



Overview of Bridging Course

Department: Religious Education (Philosophy, Ethics, Christianity)

What is the focus of this bridging course?

- Students will be introduced to some key arguments for the existence of God such as Religious Experiences and the Teleological Argument.
- Students will explore the challenges that Science has made to Religion, evaluate the strength of these challenges and consider if Science has shown religion to be unnecessary.
- Students will look at the rise of Secularism and the reasons behind this. This will lead into looking at the characteristics of New Religious Movements and why they seem to be more appealing.

w/b 27 April

Overview of what students will cover this week:

- Students will learn about what the course entails, and the different aspects of the A-Level in Religious Education.
- Students will begin by looking at Philosophy and recap any ideas they might have already learnt about Religious Experience when studying it at GCSE.
- Students will then begin to learn about William James' characteristics of a Religious Experience and his views on such experiences.
- Students will look at a range accounts of Religious Experiences and apply the 4 characteristics as highlighted by James as well as considering other possibilities as to what may have caused such an experience.
- Reflection will be given as to how far Religious Experiences prove that there is a God and what challenges there are from scholars and generally to suggest that God was not involved.

w/b 4 May

- Students will continue with Philosophy and consider the Teleological Argument, recalling key ideas that they covered at GCSE.
- Students will recap over the Analogy of the Watch by William Paley by reading the actual extract specifically looking at the extra 7 pieces of criteria suggested by Paley to strengthen his argument.
- Students will explore the problems of analogy as highlighted by David Hume.
- Other writings to be read are by Richard Dawkins and J.S.Mill. Consideration to be given to the strength of their arguments and if they successfully challenge the belief in God.

w/b 11 May

- Students will now consider challenges to religion from Science.
- A timeline is to be created showing the challenges that arose and the implications they had for religion. Students will watch "The Big Questions" where a variety of arguments are given supporting and challenging religion.
- Students will read the debate between Richard Dawkins and Francis Collins highlighting their arguments. Students will watch a clip of Collins speaking about how he came to have faith.

w/b 18 May

- Students will consider New Religious Movements (NRM's) and the effects of Secularisation.
- Students will read an article on the rise of secularisation in Europe. Students will watch a clip showing Christopher Hitchens challenge religion.
- Students will read a section from The God Delusion by Richard Dawkins and assess his challenges to religion.
- Students will explore the 3 types of NRM's and their characteristics. A comparison is to be made between NRM's and traditional religion to identify why NRM's are more popular.
- Students will learn about the different styles of exam questions and how to structure answers.

Work that will students will receive feedback on:

- Students will be given a range of exam style questions to answer.