguments. We will take time to explore atheist and humanist beliefs about the world. Finally you will look at evil and suffering in the world and ask how a loving and powerful God allows evil and suffering in the world and we will understand how Catholics respond to this very big question.

Throughout the course you will be practising exam style questions to help you develop your skills in preparation for your GCSE RE examinations at the end of Year 11.

Lesson number:	Topic being studied:	Page number:
0	<i>Guide on GCSE RE questions</i>	3
0	Chapter 2's key words	4
1	Revelation	5-7
2	Visions	8-11
3	Miracles	12-14
4	Religious Experience	15-19
5	The Design Argument	20-21
6	The Cosmological Argument	26-27
7	The Problem of Evil	28-30
8	Responding to the Problem of Evil	31-34
	Exam questions and model answers	35
	Revision sheets to complete - Lessons 1-8	36-43

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

Types of Questions at GCSE (there are four types of questions to answer at GCSE!):

The **(a) question** is a **3 mark** question. You will be asked to provide **three, one sentence answers to the question that you are asked**. You will receive one mark for each correct sentence. Therefore, in the (a) question you will need three correct sentences to gain three marks. The question will ask you to "outline" or "state". You may be asked to "outline" or "state" religious beliefs, features, events, characteristics or teachings.

Examples:

- (a) Outline **three** types of religious experience. (3)
- (a) State **three** examples of Jesus' miracles. (3)

The **(b) question** is worth **4 marks**. You will be required to give **two explained reasons in your answer**. The (b) question is assessing your skills in **knowledge** and **understanding** in relation to religious belief, practice or sources of authority. In your answer you must give one **reason** and then **explain** this reason fully and then give another **reason** and **explain** that reason fully. You will be awarded one mark for your reason and one mark for the explanation. Your explanations may include a quotation, a religious teaching or a piece of evidence.

Examples:

- (b) Explain **two** reasons why design argument proves the existence of God. (4).
- (b) Explain **two** different types of revelation. (4).

The **(c) question** is worth **5 marks**. You will be required to give **two explained reasons in your answer**. The (c) question is assessing your skills in **knowledge** and **understanding** in relation to religious belief, practice or sources of authority. In your answer you must give one **reason** and then **explain** this reason fully and then give another **reason** and **explain** that reason fully. You will be awarded one mark for your reason and one mark for the explanation. Your explanations may include a quotation, a religious teaching or a piece of evidence. **The fifth and final mark is awarded if you use a source of authority in your answer. Therefore, if you talk about the Bible, Church, Magisterium or another source of religious authority then you will be awarded an extra mark.**

Examples:

- (c) Explain **two** beliefs about God's nature which Catholics believe are shown in miracles. (5). *In your answer you must refer to sources of wisdom and authority.*

The **(d) question** is worth **12 marks**. Two (d) questions in your examinations at the end of Year 11 will be worth 15 marks as in these questions up to 3 marks are awarded for the quality of your Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPG). The (d) question will always begin with a **quotation**. You must **evaluate** this statement and consider the arguments **for** and **against** this stance. Ensure that for each point for or against you state whether or not it is a strong or weak point. You should follow the **bullet point instructions** below each statement and included these instructions in your answer. You should give **three explained points for each side of your argument**. You should write a brief **conclusion**.

Examples:

"The cosmological argument proves God's existence." (12).

Evaluate this statement, considering arguments for and against. In your response you should:

- Refer to Catholic teachings
- Refer to different Christian points of view
- Reach a justified conclusion

THIS SECTION OF THE PAPER FOCUSES ON CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

Chapter 3 - 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.

Natural Revelation - the revealing of God in the nature of the universe.

Special Revelation - the revealing of God in such things as Holy books, for example the Bible.

Spiritual - the non-material element of life, such as religion, feelings and values.

Awe - a sense of overwhelming wonder at the vastness, mystery or beauty of something.

Vision - something seen in a dream, trance or religious ecstasy, gives a religious message.

Apparitions - visual experiences that have an effect on the people around the vision.

Auditory vision - a vision which is only a voice with no images.

Nature miracle - a miracle involving a change in natural objects or forces.

Immaculate conception - the Catholic belief that God preserved Mary from original sin from the moment she was conceived.

Blessed Sacrament Procession - the consecrated host is carried through the streets in a special container - a monstrance.

Conversion - an experience that changes a person's life or religion.

Numinous - the feeling of the presence of something greater than you.

Transcendent - something going beyond human experience and outside the material world.

Design - when things are connected and seem to have a purpose.

Evolution - the idea that forms, species change over time and that humans have developed from single cell organisms.

Summa Theologica - a major book written by Thomas Aquinas.

Contingent - the fact that something does not have to exist because it depends on something else for its existence.

Big Bang - the scientific theory of the beginning of the universe.

Freewill - the idea that human beings are free to make their own choices.

Moral evil - actions done by humans which cause suffering.

Natural evil - things which cause suffering but have nothing to do with humans.

Omnipotent - the belief that God is all powerful.

Omniscient - the belief that God is all knowing.

Omnibenevolent - the belief that God is all good

Holiness - the state of being very moral and spiritual.

Psalms - a book of the Old Testament containing 150 sacred songs.

Theodicy - a philosophical explanation of the problem of evil.

Free Will - the idea that humans are free to make their own choices.

Lesson Topic	Revelation
Outcomes	To understand the distinction between natural and special revelation. To explain the significance of Jesus Christ as a culmination of God's revelation. To consider what the revelation of Jesus shows about God's nature.
Key Terms	Natural Revelation - the revealing of God in the nature of the universe. Special Revelation - the revealing of God in such things as Holy books, for example the Bible. Spiritual - the non-material element of life, such as religion, feelings and values. Awe - a sense of overwhelming wonder at the vastness, mystery or beauty of something.
Starter	How do you think Christians can find out what God is like? Record your ideas down in your exercise book.
Main Activity 1	<p>What are the differences between natural and special revelation?</p> <p>Natural Revelation - people see all sorts of clues all around them that God exists. A person may witness the beauty of a sunset, or have a sense of awe at the vastness of space. The complexity of the world for many points towards the existence of God, especially when we learn more about our DNA or the laws of science.</p> <p>Special Revelation - Christians believe that God has revealed more about His nature to humanity through special revelation or the Bible. The Old Testament reveals God's Laws and the New Testament the life and teachings of Jesus. Christians believe the Bible reveals the existence of God because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It is inspired by the Holy Spirit - so it essentially comes from God. ✓ The Church teaches that God speaks through both the Old and New Testament. ✓ The Bible contains the Laws of God. ✓ The Bible brings people closer to God through learning about what God wants. <p>Tasks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the information. 2. Explain Natural Revelation and include at least two examples. 3. Explain Special Revelation and at least two reasons why Christians believe the Bible reveals God.
Review	Create a play-doh sculpture that represents <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Special Revelation 2. Natural Revelation <p>Extension: on a post-it note explain which one you feel best reveals God's nature and why.</p>
Main Activity 2 Source of Wisdom and Authority	<p>Essential Information:</p> <p>The Catholic Church believes that God is ultimately revealed in His incarnation of Christ. Also the Catholic Church believes that there can be no further or fuller revelation of God than in Jesus and Jesus is God Himself made flesh.</p> <p>The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: " His will was that men should have access to the Father through Christ, the Word made flesh." CCC 51</p> <p>Jesus therefore allows humans to have full understanding of God. This is why the New Testament is so important in understanding the full nature of God.</p>

Complete the exam style question.

C) Explain what is meant by Jesus as the culmination of revelation (5) In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

Firstly Jesus is the culmination of God's revelation because

A quote to support this is

This means.....

Secondly Jesus is a culmination of God's revelation because.....

This means.....

Main Activity 3

How is God's nature revealed through Jesus?

For Catholics Jesus shows them what God is like: their God is Christ-like. God is beyond the universe and created the stars and cannot be fully understood by human beings; whereas because God is Jesus, people see God as:

- ✓ One who is love.
- ✓ One who forgives
- ✓ One who meets people where they are
- ✓ Jesus on the cross showed the ultimate act of self-giving love and forgiveness.

Task

Copy and complete this table in your exercise books.

Extension - Do you agree that God is fully revealed in Jesus? Why do you think people doubt this?

What Jesus reveals about God	Expand with an example.
Love	
Forgiveness	
Self-giving	
Communicates with people	

Extension Activity

"The Bible proves that God exists." (12)

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against. In your answer you should:

- ✓ *Refer to Catholic points of view.*
- ✓ *Refer to different Christian or non-religious points of view.*
- ✓ *Reach a justified conclusion.*

Plenary	Complete at least one of the following activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Explain at least one way in which Jesus is the culmination of <i>God's</i> revelation.✓ Provide a reason why people may believe the Bible reveals <i>God's</i> nature and a reason why people might disagree.✓ Provide an example from the Bible that reveals something about <i>God</i>.
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Homework	MUST: Read the Biblical accounts of revelation and answer the questions. (see appendix) SHOULD: B) Describe two forms of revelation. (4) COULD: Research and record an example of a person who experiences <i>God</i> .
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Chapter 1 Lesson 2

Lesson Topic	Visions
Outcomes	To consider the importance of visions. To be aware of biblical and non-biblical examples of visions. To evaluate the different responses to visions.
Key Terms	Vision - something seen in a dream, trance or religious ecstasy, gives a religious message. Apparitions - visual experiences that have an effect on the people around the vision. Auditory vision - a vision which is only a voice with no images.
Starter	A beautiful mind is about a man who suffers from schizophrenia and experiences visions. In this lesson we will be looking at religious visions and how they reveal God. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yqj1DhUKJco Watch the trailer and discuss what might be the difficulty in defining whether or not a vision is a genuine act of God?
Main Activity 1	Why are visions important? A vision is something seen in a dream or a trance or religious ecstasy which gives a religious message to the person having a vision. Catholics believe that God can use our mental faculties to communicate truth and messages to us. Catholics, especially Saints have had visions or apparitions of the risen Christ, an angel, or a saint and most particularly of the Virgin Mary. Visions have been approved by the Church and are important because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ They show that God cares for us and can intervene in the world. ✓ They provide a message from God. ✓ They prove that Christ, the Virgin Mary or the Saints are still present in the world. ✓ They show it is worthwhile to pray to Christ or the Virgin Mary. Task <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Record the four reasons visions are important to Catholics. 2. Describe in at least 30 words how you think you would feel about visions. Extension: Can you recall any examples of visions in the Bible?
Main Activity 2 Source of Wisdom and Authority	Examples of visions in the Bible <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a class we will read the two examples of Biblical visions. 2. For each one explain whether it is an example of visual or auditory visions. 3. For each one, explain the message that is given from God.

Example 1

God makes a covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15:1-5)

After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."¹

But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit^[c] my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir."⁵ He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

Is this an example of a visual or auditory vision? Explain.

What message is being given by God? At least 20 words.

The Transfiguration (Matthew 17: 1-9)

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.² There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.³ Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

⁴ Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified.⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid."⁸ When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Is this an example of a visual or auditory vision?

What message is being delivered by God? Explain in at least 20 words.

Review

Can you recall at least two reasons why visions important to Catholics?
Can you provide at least two Biblical examples of visions?
Record your answers on a post-it note.

Main Activity 3

Examples of non-biblical visions.



Example of a vision: Bernadette at Lourdes

France: Identifying herself as the Immaculate Conception, Mary appeared 18 times to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubriou between February 11 and July 16, 1858. The waters of the miraculous spring that appeared according to Mary's promise are world famous for their healing powers. She was a peasant and claimed to have had numerous experiences. It attracts a lot of tourists and people who claim to have been healed. The vision was declared authentic by the Roman Catholic Church and she became a saint after she passed away.



Example of a vision: Joan of Arc

Joan of Arc was a peasant girl during the time of the Hundred Years' War between France and England. At the age of nineteen she claimed to have a vision of the Angel Michael and Saints Margaret and Catherine who told her to drive the English out of France. Joan led the French to several victories before being caught by the British and burned at the stake. Joan of Arc is known as a Saint and a martyr.

Watch the trailer of the film that was made about Joan of Arc.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCbMOQIs45s>

Task


Exam style question

B) Describe two examples of non-biblical visions. (4 marks)

Firstly an example of a non-biblical vision is.....

Secondly an example of a non-biblical vision is

Main Activity 4	<p>Group discussion</p> <p>Atheists and Humanists do not believe in God and therefore do not believe that God communicates through visions and that therefore there must be other possible explanations for visions.</p> <p>What do you think these reasons could be?</p> <p>The Catholic Church has studied various accounts of visions and confirmed that they are true experiences of God.</p> <p>How do you think Catholics respond to atheists?</p>
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Plenary	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #FFD700; padding: 5px;"> <h2 style="margin: 0;">Plenary: Visions</h2> </div> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 10px;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">‘These visions came from God’</h3> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #FFB6C1; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; width: 200px;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="margin: 0;">Atheist Theist</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #90EE90; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; width: 200px;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. </div> </div>
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Homework	<p>MUST: "Visions prove that God exists." Evaluate this statement providing arguments for and against. In your answer you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to a Catholic point of view. • Refer to a different Christian or non-religious point of view. • Reach a justified conclusion. <p>EXTENSION: What characteristics can be found in the visions of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exodus 3:1-17 • 1 Kings 19:1-18 • Ezekiel 1:1-28 <p>Choose one of the above and describe the characteristic of God in the vision.</p>
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Lesson Topic	Miracles
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Outcomes	To understand what a miracle is. To explain examples of biblical and non-biblical miracles. To evaluate whether or not miracles prove the existence of God.
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Key Terms	<p>Nature miracle - a miracle involving a change in natural object or forces.</p> <p>Immaculate conception - the Catholic belief that God preserved Mary from original sin from the moment she was conceived.</p> <p>Blessed Sacrament Procession - the consecrated host is carried through the streets in a special container - a monstrance.</p>
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Starter	<p>Would you call any of the events listed below as a miracle?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having a baby. 2. A man becoming naturally cured from cancer. 3. Surviving a life threatening illness and dangerous surgery. 4. A Catholic man and his daughter report that the statue of the Virgin Mary in his garden is weeping tears. 5. Winning the lottery. 6. Having a vision of God.
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Main activity 1	<p><u>What is a miracle and why are they important?</u></p> <p>In pairs you must complete the following activities on A3 paper.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define a miracle. 2. Provide an example of a miracle. 3. Explain how a miracle may change a person. <p>You have 5 minutes. Be ready to share your ideas.</p> <p>A miracle is an event that seems to break the laws of science and for which the only explanation seems to be God. Miracles are often separated into healing miracles (for examples when Jesus heals the paralysed man) or nature miracles (for examples when Jesus walks on water).</p> <p>Miracles can lead to a belief in God because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It means that God has acted. ✓ If an atheist or agnostic witnesses a miracle it will lead to a conversion. ✓ It means a person has had direct contact with God.
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Main Activity 2 Source of Wisdom and Authority	<p>There are many examples of miracles in the Bible in both the Old and New Testament. In this activity we will look at the account of Jesus healing the royal official's son. Read the extract as a class and complete the reflection pyramid.</p> <p><u>Jesus Heals an Official's Son</u></p> <p>43 After the two days he left for Galilee. 44 (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honour in his own country.) 45 When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.</p> <p>46 Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. 47 When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.</p>
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48 "Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

49 The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

50 "Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live."

The man took Jesus at his word and departed. 51 While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. 52 When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him."

53 Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and his whole household believed.

54 This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee

What does this miracle reveal about God?

Why was this a miracle?

Summarise the miracle

Extension

Can you recall any other miracles that Jesus performed?

Review	<p><i>On a post-it note</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide at least two biblical examples of miracles. ✓ Create a criterion for a miracle.
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Main Activity 3	<p><u>Non-biblical examples of miracles</u></p> <p>The Jeanne Fretel Case</p> <p>Jeanne Fretel was born on 7th May. In later life she caught tuberculosis. In October 1948 she joined her diocese's pilgrimage to Lourdes, She was seriously ill with tuberculosis and peritonitis. She was declared incurable by her doctor, who wrote in her notes:</p> <p><i>"The patient becomes more and more feeble. She can only take small amounts of liquid; meningitic signs were appearing. The abdomen is very distended and very painful. Pus runs abundantly from the natural outlets...accompanied by black blood. Cardiac attacks are very frequent and endanger the patients life. All hope seems lost."</i></p> <p>At Lourdes all her symptoms of illness disappeared. She received communion at the Church and then bathed in the pool underneath the Church called the Grotto, where Roman Catholics believe the Virgin Mary appeared. On her return home the doctor stated that she had been completely cured.</p> <p>Group discussion</p> <p>Consider the following questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why do you think Catholics believe this was a miracle? 2. What does this miracle tell Catholics about God? 3. What other possible explanations could there be? 4. What is the opinion of the group?
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Main activity 4	<p>Atheist and Humanist attitudes towards miracle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Miracles break the laws of nature. What is more likely the laws of nature being broken or that the miracle did not occur? ✓ Evidence of miracles is always based on witnesses and witnesses can be mistaken. ✓ Miracles that happened in the past can now be explained by science. <p>Catholic responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Miracles are recorded in the Bible and this is the word of God. ✓ Miracles that have been approved by the Church have been studied very carefully to ensure that they are true accounts. ✓ Miracles are proof of God acting in the world and revealing His truth to us. <p>Use the information above to answer the following D style question.</p> <p>"Miracles prove that God exists." Evaluate this statement providing reasons for and against. In your answer you should refer to Catholic points of view. Different Christian or non-religious points of view. Reach a justified conclusion. (12 marks)</p>
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Plenary	In a tweet summarise what you have learnt this lesson.
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Homework	<p>MUST: B) Explain two beliefs about God's nature that is revealed through miracles. (4)</p> <p>SHOULD: Find an example of a modern day miracle and record your findings in at least 40 words.</p> <p>COULD: Research Lourdes and explain why Lourdes is important to Catholics.</p>
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Chapter 1 Lesson 4

Lesson Topic	Religious Experience
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Outcomes	To understand the different types of religious experiences. To explain the teaching of the Catholic Church on religious experience. To evaluate religious experiences.
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Key Terms	Conversion - an experience that changes a person's life or religion. Numinous - the feeling of the presence of something greater than you. Transcendent - something going beyond human experience and outside the material world.
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Starter	In this lesson we will be looking at the different types of religious experiences. Watch the following interview and complete at least one of the following tasks: http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02fmhc2 Medium: Describe Rev Richard Coles' religious experience in your own words. Hard: How do you know the Rev Coles has a religious experience? Stretch: What type of religious experience is Rev Richard Coles is describing?
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Main activity 1	In today's lesson we are also the exploring four types of religious experiences:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conversion ✓ Numinous ✓ Prayer ✓ Mysticism 		
	<p>Task: Using the pieces of information you have been provided complete the table. Explain each form of religious experience in at least 30 words.</p> <p>Stretch: Complete the section where you can consider the possible problems with verifying this type of religious experience.</p> <p>You have 12 minutes. ©</p>		
	Religious Experience	Explanation	Extension: Possible problems in proving this religious experience.
	Conversion		
	Numinous		

	Prayer		
	Mysticism		

<p>Main Activity 2 Source of Wisdom and Authority</p>	<p>Essential Information Although religious experiences are important for Catholics, the Catholic Church teaches that such experiences may only be regarded as genuine if they do not contradict the beliefs of the Catholic Church. If an experience told a person to do something that goes against the Church such as murder - the Catholic Church would not regard this as a religious experience. Religious experiences strengthen a person's faith and prove the existence of God. And the Catholic Church believes it is a way in which God chooses to reveal Himself, all humans can experience God .The Catechism states, "The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to Himself."</p> <p>C) Explain two teachings of the Catholic Church on the topic of religious experience. (5) In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom or authority.</p>
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<p>Review 1</p>	<p>You will now be shown examples of religious experiences. Identify which type(s) of religious experience they are. Stretch: Provide at least one reason why you think it matches that type of religious experience.</p> <p>Example Mysticism because the person was unable to describe the events.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2.
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3.

4.

Main Activity 3

Using the information copy and complete the following table in your exercise book

Atheist and Humanist beliefs on Religious Experience.	Catholic beliefs on Religious Experience

Science will have the answers to miracles in future and can explain miracle of the past.

So many people claim to have had a religious experience – they all can't be lying.

Religious experiences may be a result of mental illness.

There are many accounts of religious experiences in the Bible such as answered prayers – Hannah wanting a child.

Catholic Church believes that humans are all built with an innate spiritual sense and can all experience God.

Religious experiences may be wishful thinking of people who need to have God in their life to help them through difficult times – especially seen in conversion experiences.

Philosophers and theologians have found that there a striking similarities in the accounts of religious experiences.

If religious experiences are real why are there Hindu, Muslim, Christian experiences etc. Would not everyone experience the same God?

Plenary

"Religious experiences prove that God does exist."

Find the opinions of at least three other people in the room and record their points in your exercise book.

Person 1 -

Person 2-

Person 3-

Homework Activity

MUST: Summarise the accounts of religious experiences you have been given. At least 60 words for each one.

SHOULD: For each one create a table of reasons that suggest that it was an experience of God and reasons that could suggest it may not have been an experience of God.

God Calls Moses

³ One day while Moses was taking care of the sheep and goats of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, he led the flock across the desert and came to Sinai, the holy mountain. ² There the angel of the Lord appeared to him as a flame coming from the middle of a bush. Moses saw that the bush was on fire but that it was not burning up. ³ "This is strange," he thought. "Why isn't the bush burning up? I will go closer and see."

⁴ When the Lord saw that Moses was coming closer, he called to him from the middle of the bush and said, "Moses! Moses!"

He answered, "Yes, here I am."

⁵ God said, "Do not come any closer. Take off your sandals, because you are standing on holy ground. ⁶ I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." So Moses covered his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷ Then the Lord said, "I have seen how cruelly my people are being treated in Egypt; I have heard them cry out to be rescued from their slave drivers. I know all about their sufferings, ⁸ and so I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and to bring them out of Egypt to a spacious land, one which is rich and fertile and in which the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites now live. ⁹ I have indeed heard the cry of my people, and I see how the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ Now I am sending you to the king of Egypt so that you can lead my people out of his country."

¹¹ But Moses said to God, "I am nobody. How can I go to the king and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

¹² God answered, "I will be with you, and when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will worship me on this mountain. That will be the proof that I have sent you."

¹³ But Moses replied, "When I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' So what can I tell them?"

¹⁴ God said, "I am who I am. You must tell them: 'The one who is called I Am^[a] has

sent me to you.' ¹⁵ Tell the Israelites that I, the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, have sent you to them. This is my name forever; this is what all future generations are to call me.



St. Teresa of Avila

Teresa Sanchez Cepeda Davila y Ahumada, born at Avila, Old Castile, 28 March, 1515; died at Alba de Tormes, 4 Oct., 1582.

St. Teresa of Avila was born in 1515 and grew into a flirtatious and rebellious teenager. When she was 16 her father decided to take control of the situation and sent her to a convent. Her life there did not begin well but in time she learned to love it: her relationship with God. But despite meditating on Christ, she felt that she was getting nowhere. Then she became so dangerously ill that her grave was dug. She recovered but was initially paralysed and never regained

her previous health.

After a period in which her religious observances halted, she resumed and on beginning to pray again, she began to have mystical experiences. [God](#) began to visit St. Teresa with "intellectual visions and locutions", that is manifestations in which the exterior senses were in no way affected, **the things seen and the words heard being directly impressed upon her mind**, and giving her **wonderful strength** in trials, reprimanding her for unfaithfulness, and consoling her in trouble. The more she endeavoured to resist them the more powerfully did [God](#) work in her soul.

She became **convinced that God was lifting her bodily into the air**: she would call on her fellow nuns to help hold her down. She wrote in detail about these experiences, analysing them almost like an academic researcher. She saw the experiences not as God singling her out for something special but God's way of keeping her disciplined. Her writings became very influential initially in Spain and then throughout Catholic Europe.



Lesson Topic	The Design Argument
Outcomes	To understand the argument from design. To explain the significance of the design argument in the Catholic Church. To consider whether or not the design argument proves God's existence.
Key Terms	Design - when things are connected and seem to have a purpose. Evolution - the idea that forms, species change over time and that humans have developed from single cell organisms.
Starter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you were going to build a house how would you do it? 2. What materials would you need? 3. What would be the order of the things you would do to the house?
Main activity 1	<p><u>What is the design argument?</u></p> <p>The design argument suggests that because so much of the world appears to be designed that there must have been someone or something that design the world. Catholics believe that this designer is God. A man by the name of William Paley created the design argument. He compared the universe to a watch and concluded that is a watch needed a designer/creator than the universe which is far more complex and grand must definitely need a designer/creator.</p> <p>Examples of design in the natural world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The human brain - so complex and far more capable than a computer. ✓ The process of photosynthesis - leaves are designed specially to enable photosynthesis. ✓ Scientific laws - gravity. <p>Tasks</p> <p>Read the information in your booklets and complete the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write the heading <u>What is the design argument?</u> 2. Underneath your heading create at least 8 bullet points of information on the argument. 3. Provide at least two examples in the world that is evidence of design. <p>Extension: What are the possible criticisms?</p>
Main Activity 2 Source of Wisdom and Authority	<p>Catholics believe that the design argument is important because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You can prove God's existence through looking at creation. St Paul said " Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through things he has made." ✓ God wants humans to use their reason to understand the world as well as the revelation that has been given to the Church. ✓ The universe works in fixed ways with certain laws that have been created by God so that through science we can use them to help others. <p>Using the information above answer the following C style question.</p> <p>C) Explain two reasons why the design argument is important to Catholics. (5) In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>

Review	<p>QUICK QUIZ</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did Paley compare the universe to? 2. What was Paley's first name? 3. What part of the human body is used to illustrate the design argument? 4. Provide another name for the design argument?
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Main Activity 3	<p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of the design argument?</p> <p>Copy and complete the table in your exercise book and create a least two strengths and weaknesses. Use the hint box to help you.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">Arguments in favour of the design argument</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Arguments against the design argument</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 60px;"></td> <td style="height: 60px;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #ffff00; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black; width: 45%;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Hints</u></p> <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is there any evidence in the world that might show evidence of design? ✓ Does the design argument support Christian views on the world? ✓ How is scientific? </div> <div style="background-color: #90ee90; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black; width: 45%;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Hints</u></p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Does it make sense to compare the universe with a watch? ✓ Do you think the world is a beautifully designed as Paley seems to think? </div> </div>	Arguments in favour of the design argument	Arguments against the design argument		
Arguments in favour of the design argument	Arguments against the design argument				

Main Activity 4	<p>'Design in the world proves the God does exist'. Do you agree?</p> <p>Use the discussion sheet to help you debate this topic.</p> <p>Each group will share their conclusion</p>
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Plenary	<p>Ask the person next to you to Explain what the Design Argument is in their own words... (copy this down exactly!)</p> <p>Then ask them to give you an example of Design in the world to support their point (quote them on this too in your book!)</p> <p>E.g. Joe said the Teleological Argument is as follows...</p>
Homework	<p>Must</p> <p>Create a storyboard that outline's William Paley's watch analogy.</p> <p>Should</p> <p>Create a page of examples in the world that could prove and disprove the belief that the world was designed.</p> <p>Could</p> <p>Research the philosopher David Hume and record in your books his criticisms of the design argument.</p>

Result:

Student response:

Grade:

Teacher comment:

Student targets:

Lesson Topic	The Cosmological Argument
Outcomes	To understand the cosmological argument. To explain the significance of the cosmological argument to Catholics. To evaluate the cosmological argument.
Key Terms	Summa Theologica - a major book written by Thomas Aquinas. Contingent - the fact that something does not have to exist because it depends on something else for its existence. Big Bang - the scientific theory of the beginning of the universe.
Starter	On a post-it note record what you think started the universe over 13 billion years ago?
Main activity 1	<p><u>What is the Cosmological Argument?</u></p> <p>The cosmological argument is one which argues that God exists from the philosophical study of the origins of the universe. The argument focusses on observing that everything in the world has a cause. St Thomas Aquinas put forward the classic form of the argument. Thomas Aquinas put forward three reasons why cause and effect in the world proves God's existence.</p> <p><u>1st Way: Motion</u> Everything is in a state of motion. But the chain of movers cannot go on for infinity. Conclusion Therefore there must be a first mover, which must be God.</p> <p><u>2nd Way: Cause</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Something can only be put into motion if force is applied to it. It must be caused. • Causes follow an order, first cause, second cause and so on. • It is not possible for the causes to go on for infinity. <p>Conclusion: Therefore there must be a first cause - which must be God.</p> <p><u>3rd Way: Contingency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things that exist in nature at one time did not exist, and in the future will not exist. These things at any time may or may not exist. • If everything at one time did not exist, there would have been nothing in existence. • If point 2 were true there would have been nothing in existence, because there would be nothing to bring anything into existence. <p>Conclusion: There must exist something in existence which does not need anything for its existence- This must be God as God is a necessary being</p> <p>TASK: Create an explanation of each of Aquinas's three ways of the cosmological argument. Draw a picture/symbol for each one.</p> <p>Extension: Which do you think is the most convincing and why?</p>

Review 1	<i>Using play-doh explain Aquinas' cosmological argument.</i>
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Main Activity 2	<p>Essential Information The cosmological argument is important because it shows Catholics that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ God is the origin of everything, he is the unmoved mover, the first cause and the non-contingent being. ✓ God is not another thing within the universe. He is both within and beyond it: a different order entirely. God is the being that allows everything to be. ✓ God is a mystery, more a question than an answer. Human beings can only grasp so much about God's being and nature. <p>Task Summarise the above information in at least 30 words. Extension: Why is it so difficult to understand God's nature</p>
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Main Activity 3	<p>Evaluating the Cosmological Argument You have been provided the strengths and weaknesses of the cosmological argument. You must work out whether they are from an atheist/humanist perspective or whether they a points from a Catholic perspective. Create a table in your book and stick them under the correct heading. Extension activity: Choose one point you most agree with and provide a detailed reason why.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Atheist and Humanist views on the cosmological argument.</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Catholic views in favour of the cosmological argument.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 100px;"></td> <td style="height: 100px;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Atheist and Humanist views on the cosmological argument.	Catholic views in favour of the cosmological argument.		
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Plenary	<p><i>Complete at least one of the following activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Explain the cosmological argument in 10 words.</i> ✓ <i>Provide a reason why the cosmological argument proves the existence of God..</i> ✓ <i>Explain the importance of the cosmological argument to Catholics.</i>
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Homework	<p>MUST: D) " The cosmological argument proves that God exists." Evaluate the statement providing reasons for and against. In your answer you should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Catholic view. • A different Christian or non-religious point of view. • A justified conclusion. <p>SHOULD: Explain how the Big Bang proves and disproves the cosmological argument.</p> <p>COULD: Research Thomas Aquinas and write 40 words on him.</p>
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Lesson Topic

The Problem of Evil

Outcomes

To **know** the difference between natural and moral evil.
 To **explain** why the problem of evil causes problems for Catholic beliefs about God.
 To **reflect** on how the problem of evil can lead some Christians to doubt or reject their faith.

Key terms

Freewill - the idea that human beings are free to make their own choices.
Moral evil - actions done by humans which cause suffering.
Natural evil - things which cause suffering but have nothing to do with humans.
Omnipotent - the belief that God is all powerful.
Omniscient - the belief that God is all knowing.
Omnibenevolent - the belief that God is all good.

Starter



Look at the image carefully - create as many reasons as possible for why this suffering may have happened. Who or what is to blame?

Main activity 1

What is the difference between moral and natural evil?

Moral evil - this is suffering caused by humans misusing their free-will. It is always possible to choose something good or something evil. Humans choosing to do something evil can lead to moral suffering. War, rape, murder and burglary are examples of moral evil. Catholics often call acts of moral evil sins.

Natural evil - natural evil is suffering that has not been caused by humans, earthquakes, floods, tsunamis and illness are examples of natural suffering. These examples of evil are not caused by humans and are found in nature. They can lead people to question God and His creation

Look at the examples on the next few slides and decide whether or not they are examples of natural or moral evil.

1. Poverty
2. Mass murder
3. Natural disasters
4. Stealing

<p>Main Activity 2 Source of Wisdom and Authority</p>	<p><u>What is the Problem of Evil?</u> Christians believe that God is all-loving (omni-benevolent), all-knowing (omniscient) and all-powerful (omnipotent). These key beliefs about God are found in the Bible and in particular in Isaiah 45. God's omnipotence is found in the following quote " It is I who made the earth and created mankind on it. My own hands stretched out the heavens." (Isaiah 45:12). God's omniscience is found in the following quote, " Declare what is to be, present it - let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the Lord? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God, a Saviour; there is none but me." (Isaiah 45:21) God's omni-benevolence is found in the following quote, "But Israel will be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; you will never be put to shame or disgraced, to ages everlasting." (Isaiah 45:17) The problem arises from the fact that despite God's omnipotence, omniscience and omni-benevolence evil and suffering still exists in the world. These leads people to think about the following three points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If God was all-powerful he must be able to remove evil and suffering from the world. 2. If God was all-knowing God would know about evil and suffering in the world. 3. If God was all-loving God would want to remove evil and suffering from the world. <p>Yet evil still exists and therefore God may not exist.</p> <p>Task Explain the problem evil by completing the following sentences. Use the information in your booklet to help you. Christians believe that God is omnipotent which means A quote to support this is..... Christians believe that God is omniscient which means A quote to support this is..... Christians believe that God is omni-benevolent which means..... A quote to support this is Evil and suffering exists in the world and this leads people to consider the following three points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. <p>Extension: Do you think it is possible to explain why God allows evil and suffering? Explain.</p>
<p>Review</p>	<p>On a post-it note</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Record an example of moral and natural evil. 2. Explain what omnipotent, omni-benevolent and omniscience means.
<p>Main Activity 3</p>	<p><u>How can evil and suffering lead people to question or abandon their belief?</u> In pairs create as many reasons as you can to explain why evil and suffering may lead a person to reject their faith. Discuss this and record your ideas in your exercise book.</p> <div data-bbox="344 1503 844 1861" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Success Criteria Think and discuss the following points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How would a Christian feel who suffers? ✓ Would a Christian feel supported by God when they are suffering? ✓ How do you think unfairness in the world makes people feel about God? ✓ How might natural disasters challenge a person's belief in God? </div>

Main Activity 4	C) Explain two reasons why evil and suffering in the world cause problems for Catholic beliefs about God. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority. (5)
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Plenary	Record at least three things you have learnt this lesson. Do you agree that evil disproves God's existence? Give reasons.
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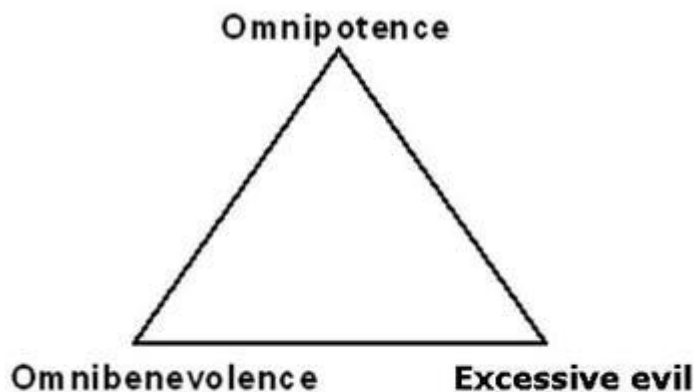
Homework	MUST: B) Explain two forms of evil in the world. (4) SHOULD: Find out about the Holocaust and write 60 words on it. COULD: Find examples of natural evil in the world today and record them in your exercise book.
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Lesson Topic	Responding to the Problem of Evil
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Outcomes	To understand the Biblical, Theoretical and Practical responses to the Problem of Evil. To evaluate these responses.
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Key Terms	<p>Holiness - the state of being very moral and spiritual.</p> <p>Psalms - a book of the Old Testament containing 150 sacred songs.</p> <p>Theodicy - a philosophical/theoretical explanation of the problem of evil.</p> <p>Free Will - the idea that humans are free to make their own choices.</p>
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Starter	Explain what this diagram means.
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Main activity 1	<p><u>How can the Bible solve the Problem of Evil and suffering?</u></p> <p>Many Christians believe that there is no point in worrying about the problem of evil because humans cannot understand God's reasons for doing things. Christians look to the Bible to find an answer to evil and suffering.</p> <p>In groups you have been given information on how the Bible may be able to explain the problem of evil and suffering.</p> <p>Each person in the group must provide one reason why evil and suffering exists according to the Bible. Share your ideas and form a conclusion.</p> <p>Essential information on the Biblical explanation of evil and suffering.</p> <p><u>The Book of Job - Old Testament</u></p> <p>This view is based on the Book of Job in the Old Testament. Job was a sinless man who worshipped God faithfully. However Satan argued with God that Job only had faith in God because he had a good life and that if Job's good life disappeared he would no longer worship God. God did not believe Satan and allowed Satan to remove Job's good life. Job suffered a lot. Job kept asking God why this was happening to him and demanded an answer. When Job was finally confronted with God, Job realised that humans were not in any position to confront or question God.</p> <p><u>The Book of Psalms- Old Testament</u></p> <p>The Psalms shows that suffering is intended to be a part of life and many of the Psalms tell of good</p>
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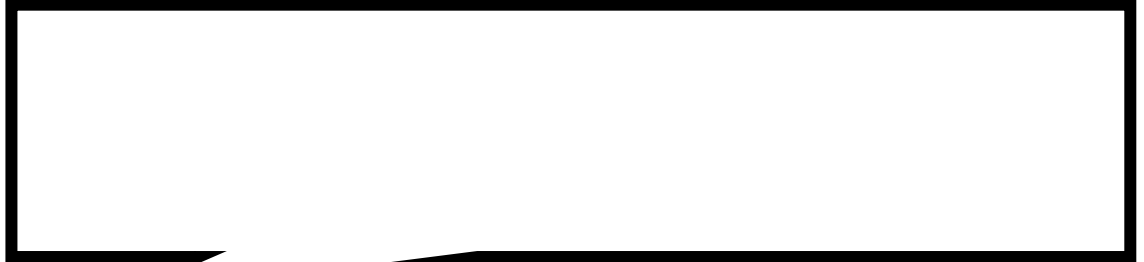
religious people suffering. Suffering can also bring joy and bring a person closer to God.

Jesus - The New Testament

Christians believe that the New Testament reveals a God who suffered in Jesus. For Catholics, the answer to any problem of evil has Jesus at the heart of it. Suffering has a purpose and we may not understand it as humans but Christians are aware of Christ's suffering for our sins. Suffering is a part of God's plan.

Review 1

Summarise in three separate tweets ways in which the Bible can explain evil and suffering to Christians.



Main Activity 2

Theoretical responses

Theologians have tried to explain the problem of evil to Christians. An explanation for the problem of evil is called a Theodicy. The two key thinkers who tried to understand the problem of evil are St Irenaeus and St Augustine.

1. In pairs you each must choose to either be St Irenaeus or St Augustine.
2. You must read the information card you have been provided on your thinker.
3. In your exercise book make a note of at least 6 points you have learnt so that you are ready to answer your partner's questions. You have 6 minutes!

When this has been completed you must ask your partner the questions on the next page of the booklet and record their answers.

Questions to ask Augustine

1. Augustine can you explain whether or not it is God's fault that evil exists?
2. Why do people call your theory a soul-deciding theodicy?
3. Explain how moral and natural evil arrived in the world.

Questions to ask Irenaeus

1. Irenaeus, is it God's fault evil exists?
2. Why do people call your theory a soul-making theory?
3. Explain how natural and moral evil exists in the world.

Extension

Summarise how these thinkers are similar and different.

Main Activity 3	<p><u>What are the practical responses to the problem of evil?</u></p> <p>People suffer in the world and Catholics are called to respond to the evil and suffering in the world through prayer and charity.</p> <p>For each one explain in at least 35 words how they can help those who suffer. For each explanation draw a picture of symbol.</p> <p>Extension - Are the practical responses to the problem of evil always successful? Consider more than one point of view in your answer.</p>
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Extension Activity	<p>C) Explain two ways in which Catholics explain to the problem of evil and suffering. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority. (5)</p>
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Plenary	<p>Bullet point three approaches to the problem of evil,</p> <p>Explain whether or not you think evil disproves God's existence.</p> <p>Stretch- Who do you think has the strongest theodicy, Augustine or Irenaeus?</p>
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Homework	<p>Must</p> <p>Create an overview of the problem of evil across one full page of your exercise book. Include the following headings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is moral and natural evil? 2. What is the problem of evil? 3. Three ways in which Catholics respond to the problem of evil, 4. Reasons for and against evil disproving God's existence. <p>SHOULD</p> <p>Create a four stage story board explaining how evil exists according to Augustine.</p> <p>COULD</p> <p>Research five facts about Augustine and Irenaeus.</p>
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BELOW ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF ANSWERS TO SOME EXAM QUESTIONS AND SOME EXAM TIPS FOR YOU:

(a) Outline three things that the design argument shows about the nature of God for Catholics. (3)

One thing that the design argument shows about the nature of God is that he is loving because he created a beautiful world.

A second thing that the design argument shows about the nature of God is that he wants to reveal himself to humans through his creation.

A third thing that the design argument shows about the nature of God is that he possesses great wisdom and so crafted the universe and everything with a purpose.

(b) Explain two ways in which Catholics respond to the problem of evil and suffering. (4).

Firstly Catholic Christians believe that Catholics should respond to the problem of evil in a practical way. Jesus commanded his followers to respond to suffering by helping others in need. Jesus healed the sick, fed the hungry and challenged those who were evil. Christians are therefore responding through charitable actions.

Secondly Catholic Christians can respond to evil and suffering in the world through prayer. Christians should pray to God in a meaningful way and God will answer prayers. Such prayers are called intercessory prayers.

(c) Explain two reasons why miracles are important for Catholics. (5). In your answer you must refer to sources of wisdom and authority.

Firstly miracles are important to Catholics because they show Catholics a lot about what God is like. For example they show that God cares for people in his world and uses miracles to help strengthen people's faith, for example when Jesus healed the Roman soldier's son, the Father said "Lord I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief." Miracles show many of God's qualities including His power, love and ability to forgive.

Secondly miracles are also important as they prove that God exists. If a miracle happens then the laws of science have been broken and only God is capable of this. For example when Jesus fed the five thousand from two loaves of bread, the only possible explanation of such an event is that God exists.

(d) "Visions prove the existence of God". (12). Evaluate this statement, considering arguments for and against. In your response you should:

- Refer to Catholic teachings
- Refer to different Christian points of view
- Refer to non-religious views
- Reach a justified conclusion

Firstly, some Christians such as Catholics would fully agree with this because many Catholics go on pilgrimage to Lourdes. Lourdes is where the vision of Mary appeared to St Bernadette eighteen times. Catholics believe that many people are healed as a result of these visions at Lourdes; the Church has validated 69 miracles, following careful investigations. Furthermore, Catholics also believe that Joan of Arc received visions from God and battles were won as a result of these visions. This clearly supports the statement 'visions prove the existence of God' because there is tangible evidence to back up the validity of these visions.

Secondly, Fundamentalist Christians would agree because St Paul had a vision on the road to Damascus and this led to his conversion and evangelisation. Fundamentalists believe that the Bible is the literal word of God; God is truth, and so this event must truly have happened. However, this argument will fail to convince non-Christians who do not accept the Bible as having authority because they do not believe it is God's word. Therefore, it is difficult to use the Bible to prove the existence of God to everyone. Nevertheless, Christianity has become the largest world religion; something that would have been, arguably, impossible without Paul's evangelisation (inspired by his vision); could an event which has had such a dramatic effect on world history really be based on a lie? Therefore, biblical visions should be taken seriously as evidence for the existence of God.

However, some atheists may disagree with the statement by saying that visions can be explained without referring to God. They are caused by the mind being affected by other factors e.g. mental illness such as schizophrenia. You might think you have received a vision from God but it is your mind deceiving you. This is a robust point as there is a lot of evidence that your mind may deceive you through a hallucination caused by medicine or illegal drugs.

Secondly, no one can prove that a vision actually took place. For example Bernadette claimed to have had a vision of the Virgin Mary, no one outside of Bernadette's mind can actually say whether or not this really happened. Visions are impossible to prove and therefore cannot prove God's existence. This is a very strong point as many philosophers, for example Hume, agree that ultimately you need to empirically prove something to be real.

In conclusion I believe that that visions do prove the existence of God. Visions are recorded in the Bible many times and are so important to Christian beliefs. Visions have been recorded throughout history including Bernadette and Joan of Arc, and finally visions are happening today. There are too many accounts of visions occurring for them not to exist.

Revision Notes

Chapter 3 Lesson 1

Title of topic: Revelation

What are the two types of revelation?

Explain how Jesus is the ultimate culmination of God's revelation.

Key terms:

How confident are you?

- Had a look Nearly there Nailed it!

What I still need to improve:

Chapter 1 Lesson 3

Title of topic: Miracles

Why are miracles important?

Examples of biblical and non-biblical miracles.

How do miracles lead people to believe in God?

Key terms:

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

Chapter 1 Lesson 5

Title of topic: *The design argument.*

Explain the design argument.

What does the design argument reveal about God?

Key terms:

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

Chapter 1 Lesson 6

Title of topic: *The cosmological argument.*

Outline Aquinas' three ways.

Key terms:

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve:

Chapter 1 Lesson 7

Title of topic: *The problem of evil and suffering.*

Describe natural and moral evil with examples.

Explain the problem of evil in detail.

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

Chapter 1 Lesson 8

Title of topic: Responding to the Problem of Evil.

Explain Augustine's and Irenaeus' theodicies.

What are the practical responses to the problem of evil?

Key terms:

How confident are you?

Had a look

Nearly there

Nailed it!

What do you need to improve?

Appendix of lesson resources

Lesson 1

Homework task on biblical examples of revelation:

God's call to Abraham (Genesis 17:1-9)

"When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."

(1) How do you think Abraham felt when he heard the voice of God? Evidence your opinion with a quote.

(2) What did God promise Abraham?

Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 3: 1-10)

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. 3 So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

4 When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." 6 Then he said, "I am the God of your father, [a] the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

7 The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. 8 So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 9 And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. 10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

(1) How did God reveal himself to Moses?

(2) What did God ask Moses to do and promise him in return?

Lesson 4

Conversion experience

Conversion experiences always lead to a change in the individual's life. This may be dramatic, for examples the conversion of St Paul on the road to Damascus or simply a gradual realisation. The belief in conversion and the necessity for it has always been central to evangelical Christianity and its idea of being a born again Christian. Overall the result of a conversion experience should lead a person to lead a better life and perhaps this is the only way it can be verified. According to William James there are two types of conversion, volitional and self-surrender.

Numinous Religious experience

These experiences are of awe and wonder in the presence of an almighty God. It is an awareness of human nothingness when faced with a holy and powerful being. It comes from 'numen' = to bow the head. When a person has a numinous experience they will believe in God because the experience might make them believe God is real. An example of a numinous experience may be walking into a beautiful Cathedral and having an overwhelming sense of God presence.

Mysticism

Mystical experience refer to a variety of religious experience in which the subject is transformed and reports the loss of individuality, the oneness of all reality, union with the deity and the unity of the subject of the experience with the object of the experience. Mystical experiences involve special mental states or events that allow an understanding of ultimate truths. Mystical experiences have several common features:

- A sense of union with the divine.
- A sense of dependence on God.
- A sense of joy and well-being.

Prayer

Prayer is the experience of communicating with God; in some ways, all religious experiences can be seen as a form of prayer.

Prayer can be categorized in several different ways, as different forms of prayer can be identified.

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) was a Spanish mystic and Roman Catholic saint. She had several religious experiences during her life, and wrote about the importance of mystic prayer to religious life. Teresa believed that the purpose of life was union with God, which is also the purpose of prayer. Therefore, the purpose of life is union with God through prayer. She wrote of the seven different types of prayer in her work, *The Interior Castle*, and the stages of prayer in the analogy of the garden.

Lesson 6

The universe does not necessarily need an explanation.

Even if there is a first cause, this cause might not be God- it could be multiple Gods.

To say that the Big Bang just created the universe from nothing is less believable than to say it was caused by a God.

Everything in the universe has a cause, therefore the universe must have a cause.

The Church teaches that we have an immortal soul and therefore there must be something more to the universe.

The Bible suggests that God is the creator and cause of all things in the universe.

Lesson 8

AUGUSTINIAN THEODICY (SOUL-DECIDING THEODICY)

Augustine believed that God created the world perfect as this is what is said in the Bible. Augustine argued that evil is a privation (lack) of goodness just like blindness is a privation (lack) of sight.

Augustine believed that humans created evil by turning their back on God; this is shown in *Genesis 3*, when Adam and Eve disobey God. As a result God's perfect world is ruined by sin and now is open to natural and moral evil.

God has the right not to intervene and put a stop to evil and suffering since he is a just God and we are worthy of punishment.

However if Christians live a good life they will achieve a state of happiness in Heaven. Our souls are decided on how we behave in life.

IRENAEN THEODICY (SOUL-MAKING THEODICY)

Irenaeus argued that evil is the consequence of human free will and disobedience.

Irenaeus believed that God was partly responsible for evil and suffering. Irenaeus argued that God created the world imperfectly so that imperfect immature beings could develop through a soul-making process into a 'child of God,' in his perfect likeness.

Irenaeus believed it would be impossible to make perfect humans in God's likeness because to be like God you must be free, and free choose to do good. God had to give us free will and therefore many people choose bad actions that cause suffering.

Natural Evil: Has the purpose to develop qualities such as compassion through the soul-making process

Moral Evil: is caused from human free will and disobedience