

Welcome to the Religious Studies Department



We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you to the Sixth Form.

This Transition Pack contains information to support your transition from GCSE to A Level study.

Please read all the documents ready to begin Year 12:

- Independent Learning in Religious Studies
- Useful Online Resources for Religious Studies
- Religious Studies Introductory Tasks

- **Read the Subject Information Sheet** which is available here:
[CRGS Subject Sheet - Religious Studies](#)
- **Download the exam board specification** which is available here:
[OCR A Level Religious Studies](#)
- **Read the 'Specification at a Glance'**, focusing on the A Level content.
- Some of these resources will become more useful when you have moved further through the course, such as the A Level specification, so store them where you can revisit them over the next 2 years.
- Don't worry if some of the work sounds challenging. A Level work is more difficult than GCSE work after all. Your teachers will be supporting you through this transition. Please talk to us if you are unsure about any aspect of the course.



We look forward to seeing you soon.

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Useful Online Resources for Religious Studies

If you wish to explore some of the issues and topics we will be exploring in class, then we would recommend these sources:

Why Study Religious Studies at A Level? I Think Therefore I Teach

This is a video from an RS teacher in a Sixth Form who explains what RS at A Level involves. There are also other videos on specific topics which we shall be studying.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eU7AX7TgLOI>



The School of Life Western Philosophy



These are some short, animated videos which introduce you to the ideas of some of the philosophers we study in this course. We don't study all the philosophers covered in this series and would recommend some of the following: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, David Hume, Immanuel Kant & Sartre.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwxNMb28XmpeypJMHfNbJ4RAfRtmAN3P>

The Panpsycast podcast

These are some informal and informative podcasts which cover a wide range of philosophical and ethical topics. It is produced by people who have recently graduated and now teach in universities or schools. The show features regularly in the Top Higher Education Podcasts Chart in iTunes. We recommend that you click on the tab episodes and select some topics that interest you.

<https://thepanpsycast.com/home>



'The Moral Maze' on BBC Radio 4 – available on the BBC Sounds app



This is a series of debates on topical ethical issues between members of a panel and includes contributions from guest witnesses.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qk11>

TED Talks

This website has many short lectures covering a whole range of ideas. Select the topics of Philosophy and Religion & choose a talk which interests you.

<https://www.ted.com/talks>



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Philosophy: Greek Philosophy:

Read pages 32-36: [Sophie's World.pdf](#) and answer the questions



1. What method did Socrates use to engage others in philosophical discussion, and how did it differ from traditional teaching methods? (Hint: Consider the role of questioning and Socratic irony.)
2. Why is it difficult for historians to distinguish between the actual teachings of Socrates and those of Plato? (Think about the sources we rely on for information about Socrates.)
3. In what ways did Socrates' philosophical mission challenge the Athenian authorities and traditional values? (Reflect on why his actions were seen as dangerous.)
4. How does Socrates compare to the Sophists, and why is this distinction important to understanding his philosophy? (Make sure to define both terms clearly.)
5. Explain the significance of Socrates' claim: "One thing only I know, and that is that I know nothing." What does this reveal about his philosophical approach? (Consider this in relation to humility, wisdom, and truth-seeking.)
6. What role did Socrates believe reason and conscience played in ethical decision-making? (How did this set him apart from the cultural norms of his time?)
7. How does the comparison between Socrates and Jesus help us understand the social and moral impact of their teachings? (Think about their methods, legacies, and the reactions of those in power.)
8. Socrates believed that "he who knows what is good will do good." How might this idea be challenged by modern ethical theories or psychological understandings of human behaviour? (This is an evaluative question—explore potential criticisms.)

Ethics: Introduction to ethics

Read pages 3-8 of this book: [Ethics for A-Level: For AQA Philosophy and OCR Religious Studies](#) and answer the questions



9. How would you explain what philosophy is to someone?
10. Do you think philosophy is important? If yes, why? If no, why?
11. List some ethical questions.
12. Can you figure out if your questions are Normative, Applied, or Metaethical? #
13. Is there a link between Applied, Normative and Metaethics? Which type of ethics do you think it would be best to study first, and which last?
14. What is the difference between prudential and moral reasons?
15. What is meant by the "is/ought" gap? Why is it important to remember when discussing ethical questions?
16. What role, if any, does science have in ethical arguments?
17. What are thought experiments? Why might they be useful to philosophers?
18. "Because there are so many different views on moral issues there cannot be any moral truth". What do you think of this line of argument?

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Developments in Christian Thought: Life of Jesus

Watch this clip: [Gospel of Mark Summary: A Complete Animated Overview](#)



Create an A3 timeline of the life of Jesus. Include reference to the following:

- Main sections: Galilee, the road, Jerusalem
- Kingdom and God and repentance
- Messianic Secret
- The disciples
- Messiah and sacrifice
- Religious leaders

Please bring this work with you at the start of September to hand in. We will provide you with answers to the questions to self-assess your view.

We look forward to teaching you and appreciate the time you are taking to complete this work.

Best wishes,

Mrs J Hartley
Head of RMPS