



Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics (RS) 2024

“The unexamined life is not worth living” – Socrates.

**Welcome to A level Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics (RS) –
do Socrates proud!**

There are three distinct areas of study within the A level: Philosophy, Ethics and Buddhism.

The work has been set so that you will study and complete one of these areas of study at a time, each taking approximately 5 hours to complete. However, you may find yourselves researching for longer as you discover more and more and find yourself asking more questions, often with few answers!

You will need to read a variety of resource materials across the three component papers during the 2-year course. The more you read, the greater your mastery of the language of these subjects and your ability to argue coherently and perceptively. Here is a list of books you may wish to source some of your learning from for the A level course! But please don't buy any books just yet, unless you can't resist!

Oxford A Level Religious Studies for OCR: L Ahluwalia and R Bowie

The Philosophy of Religion: P Cole

Philosophy of religion for OCR: Dennis Brown and Ann Greggs

Religion and Ethics for OCR: Mark Coffey and Dennis Brown

Ethical Theory: M Thompson

Ethics Matters: P and C Vardy

Understanding Religious Ethics: R Wright

A Students Approach to Buddhism by Denise Cush

Buddhism by Dominique Side

Other Alternatives: Teach yourself Buddhism by Clive Erricker Buddhism

A Very Short Introduction by Damien Keown



"We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark, the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light." Plato (428/427 or 424/423 – 348/347 BC)

What does this quote from Plato mean?

What does light refer to in this quote?

**"IT IS THE
MARK OF AN
EDUCATED MIND
TO ENTERTAIN
A THOUGHT
WITHOUT
ACCEPTING IT"**

- ARISTOTLE

Let the thinking begin!

Philosophy - any questions please contact Mrs Singer

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PHILOSOPHY

1] What is philosophy? Watch the following YouTube clip (we use *Crash Course Philosophy* a lot!) https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=1A_CAKYt3GY

Summarise what philosophy is in your own words, give examples of philosophical questions.

During the course, you will study different philosophers and analyse their theories on many different issues, many of them appear with ethical theories too!



Plato

Aristotle

Anselm

Descartes

2] Research the **four** philosophers named above. Write about each philosopher, include:

- a) Basic biographical detail e.g., when and where, life history etc.
- b) At least ONE interesting or perhaps quirky fact about them.
- c) What key philosophical ideas they had (that contributed to key philosophical theories).

The School of Life YouTube is an excellent channel for most Philosophy and Ethics topics.

[Philosophy - watch](#) is all about Plato – have a watch and then look for the other philosophers, one source for your research.

Other possible resources:

<https://www.britannica.com/browse/Philosophers>

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato/>

[Introducing philosophy | OpenLearn - Open University](#)

Present the information how you wish, ensuring it is comprehensive and unique to you, avoid copying text. Two examples a knowledge organiser or PowerPoint.



3] Test your thinking with this game:

<https://www.philosophyexperiments.com/god/Default.aspx>

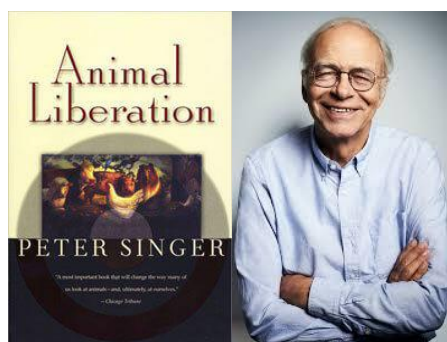
Then ask others to complete it and have a debate on some of the issues and present the different points on one side of A4.

4] Attached is an article called, '*Talking about the impossible.*' Presented are some philosophical questions. Choose two of the questions, read and produce a dialogue of your views on the two questions with reference to some of what you have just read.

[Talking about the impossible.pdf](#) In SMSC resources, A Level Induction 2023.

5] Peter Singer, Australian philosopher. Animal philosophy.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3-BX-jN_Ac



"What we must do is bring nonhuman animals within our sphere of moral concern and cease to treat their lives as expendable for whatever trivial purposes we may have."

Singer, P.

Research the book *Animal Liberation* and Singer's philosophy on animal rights, a revolutionary book in 1975.

<https://www.peta.org/about-peta/learn-about-peta/ingrid-newkirk/animal-liberation/>

Other possible areas for research on animal liberation (use your own too);

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/1999/nov/06/weekend.kevintoolis>

<https://www.ecolitbooks.com/2013/11/book-review-animal-liberation-peter-singer/>

<https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/philosophy/the-philosophical-necessity-of-animal-rights>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/rights/moralstatus_1.shtml

Write an essay (max 1000 words) answering the following statement after the above research, include different points of view.

'Humans are no different from animals.'