

Transition Work

Philosophy and Ethics

Complete ALL tasks

Due: First lesson back

This work will also form a part of the first assessment in Week 4.

Types of Argument and Reasoning

You will need to understand these terms and be able to explain them/use them appropriately in both Philosophy and Ethics.

Deductive Arguments and Reasoning

Deductive reasoning, or deduction (top-down logic), starts out with a **general statement**, or hypothesis, and **examines the possibilities** to reach a **specific, logical conclusion**. Deductive reasoning **links premises with conclusions**. If **all premises are true**, the **terms are clear**, **and the rules of deductive logic are followed**, **then the conclusion reached is necessarily true**. The scientific method uses deduction to test hypotheses and theories.

In deductive reasoning, if something is true of a class of things in general, it is also true for all members of that class. For example, "All men are mortal. Harold is a man. Therefore, Harold is mortal." For deductive reasoning to be sound, the hypothesis must be correct. It is assumed that the premises, "All men are mortal" and "Harold is a man" are true. Therefore, the conclusion is logical and true.

It's possible to come to a **logical conclusion** even if the **generalisation is not true**. If the generalization is wrong, the conclusion may be logical, but it may also be untrue. For example, the argument, "All bald men are grandfathers. Harold is bald. Therefore, Harold is a grandfather," is **valid logically** but it is **untrue** because the **original statement is false**.

Inductive Arguments and Reasoning

Inductive reasoning, also known as induction, or, informally, "bottom-up" logic, is a kind of reasoning that **constructs** or evaluates **general propositions** that are **derived** from **specific examples**. Here's an example: "Almost all people are taller than 26 inches. Gareth is a person. Therefore, Gareth is almost certainly taller than 26 inches." Inductive arguments are concerned with probability – how likely is something to be true.

Even if all of the premises are true in a statement, it is possible, in inductive reasoning, for the conclusion to be false. The conclusion does not follow logically from the statements.

Contrast

Deductive reasoning (top-down logic) contrasts with inductive reasoning (bottom-up logic) in the following way: In deductive reasoning, a conclusion is reached from general statements, but in inductive reasoning the conclusion is reached from specific examples.

A priori statements or knowledge

A statement is considered **a priori** if it is true or false **without** the need for observation, can that be known by reason alone (**prior** – meaning **before**).

A posteriori statements or knowledge

A statement is considered **a posteriori** if it is true or false **with** the need for observation, that cannot that be known by reason alone (**post** – meaning **after**).

Example

The intuitive distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge is best seen in examples.

A posteriori: "George V reigned from 1910 to 1936." This is something that (if true) one must come to know *a posteriori*, because it expresses an empirical fact unknowable by reason alone.

A priori By contrast, consider the proposition, "If George V reigned for at least four days: then he reigned for more than three days." This is something that one knows *a priori*, because it expresses a statement that one *can* derive by reason alone.

Synthetic and Analytic Statements

The **analytic–synthetic distinction** (also called the **analytic–synthetic dichotomy**) is a semantic (to do with language and logic) distinction, used primarily in philosophy and ethics to distinguish propositions (in particular, statements that are affirmative subject–predicate judgments) into two types: **analytic propositions** and **synthetic propositions**.

Analytic propositions are true by virtue of their meaning. In other words, they are true by definition and need no further information in order to prove. For example:

‘All bachelors are male’ or ‘All triangles have three sides’. You do not need any extra information to prove these true.

Synthetic propositions are true by how their meaning relates to the world. The statement is not true in and of itself and so in order to prove or disprove the statement, additional information is needed. For example:

‘All bears are white’ – in order to prove or disprove this you would need to check all bears to see if they are white.

Tasks:

Write your own example for each of the following:

1. An Inductive Argument
 2. A Deductive Argument
 3. An A Priori Statement
 4. An A Posteriori Statement
 5. A Synthetic Statement
 6. An Analytic Statement
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Philosophy Transition Tasks

A-Level Philosophy of Religion (H573)

Philosophy is simply “thinking about thinking”, an intellectual journey of life.

At A-Level we study Ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle. We then look at arguments for and against the existence of God. This involves the study of many philosophers including Kant, Descartes, Dawkins and Aquinas.

We start off looking at the Ancient Greek influences on Philosophy of Religion. To be prepared to start this you need to distinguish between the main approaches to knowledge:

Rationalism – Rationalist philosophers believe that all knowledge can be understood through a process of reasoning, without any external sources.

Empiricism – In philosophy, empiricism is a theory which believes that all knowledge comes from experience.

Compulsory Tasks – Work to be handed to teacher FIRST LESSON BACK

1. **Research** the **TWO** main approaches to knowledge and **produce a summary of each**. You should include particular philosophers, and link these to Plato or Aristotle.
2. **Read and summarise** the main points made in Plato’s **Allegory of the Cave**
 - a. <http://faculty.washington.edu/smcohen/320/cave.htm>
 - b. <http://voices.yahoo.com/platos-allegory-cave-analysis-summary-25170.html>
 - c. <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.8.vii.html>
3. **Read and summarise** the main points made by Aristotle in his **Metaphysics, Book 12**
 - a. <http://www.the-philosophy.com/aristotle-metaphysics-summary>
 - b. <http://www.philosophicalinvestigations.co.uk/index.php/philosophy/aristotle/1028-source>
 - c. <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.12.xii.html>
 - d. <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/Metaphysics12.htm>

Recommended Reading

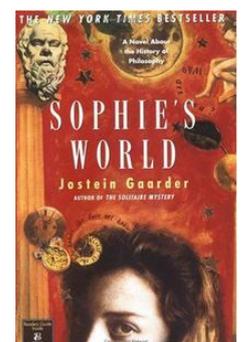
If you want to achieve a high grade in both A-Level then you need to be reading at a very high level. You need to engage with much more than just the textbook available. We have two copies of each of the following books in the RE Department should you want/need to borrow them.

So you should aim to read AT LEAST ONE of the following books:

1. *Philosophy: The Essential Study Guide* by Nigel Warburton ISBN 0415341809
2. *Philosophy: The Classics* by Nigel Warburton ISBN 0415356296
3. *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder ISBN 1858815304

It would also be worth your while watching AT LEAST ONE of the following films:

1. The Matrix
2. The Truman Show
3. The Dead Poets’ Society



Ethics Transition Tasks

A Level Religious Ethics (H573)

Ethics is the part of philosophy that deals with good and evil. Ethics tries to answer questions like:

- What actions are good? What actions are evil?
- What methods can we use to differentiate between moral and immoral?
- Is morality the same for everyone?
- How successful are the different moral theories when applied to real world examples?

To be prepared for the study of ethics it is important to be able to distinguish between:

Deontological ethics – This is the branch of ethics concerned with **actions**. Here we should follow independent moral rules or duties. When we follow our duty, we are behaving morally. When we fail to follow our duty, we are behaving immorally.

Absolutist ethics – Some people think there are such universal rules that apply to everyone. This sort of thinking is called moral absolutism.

Teleological ethics – This is the branch of ethics concerned with **consequences**. Consequentialism teaches that people should do whatever produces the greatest amount of good consequences.

Relativist ethics – If you look at different cultures or different periods in history you'll find that they have different moral rules. So what is right or wrong depends on the situation.

Compulsory Tasks – handed to your teacher FIRST LESSON BACK:

1. **Research** the **FOUR main categories** of **ethical theory** and **produce a summary of each**. You should include particular philosophers or ethical theories, and link these to examples of ethical dilemmas.
2. **Read and summarise AT LEAST ONE** news article on each on the following areas of **Applied Ethics**:
 - a. Businesses and social responsibility
 - b. EuthanasiaYou should include the main ethical issue(s) raised in the article, and explain the arguments **FOR** and **AGAINST** the issue(s) mentioned.

Recommended Task – aiming for top marks you should read: We have two copies of the following books in the RE Department should you want/need to borrow them.

3. *Puzzle of Ethics* – Peter Vardy ISBN 9780006281443

Advisable:

Read or watch AT LEAST ONE of these:

The Good Place (Ethics and Heaven)

A Short Stay In Switzerland (Euthanasia)

Trade Rules Are Nuts (Business)