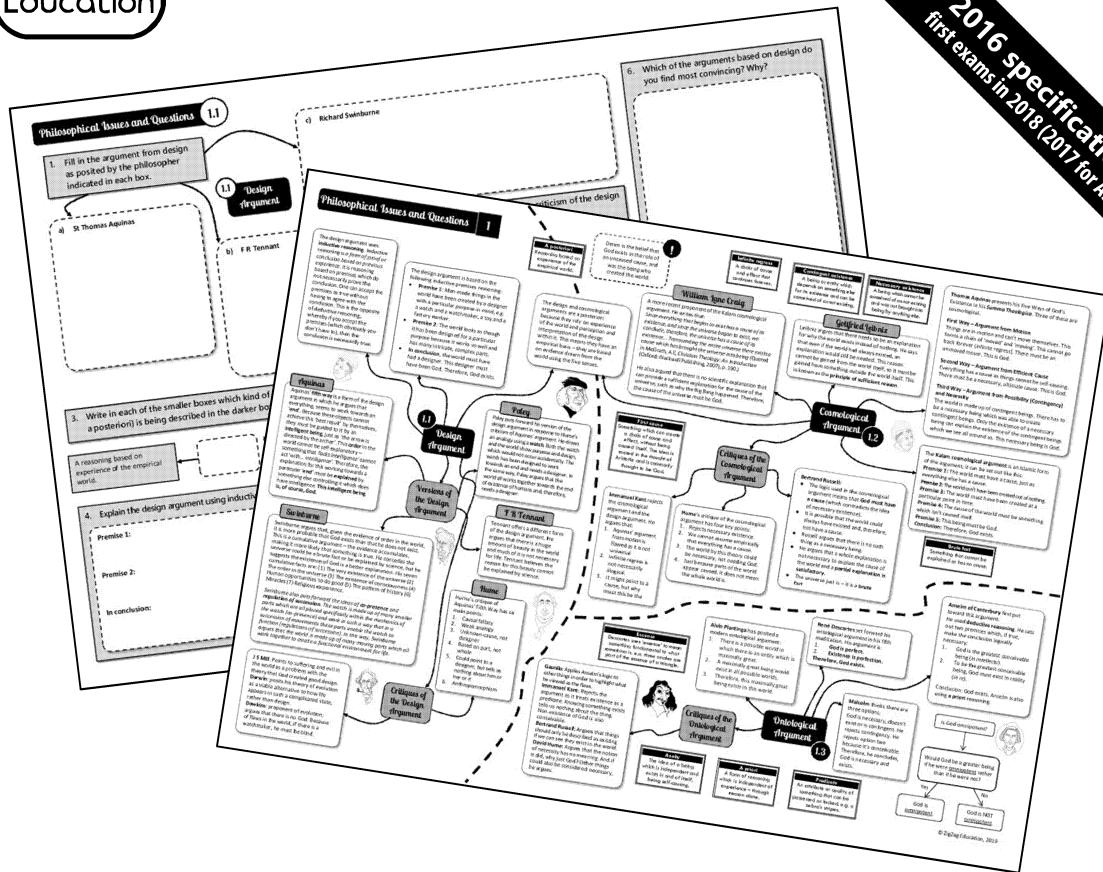


2016 specification
first exams in 2018 (2017 for AS)



Topic on a Page

for AS / A Level Year 1 Edexcel

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource covers the AS / A Level Year 1 Edexcel Religious Studies specification for Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion, and includes the following content:

1 Philosophical Issues and Questions

- 1.1 Design Argument
- 1.2 Cosmological Argument
- 1.3 Ontological Argument


2 The Nature of Religious Experience

- 2.1 The Nature of Religious Experience
- 2.2 Influence of Religious Experience as an Argument for the Existence of God

3 Problems of Evil and Suffering

- 3.1 Problems of Evil and Suffering
- 3.2 Theodicies and Solutions to the Problem of Suffering

The resource is split into five sections as follows:

1. **A4 teacher information pages.**
2. **Three A3 revision posters**, between them covering the seven subtopics. These are labelled: **1** to **3**. These posters are intended as a summary of all topic material, focusing on the main points rather than the detail, so that all important areas are covered without going into too much depth.
3. **Seven A3 subtopic sheets with activities.** Each of these sheets covers one subtopic and provides write-on activities for students to complete. Answers can generally be found in the A3 revision posters themselves, but are also provided in a separate answer document (see section 5). These are labelled with numbers inside white circles: **7**.
Exam-style questions, modelled on those found in the AS / A Level exam, are marked by a pencil icon: 
4. **Seven A4 subtopic revision posters.** These provide answers for the main activities given in the A3 subtopic activity sheets. As revision posters, these can be used as a summary for each area, and have enough space for teacher or student annotation. These are labelled with numbers inside black circles: **7**.
5. **A4 answer sheets.** These pages provide more detailed answers to the questions on the A3 subtopic activity sheets; in particular, the long-answer questions. Student-friendly, Edexcel-style mark schemes are also provided for the exam-style questions.

All posters can be displayed on classroom walls, or given to students to learn in lessons or at home.

As a whole, the resource can be used to help students to consolidate knowledge at the end of a topic/subtopic, or to revise before a test or an exam. Different styles and layouts are used to make the information interesting and to help the students engage with the information in a productive way.

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The design argument uses **inductive reasoning**. Inductive reasoning is a form of proof or conclusion based on previous experience. It is reasoning based on premises which do not necessarily prove the conclusion. One can accept the premises as true without having to agree with the conclusion. This is the opposite of deductive reasoning, whereby if you accept the premises (which obviously you don't have to), then the conclusion is necessarily true.

The design argument is based on the following inductive premises reasoning:

- **Premise 1:** Man-made things in the world have been created by a designer with a particular purpose in mind, e.g. a watch and a watchmaker, a toy and a factory worker.
- **Premise 2:** The world looks as though it has been designed for a particular purpose because it works so well and has many intricate, complex parts.
- **In conclusion,** the world must have had a designer. This designer must have been God. Theists believe that God exists.

A posteriori
Reasoning based on experience of the empirical world.

Deism is the belief that God exists in the role of an uncaused cause, and was the being who created the world.

Infinite regress
A chain of cause and effect that continues forever.

William Lane Craig

A more recent proponent of the Kalam cosmological argument. He writes that: *Since everything that begins to exist has a cause of its existence, the universe began to exist, we conclude, the universe has a cause of its existence. Transcending the entire universe there exists a cause which has brought the universe into being* (Quoted in McGrath, A E, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), p. 190.)

He also argued that there is no scientific explanation that can provide a sufficient explanation for the cause of the universe, such as why the Big Bang happened. Therefore, the cause of the universe must be God.

Aquinas
Aquinas' **fifth way** is a form of the design argument in which he argues that everything, seems to work towards an 'end'. Because these objects cannot achieve this 'best result' by themselves, they must be guided to it by an **intelligent being**, just as 'the arrow is directed by the archer'. This **order** in the world cannot be self-explanatory – something that 'lacks intelligence' cannot act 'with... intelligence'. Therefore, the explanation for this working towards a particular 'end' must be **explained** by something else controlling it which does have intelligence. **This intelligent being is, of course, God.**



1.1 Design Argument

Versions of the Design Argument

Swinburne
Swinburne argues that, given the evidence of order in the world, it is more probable that God exists than that he does not exist. This is a cumulative argument – the evidence accumulates, making it more likely that something is true. He concedes the universe could be a brute fact or be explained by science, but he suggests the existence of God is a better explanation. His seven cumulative facts are: (1) The very existence of the universe (2) The order in the universe (3) The existence of consciousness (4) Human opportunities to do good (5) The pattern of history (6) Miracles (7) Religious experience.

Swinburne also puts forward the ideas of **co-presence and regulation of succession**. The watch is made up of many smaller parts which are all placed specifically within the mechanics of the watch (co-presence) and work in such a way that in a succession of movements these parts each perform a watch function (regulations of succession). Swinburne argues that the world is made up of parts which all work together to create a functioning life.



J S Mill: Points to suffering and evil in the world as a problem with the theory that God created good design.
Darwin: posits his theory of evolution as a viable alternative to how life appears in such a complicated state, rather than design.
Dawkins: proponent of evolution; argues that there is no God. Because of flaws in the world, if there is a watchmaker, he must be blind.

Critiques of the Design Argument

Paley
Paley puts forward his version of the design argument in response to Hume's criticism of Aquinas' argument. He draws an analogy using a **watch**. Both the watch and the world show purpose and design, which would not occur accidentally. The watch has been designed to work towards an end and needs a designer. In the same way, Paley argues that the world all works together towards the end of existence of humans and, therefore, needs a designer.

F R Tennant
Tennant offers a different form of the design argument. He argues that there is a huge amount of beauty in the world and much of it is not necessary for life. Tennant believes the reason for this beauty cannot be explained by science.

Hume
Hume's critique of Aquinas' Fifth Way has main points:

1. Causality is an analogy
2. Cause, not designer
3. Based on part, not whole
4. Could point to a designer, but tells us nothing about him or her or it
5. Anthropomorphism



First cause
Something which can create a chain of cause and effect, without being caused itself. The idea is rooted in the thought of Aristotle and is commonly thought to be God.

Immanuel Kant rejects the cosmological argument and the design argument. He argues that:

1. Aquinas' argument from motion is flawed as it is not universal
2. Infinite regress is not necessarily illogical.
3. It might point to a cause but not a designer.

Critiques of Cosmological Argument

Hume's critique of the cosmological argument has four key points:

1. Rejects necessary existence
2. We cannot assume empirically that everything has a cause
3. The world by this theory would be necessary, not needed
4. Just because parts of the world appear caused, it does not mean the whole world is.

Essence
Descartes uses 'essence' to mean something fundamental to what something is, e.g. three angles are part of the essence of a triangle.

Gaunilo: Applies Anselm's logic to other things in order to highlight what he viewed as the flaws.
Immanuel Kant: Rejects the argument as it treats existence as a predicate. Knowing something exists tells us nothing about the thing. Non-existence of God is also conceivable.
Bertrand Russell: Argues that things should only be described as existing if we can see they exist in the world.
David Hume: Argues that the notion of necessity has no meaning. And if it did, why just God? Other things could also be considered necessary, he argues.



Critiques of Ontological Argument

Aseity
The idea of a being which is independent and exists in and of itself, being self-causing.

Alvin Plantinga moderns:

1. The world is not self-causing
2. A necessary being exists
3. The being is self-causing

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William James was a nineteenth-century theologian who was specifically interested in the religious experience. He developed the following terms:

Ineffability: the nature of religious experience which is beyond human words

Noetic quality: being beyond the knowledge of normality

Transiency: the short-lived nature of a religious experience (but it may nonetheless effect great change in the person having it).

Passivity: a religious experience as being sourced from outside the individual and having an impact on them.

Rudolph Otto was a Christian Protestant theologian who examined the nature of religious experience. He developed the following terms:

Mysterium: the mystery of religious experience

Tremendum: sense of awe at religious experiences

Fascians: fascination with the divine

Religious experience
A religious experience is an experience of something which is not normally experienced.

Religious experiences are also considered by some to arise purely from social, rather than religious, factors; for example, group hysteria during religious worship. Others might point towards the fact that they take the form of religions they are already familiar with through their societal upbringing.

Inductive
Drawing a conclusion based on a number of particular experiences.

Religious experience argument for God's existence is an inductive and cumulative argument.

Freud offered a psychological explanation of the phenomenon of religious experiences.

He called religion a neurosis in the sense that it is a form of mental illness or derangement. Religion and God are, therefore, a creation of the human mind, rather than objectively true; they are hallucinations.

John Hick became a Christian follower. He claimed to be a strong religious experientialist. These ideas began with his first work *On God*. He argued that Christianity is understood not by propositional revelation but by non-propositional revelation; he believed that individuals experiencing the world were experiencing the religious.

Dawkins argues that the 'symptoms' of religious experience and psychosis are incredibly similar, leading him to believe that this is an explanation for this phenomenon which does not lead to an argument for the existence of God. He argues that people who are experiencing a religious experience are not necessarily suffering from a form of psychosis, but are more commonly found on psychiatric wards.

Dr Michael Persinger is a well-respected Canadian scientist. He argues that religious experience is not a phenomenon that can be explained by forces outside the body, but rather within the body. He argues that the source of religious experience is not necessarily from outside the body but from within the very brain itself, more specifically within the **temporal lobe**. He argues that supernatural experiences are perceived to be from God, but can in fact be explained by the brain. The term he used to refer to this idea is the 'God Helmet'.

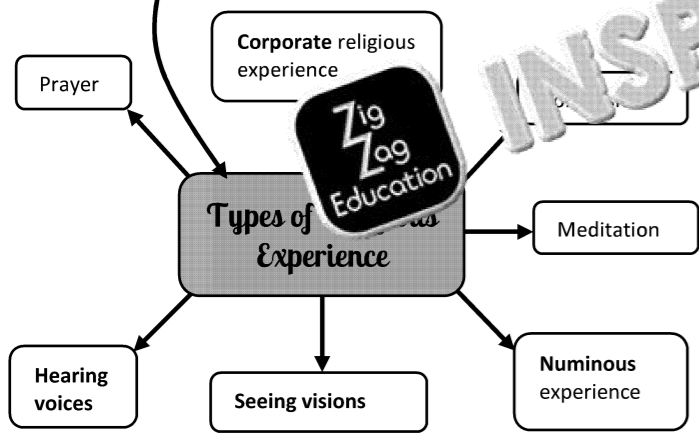
Peter Vardy argued that religious experience is not a phenomenon that can be explained by forces outside the body, but rather within the body. He argues that the source of religious experience is not necessarily from outside the body but from within the very brain itself, more specifically within the **temporal lobe**. He argues that supernatural experiences are perceived to be from God, but can in fact be explained by the brain. The term he used to refer to this idea is the 'God Helmet'.

Vardy argues that people's presuppositions regarding religion will affect how they interpret events. If they believe in God, they are more likely to accept an experience as being religious. This raises the issue of whether these experiences are **subjective** or **objective**.

Propositional and non-propositional revelation: propositional revelation reveals a truth about God, whereas non-propositional revelation does not necessarily entail facts being revealed, but rather God making himself known.

There is not one definition, but many, which all sit under the wider umbrella term 'religious experience'. These could include any of the types of religious experience below.

- Religious experiences can be divided into two different categories:
- Direct religious experience** (contact with God / an ultimate reality); for example, the conversion of Paul to Christianity and the giving of the Qur'an to Muhammad.
 - Indirect religious experience** (an internal sense of something other than this world); for example, the many mystical experiences of St Teresa of Avila in which she felt God's presence.



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Problems of Evil and Suffering 3

Is he [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? Whence then is evil?

Epicurus (341–270)

Omnipotence
God as all-powerful.

Omniscience
God as all-knowing.

Omnibenevolence
God as all-good.

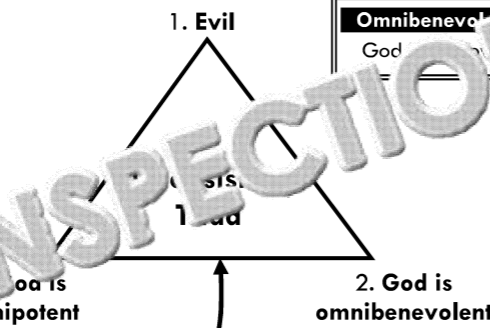
Privation
The absence of some good, e.g. the result of evil.



A theodicy is an attempt to show evil does not rule out the possibility of God. There are a variety of ways in which philosophers and theists have attempted to do this.

The weakness of omnipotence is challenged by the counterargument that free will is needed for human beings to pursue a real good.

The strengths of classical theism with its omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God for evil. Also, the argument that free will is precluded by evil and suffering, but attributed to free will is precluded by evil and suffering, but attributed to free will is precluded by evil and suffering.



3.1 Problems of Evil and Suffering

The **problem of evil** is one of the biggest points of philosophical contention between theists. It seems inconsistent that evil can exist with an omnipotent and benevolent God. The problem remains that:

- evidence for evil cannot be denied
- the omnipotence of God is central to Christian teaching
- the benevolence of God is central to Christian teaching

There are two types of evil:

Moral evil: suffering caused by the actions of humans

Natural evil: suffering caused by occurrences in nature

Hume believes that the problem of evil is a good argument against the existence of God, or at the very least the existence of the God of the Bible.

J L Mackie argues that these three principles are inconsistent and cannot be made compatible. He suggests no valid solution has been found that does not compromise or remove one of them, most commonly God's omnipotence. Therefore, he believes it is the hardest challenge to theistic beliefs.

Process theodicy is an important theodicy. It posits that the world is always changing, and that there is a natural order. Good occurs when the natural order works as it should. Evil occurs when there is discord, as a result of human free will. It presents God as being part of the world and, therefore, a fellow sufferer.

The issue is that this is not a traditional theodicy in that God's omnipotence is somewhat limited. Indeed, so are the benevolence, omniscience and transcendence of the traditional view of God in Judeo-Christian tradition.

God is, in this method of thinking, in a way responsible for the creation of evil.

The question remains, therefore, does the good created here outweigh the evil?

Religious Responses

Punishment for sin	<p>Evil is considered by some Christians to be the fair punishment by God for sins committed.</p> <p>Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suffering appears to happen randomly, e.g. in the story of Job, where Job is punished severely, not because he had committed any sin. God seems not to punish those who do commit sins, but rather to reward them with them.
A test from God	<p>The experience of suffering is considered by some Christians to be a test of a believer's faith in God – that they can continue to believe in God despite the suffering.</p> <p>Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If God is omniscient, he should already know what a believer's faith is like. God could achieve his aim without such extreme and brutal suffering.
From the Devil	<p>Some Christians believe that there is evil in the world because of the Devil (or Satan). The Devil is understood to be an angel who chose, through its free will, to turn against God. The Devil lives in hell and creates evil and suffering in the world.</p> <p>Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If God is omnipotent, he should be able to stop the Devil. If God created the world and everything in it, then he must have created the Devil, which would mean he was ultimately responsible for any suffering brought about by the Devil.

Epistemic distance
An argument by Hick that God created humans at a special distance from him so they could know God but not be so close they had no choice not to believe in him.

Gottfried Leibniz argued that this is the best of all possible worlds, which means that there is no other world that God could have created that would be better than this one. Therefore, the world is the best of all possible worlds, despite the evil and suffering in it.

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Philosophical Issues and Questions

1.1

1. Fill in the argument from design as posited by the philosopher indicated in each box.

a) St Thomas Aquinas



1.1

Design Argument

c) Richard Swinburne

2. Explain the individual points of Hume's argument in one sentence.

- a) Causal fallacy
- b) Weak analogy
- c) Unknown cause
- d) Based on part, not whole
- e) Could point to a designer, but tells us nothing
- f) Anthropomorphism

3. Write in each of the smaller boxes which kind of argument (a priori or a posteriori) is being described in the darker boxes.

A reasoning based on experience of the empirical world.

A form of reasoning which is independent of experience – through reason alone

5. Explore the key ideas in his version of the design argument (Exam Practice)

4. Explain the design argument using inductive reasoning. The form is laid out for you.

Premise 1:

Premise 2:

In conclusion:



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1. Fill in the definitions of the key terms in the boxes to the right.

a) **First cause**

b) **Contingent existence**

c) **Necessary being**

2. Write A-C to indicate which of Aquinas' Five Ways each box describes.

Motion

Efficient Cause

Contingency and Necessity

B – Everything has an efficient cause. This is because... moving itself into... cause – this is logically... something has to already exist... create something else. Although there can be partial explanations for the efficient cause of individual things, there must be an ultimate efficient cause to explain the existence of the world. God is the efficient cause of everything that exists because, as a necessary being, he has always existed.

C – There are certain things in the world that are moving. Nothing can move by itself; therefore, there must be a cause of this movement. This cause must itself be in motion, because something without motion cannot create something that has motion. This forms a chain of 'moved' and 'moving'. This chain cannot go back forever (infinite regress); there must be a first mover that started this chain – God.

A – The world is made up of contingent beings. There has to be a necessary being which was able to create contingent beings. Only the existence of a necessary being can explain the existence of the contingent beings which we see all round us. This necessary being is God.

1.2
Cosmological Argument

3. Explain Leibniz's form of the cosmological argument.

4. Fill in the summary of cosmological argument in the box below.

Big Bang **sufficient**
God **caused**

William Lane Craig's thought cosmological argument are a...
 → 'Since everything that began to exist has a cause, the universe must have a cause. The universe began to exist, therefore, the universe has a cause. This cause must be transcendent and timeless. There exists a transcendent and timeless cause of the universe. This cause is God. God brought the universe into existence.'
 → He also argued that there is no explanation that can precede the universe, such as what happened. Therefore, there must be a first cause.

5. Explain the Kalam cosmological argument.

6. Which of the following means chain of cause and effect going forever?

a) Contingent regress

b) Infinite regress

c) Necessary

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1. Fill in the gaps – with no clues!

Anselm of _____ first put forward the _____ argument. He sets out two premises which, if true, make the conclusion logically necessary:

1. God is the _____ conceivable being.
2. To be the greatest _____ being, God must exist in _____.

Conclusion: God _____

2. Multiple-choice

What kind of arguer is Anselm's version of the ontological argument?
 a) _____
 b) _____
 c) A priori

3. Write the answer into the box with no clues!

a) _____
 → Something conceivable in minds.

b) _____
 → Something that exists within the reality.



5. Circle the word which is correct within the brackets.

Gaunilo posited a rebuttal to Anselm's ontological argument.

- His reply was entitled 'On Behalf of the **(Wise/Fool)**'.
- His argument tries to highlight the false reasoning in Anselm's argument by applying the reasoning to other objects (apart from God) which clearly do not exist. He uses the example of **(a lost / an imaginary)** island.
- Overall, Gaunilo is arguing that there needs to be some kind of **(inductive/empirical)** proof that the island (and God) exists.
- He concludes that it is not possible to give a definition of **(the island / God)** and from this definition alone decide that God exists.

1.3 Ontological Argument



7. Explain the responses of the three philosophers listed to the ontological argument.

1. Bertrand Russell

2. Immanuel Kant

3. David Hume

6. Define the terms in the boxes below.

a) **Essence**

b) **Aseity**

c) **A priori**

d) **Predicate**



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The Nature and Influence of Religious Experience 2.1

1. Fill in the gaps with the type of religious experience.

There are two different categories of religious experience. The _____ religious experience is an internal sense of something other than this world. The _____ is contact with the divine / God.



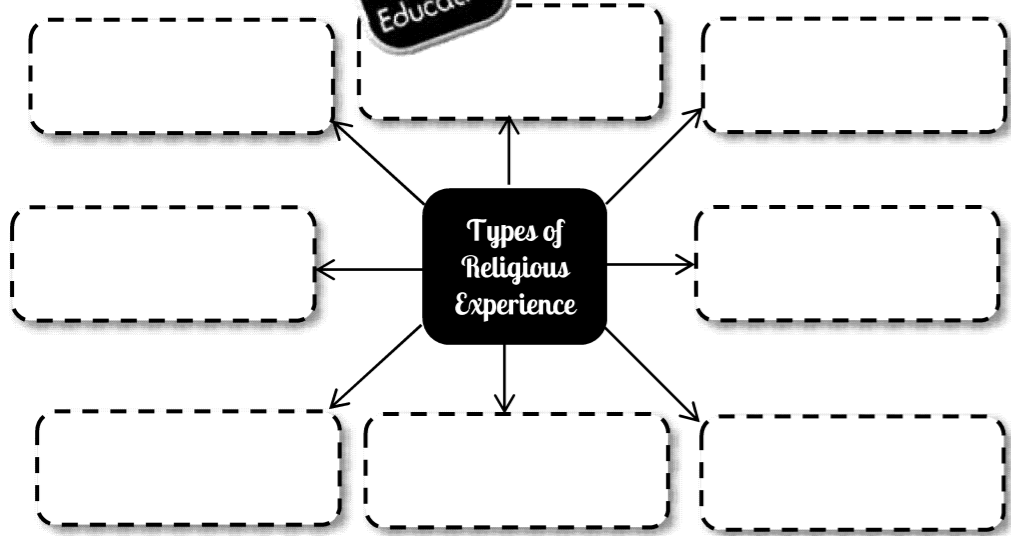
a) _____
 → This refers to the mystery of the religious encounter as experienced by the individual which cannot be adequately put into words.

b) _____
 → This refers to a particular nature of the experience of the feeling of awe: a sense of the impact of the greatness of the experienced impending power.

2. Fill in the spider diagram below to show different types of religious experience.



Types of Religious Experience



The Nature of Religious Experience 2.1

c) _____
 → This refers to the nature of the experience of being drawn into a religious experience: a fascination with the divine.

3. Fill in the terms and meanings below.

William James' terms regarding religious experience:

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____



6. Research an example of a religious experience a testimony has been given. Make note about your event, including which of the criteria are shown e.g. the experience of Pentecost in the Bible.

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1. Fill in the gaps, and then complete the inductive argument from experience. To fill in the gaps, use the words in the box below.

God conclude inductive religious

The _____ argument for the existence of God on the basis of _____ experiences argues that if I experience _____ by induction, then, as with other inductive experiences, I can rationally _____ that God exists.

It can be set out like this:

Premise 1:

Premise 2:

Premise 3:

In conclusion:



3. Fill in Brian Davies's four challenges, and four counterarguments.

His arguments:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

His replies:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

2.2
Religious Experience as an Argument for God's Existence

2. Find the error in the sentence and write the correction below.

- a) David Hume claimed that his three principles gave weight to the fact that religious experiences were as those who experience them claimed.

- b) The principle of credulity states that unless there is evidence against a claim, we should believe the testimony of the experienter.

- c) The principle of inductivism states that if there is sufficient evidence to disprove something, we should accept it as false. If evidence is presented to us, especially if many people report it, as in religious experiences, we should accept it as true.

- d) He argues that we should not instantly assume that people have understood what they have experienced.



4. Delete the incorrect options (in brackets) from the following sentences.

Something which is cumulative is (increasing/decreasing).
Some people argue that there is very (little/much) evidence for the existence of God. The (weight/force) of the testimony of people testifying that they have had religious experiences, in weighing up the evidence for the existence of God seems (unlikely/likely).
The (weight/force) of the testimony is in the favour of (theists/atheists).
One of the main objections with this argument is that, unlike the inductive argument, it only shows that God is (unlikely/likely) to exist.

5. Which of the following is one of Swinburne's principles?

- a) Principle of morality
- b) Principle of credulity
- c) Principle of testimony

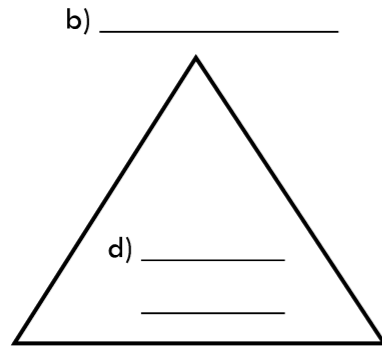
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Problems of Evil and Suffering 3.1

1. Fill in the points of the triangle, and write in the centre what philosophical concept this represents.



2. Define the terms below.

a) Omnipotence

b) Omniscience

c) Omnibenevolence

3. Briefly explain the problem of evil in three words defined to you.

5. Write the correct choice answers in the gaps below.

- The problem of **A** _____ is one of the biggest points of philosophical contention for theists to deal with.
- It seems **B** _____ that evil can exist with an omnipotent and benevolent God.
- The problem remains that:
- C** _____ for evil cannot be denied
 - the **D** _____ of God is central to Christian teaching
 - the **E** _____ of God is central to Christian teaching

A – goodness suffering evil hardship
B – plausible necessary inconsistent obvious
C – existence lies experience evidence
D – omnipotence malevolence incompetence affluence
E – malevolence physicality benevolence character

6. In the space provided to the right, write down three different religious responses to the problem of evil.

(Note: Religious responses are different from theodicy's, although those who posit theodicies might be religious.)

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

7. Epicurus described the problem of evil. In your own words, write out the problem of evil for revision purposes.

The Problems of Evil and Suffering

3.1

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1. Define the term 'theodicy'.

3. Write out the definitions for these terms in the spaces provided in the boxes.

Privation



Epistemic distance

A _____ believed, like Augustine, that evil was the result of **free will**. Humans have the ability to choose to do good or to do evil. Where the difference between Augustine and this philosopher is that he believed God gave humanity free will in order to achieve a particular purpose. He argued that this was to allow humans to develop moral and spiritual perfection – to develop to become truly in the **image of God**.



2. In the boxes below, write the name of the philosopher who put forward the theodicy being described in the corresponding box.

(A)

(B)

(C)

B _____ argues that evil is a **privation** – a lack or absence of something. Evil is, therefore, not an actual phenomenon; it does not exist. For example, the evil of disease is due to a lack (privation) of good health. For _____, privation is a result of the Fall as recorded in Genesis 3, when human beings disobeyed God, causing original sin to enter the world and cause corruption in humans and the natural order.

Theodicies

3.2

4. What are the strengths of John Hick's 'vale of soul-making' theodicy?



5. What are the weaknesses of each of the three theodicies below. Write your thoughts in the space provided.

a) St Augustine's theodicy

b) Leibniz's theodicy

c) John Hick's theodicy

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Philosophical Issues and Questions: Design Argument

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The design argument uses **inductive reasoning**. Inductive reasoning is a form of proof or conclusion based on previous experience. It is reasoning based on premises which do not necessarily prove the conclusion. One can accept the premises as true without having to agree with the conclusion. This is the opposite of deductive reasoning whereby if you accept the premises (which you usually don't have to), the conclusion is necessarily true.

The design argument is based on the following inductive premises reasoning:

- **Premise 1:** Man-made things in the world have been created by a designer with a particular purpose in mind, e.g. a watch is made by a watchmaker, a toy and a teddy bear by a toy maker.
- **Premise 2:** The world looks as though it has been designed for a particular purpose because it works so well and has many intricate, complex parts.
- **In conclusion,** the world must have had a designer. This designer must have been God. Therefore, God exists.

The arg bec of t inte wit em on wo

Aquinas

Aquinas' **fifth way** is a form of the design argument in which he argues that everything, seems to work towards an 'end'. Because these objects cannot achieve this 'best result' by themselves, they must be guided to it by an **intelligent being**, just as 'the arrow is directed by the archer'. This **order** in the world cannot be self-explanatory – something that 'lacks intelligence' cannot act 'with... intelligence'. Therefore, the explanation for this working towards a particular 'end' must be **explained** by something else controlling it which does have intelligence. This intelligent being is, of course, God.



1.1 Design Argument

Versions of the Design Argument

Paley

Paley puts forward his argument in response to Aquinas' argument using the example of a **watch**. Both the watch and the human body work towards an end, but the watch works together to the benefit of humans and, t

F R

Tennant's design argument is a huge advance and much more convincing. Tennant's beauty car

H

Hume's criticism of Aquinas' Fifth Way has three main points:

1. Causal fallacy
2. Weak analogy
3. Unknown designer
4. Based on the whole
5. Could be a designer, nothing at all, her or it
6. Anthropomorphism

Swin

Swinburne argues that, given the evidence of order in the world, it is more probable that God exists than that he does not exist. This is a cumulative argument – the evidence accumulates, making it more likely that something is true. He concedes the universe could be a brute fact or be explained by science, but he suggests the existence of God is a better explanation. His seven cumulative facts are: (1) The very existence of the universe (2) The order in the universe (3) The existence of consciousness (4) Human opportunities to do good (5) The pattern of history (6) Miracles (7) Religious experience.

Swinburne also puts forward the ideas of **co-presence** and **regulation of succession**. The watch is made up of many smaller parts which are all placed specifically within the mechanics of the watch (co-presence) and work in such a way that in a succession of movements these parts enable the watch to function (regulations of succession). In this way, Swinburne argues that the world is made up of many moving parts which all work together to create a functional environment.



J S Mill: Points to sufficient natural order in the world to explain the theory that the world is a natural good design.
Darwin: proposed his theory of evolution as a viable alternative to how life appears in such a complicated state, rather than design.
Dawkins: proponent of evolution; argues that there is no God. Because of flaws in the world, if there is a watchmaker, he must be blind.

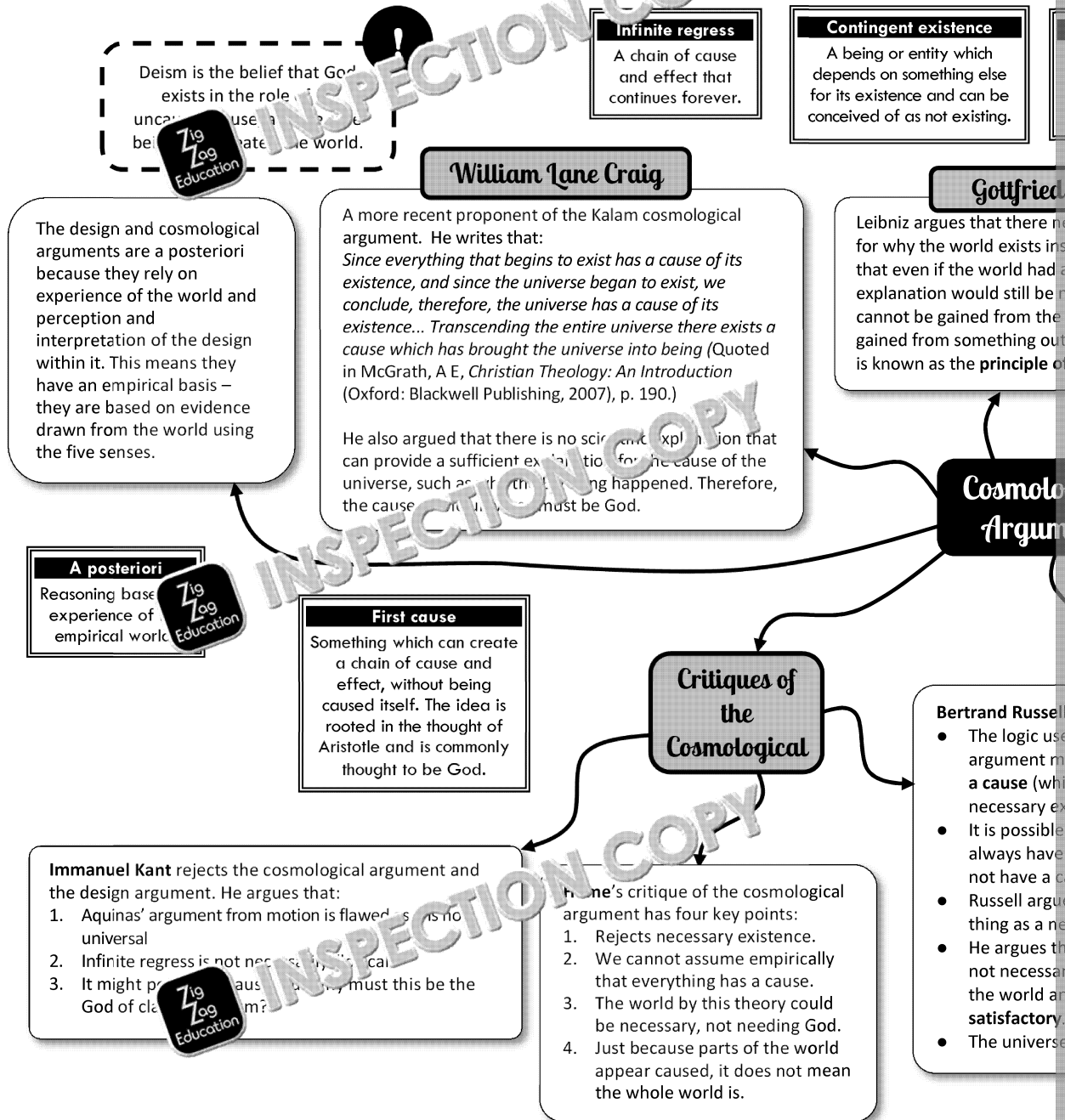


Critiques of the Design Argument

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Philosophical Issues and Questions: Cosmological Argument



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Essence
 Descartes uses 'essence' to mean something fundamental to what something is, e.g. three angles are part of the essence of a triangle.

Alvin Plantinga has posited a modern ontological argument:

1. There is a possible world in which there is an entity which is maximally great.
2. A maximally great being would exist in all possible worlds.
3. Therefore, this maximally great being exists in this world.

René Descartes set forth an ontological argument in his meditation. His argument is:

1. **God is perfect.**
2. **Existence is perfect.**

Therefore, God exists.

Ontological Argument 1.3

Critiques of the Ontological Argument

Gaunilo: Applies Anselm's logic to other things in order to highlight what he viewed as the flaw in the argument.

Immanuel Kant: Rejects the ontological argument as it treats existence as a predicate. Knowing something exists tells us nothing about the thing. Non-existence of God is also conceivable.

Bertrand Russell: Argues that things should only be described as existing if we can see they exist in the world.

David Hume: Argues that the notion of necessity has no meaning. And if it did, why just God? Other things could also be considered necessary, he argues.



Aseity
 The idea of a being which is independent and exists in and of itself being self-caused.

A priori
 A form of reasoning which is independent of experience – through reason alone.

An attribute of something possessed by itself.

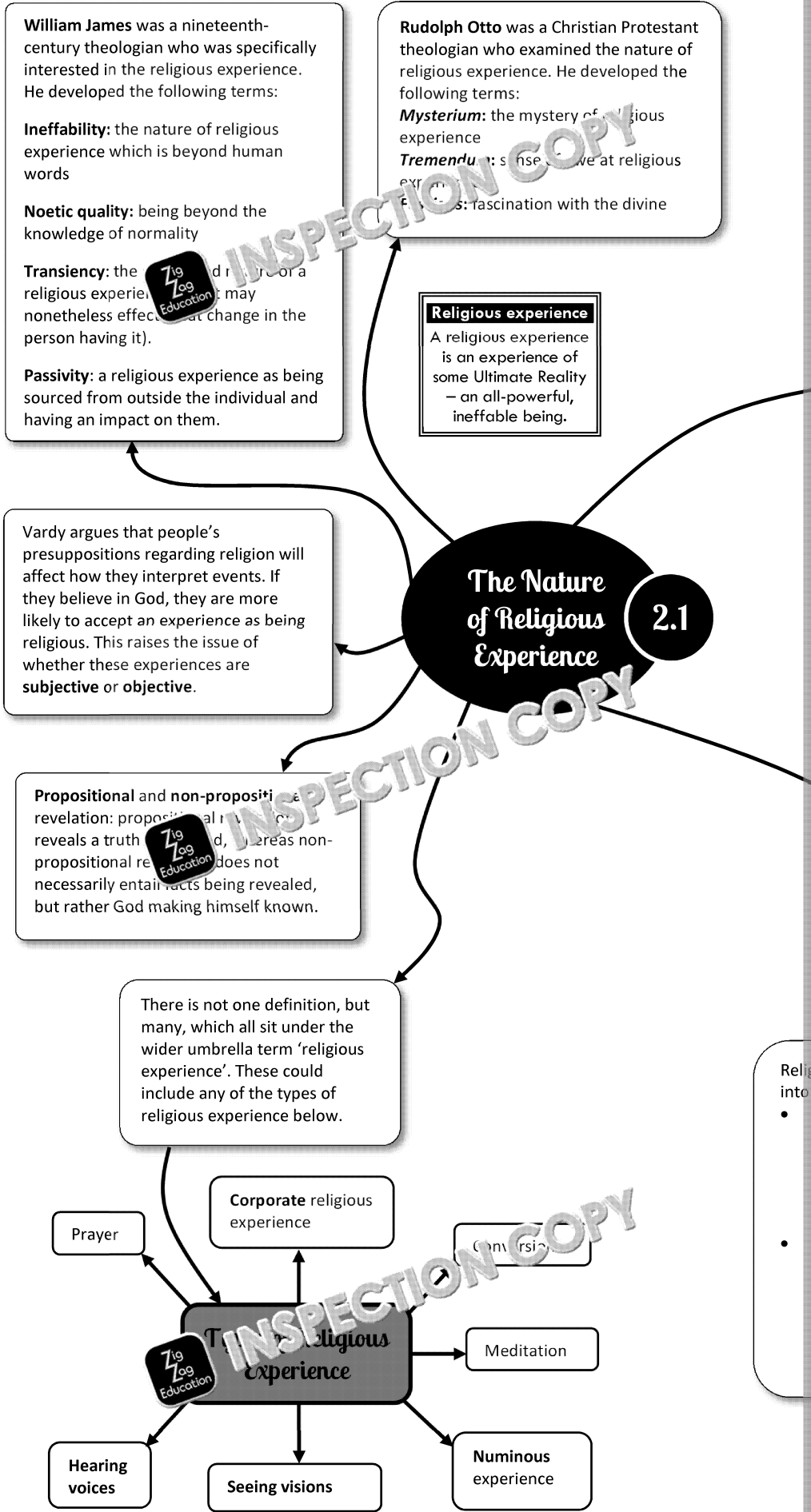


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Religious experiences can be divided into:

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Induction
Drawing a conclusion based on a certain number of particular experiences.

Cumulative argument
An argument which increases in likelihood with the more evidence given in its favour.

Religious experience as an argument for God's existence is a cumulative argument.

The inductive argument for the existence of God on the basis of religious experiences argues that if I experience God through induction, then, with other inductive experiences, I can generally conclude that God exists. It can be set out like this:
Premise 1: Experience of x indicates that x exists.
Premise 2: God can be experienced.
Premise 3: Experience of God indicates that God exists.
 In conclusion, God exists.

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John Hick became a Christian following what he claimed to be a strong religious experience. These ideas began with his first work, *Faith and Knowledge*. He argued that Christianity was best understood not by propositional revelation but by non-propositional revelation; he believed that individuals experiencing the world were also experiencing the religious.

Dawkins argues that the 'symptoms' of religious experience and psychosis are incredibly similar, leading him to believe that this is an explanation for this phenomenon which does not lead to an argument for the existence of God. He argues that those experiencing a religious experience are instead suffering from a form of psychosis not uncommonly found on psychiatric wards.

Dr Michael Persing is a well-respected Canadian neurologist. He argues that religious experience is not a phenomenon that can be explained by forces outside the body, but rather within the body. He argues that the source of religious experience is not necessarily from outside the body but from within the very brain itself, more specifically within the **temporal lobe**. He argues that supernatural experiences are perceived to be from God, but can in fact be explained by the brain. The term he used to refer to this



2.2
 Religious Experience as an Argument for God's Existence

- Four
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Peter Vardy

Peter Vardy argues that we need to question testimony and credulity. He believes that religious experiences have a low **probability** of being true. He compares religious experiences to having seen UFOs or the Loch Ness Monster. Other people need to be challenged with investigation in order to determine whether or not they are true. He encourages a sceptical approach.
 He also argues that people's views on religious experience will be influenced by their presuppositions. They will interpret a religious experience as being indicative of whatever religion they were raised with. He questions whether these are **subjective** or **objective** claims. He poses the question: can the experience be true but the interpretation subjective?



Richard Swinburne

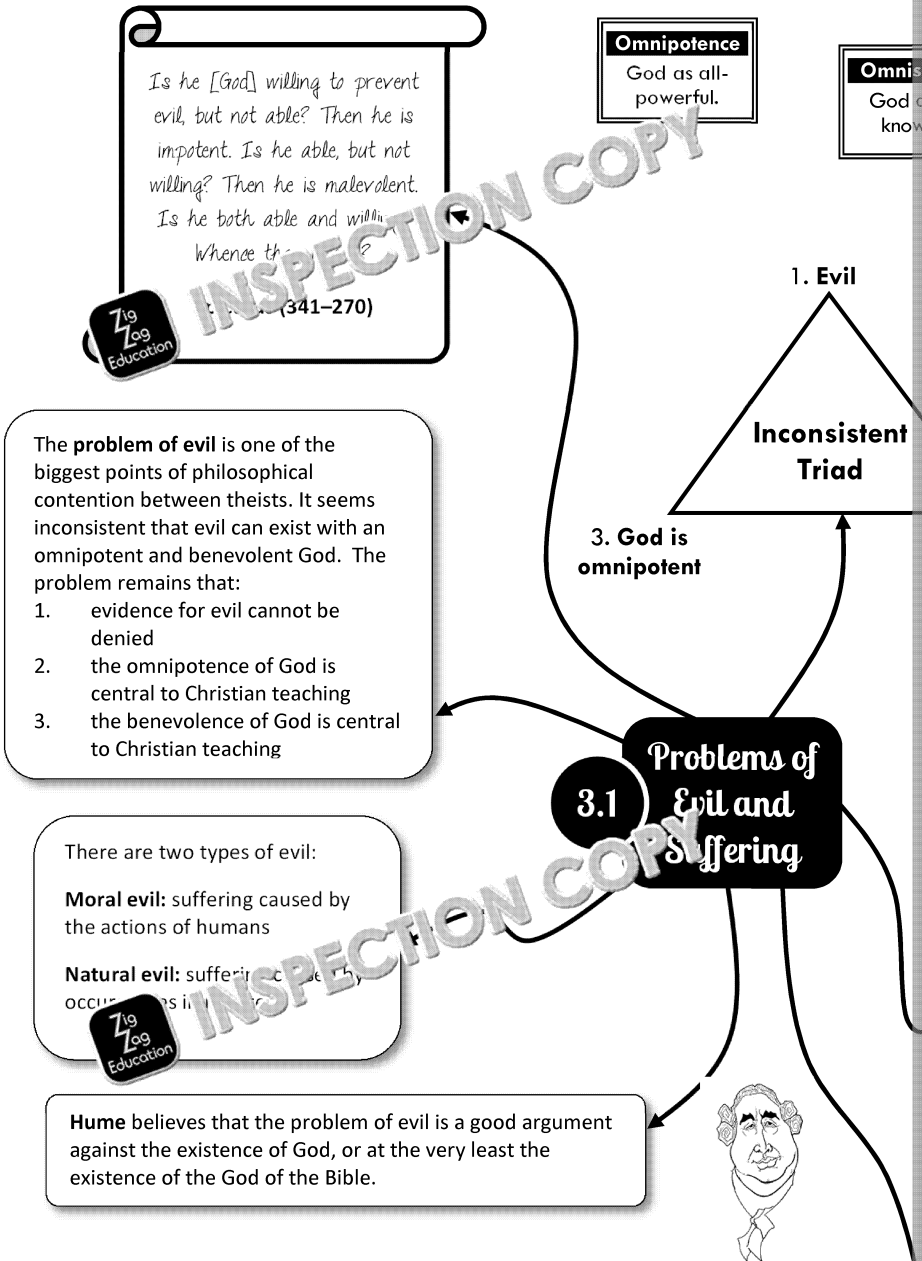
Richard Swinburne developed the likelihood that religious experiences are true.
 • **Principle of verification:** that we should believe the testimony of religious experiences only if we can verify them.
 • **Principle of credulity:** that we should believe that there are supernatural beings if we have a strong enough experience of them.
 However, things are often hallucinations.
 Swinburne is making an almost instantly assume people who have misunderstood what they saw. Very strong enough as an argument for...

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Problems of Evil and Suffering

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Religious Responses

Punishment for sin	<p>Evil is considered by some Christians to be the fair punishment by God for sins.</p> <p>Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suffering appears to happen randomly, e.g. in the story of Job, who is punished but not because of any sin he had committed. God seems not to punish those who do commit evil acts and they get away with it.
A test from God	<p>The experience of suffering is considered by some Christians as a test of an individual's faith in God – to believe in God despite their suffering. This is a belief of many religions including Christianity, Islam and Judaism.</p> <p>Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If God is all-knowing and all-powerful, why would he need to test a believer's faith – he should be able to know if they are sincere. God could achieve this aim without such extreme and brutal suffering.
From the Devil	<p>Some Christians believe that there is evil in the world because of the Devil (or Satan) who is understood to be an angel who chose, through its free will, to turn against God and creates evil and suffering in the world.</p> <p>Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If God is omnipotent, he should be able to stop the Devil. If God created the world and everything in it, then he must have created the Devil, which means he was ultimately responsible for any suffering brought about by the Devil.

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Problems of Evil and Suffering: Theodicies and Solutions

A theodicy is an attempt to show evil does not rule out the possibility of God. There are a variety of ways in which philosophers and theists have attempted to do this.



Privation

The loss or absence of something, e.g. the privation of evil.

The weaknesses of this argument include God's omnipotence and omniscience. These seem to be challenged by the solution offered by Augustine. The counterargument given is that perhaps God needed to create humans with free will in order for human beings to have the free choice to pursue a real relationship with him.

The strength of this argument is the fact that it is consistent with natural theism, which holds that God is omnipotent, omnibenevolent and not responsible for evil. Also, responsibility for evil is recognised but attributed to humans rather than God. Finally, free will is presented as the reason for suffering. Evil and suffering could be considered a price worth paying for freedom.



Augustine argued the absence of some phenomenon, such as disease is due to the presence of another. Augustine, privation of evil is the original sin to which humans and the world are subjected.

Irenaeus believed in the development of free will. Humans are created in a state of immaturity, but through good and human free will, they can grow. Irenaeus differs from Augustine as he believed that God gave humanity free will for a purpose. He argued that humans develop morally through suffering and become truly human through it. Irenaeus thought that evil was essential for good to be made humans as they were. If God was good, then he would not use coercion and, if he did intervene to stop evil, he would be undermining the purpose. Similarly, if God did not allow evil, good could not be developed. **God therefore** allows evil just to do so because it provides an opportunity for humans to grow, however, responsibility for evil is through their free will. In heaven would humans experience suffering would achieve perfection.

3.2

Theodicies and Solutions

Process theodicy is an important theodicy. It posits that the world is always changing, and that there is a natural order. Good occurs when the natural order works as it should. Evil occurs when there is discord, as a result of human free will. It presents God as being part of the world and, therefore, a fellow sufferer.

The issue is that this is not a theodicy in the traditional sense as it is somewhat limited. It does not address the benevolence, omnipotence and transcendence of the traditional view of God in Judeo-Christian tradition.

God is, in this method of thinking, in a way responsible for the creation of evil.

The question remains, therefore, does the good created here outweigh the evil?



Epistemic distance

An argument by Hick that God created humans with a special distance from him so they could know God but not be so close they had no choice not to believe in him.



Gottfried Leibniz posited a theory regarding the existence of suffering which is known as theodicy of the best of all possible worlds. The argument is as follows: God can create an infinite number of possible worlds. Only one of these universes can exist. God has a reason for doing what he does. God is good and benevolent. Therefore, of possible worlds, he would choose the best one. This world is the best possible world, despite the existence of suffering.



John Hick worked on the concept of soul-making. This means that humans are created in a process towards perfection. This process involves suffering with this process. Hick argued that the attributes and characteristics of the suffering of humans and sympathy for others might make humans more mature. This process 'soul-making' rarely completes in the afterlife (hypothetical eschatological world). The existence of epistemic distance is necessary for soul-making.

The weaknesses of the argument are that the process of soul-making does not explain why it allows for extreme suffering, such as the death of a baby. It doesn't explain why such a loving God wouldn't give us longer than a human life to get better. Also, people such as Jesus were morally good before they experienced suffering, so theodicy is a contradiction.

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Answers

1 Philosophical Issues and Questions

1.1 Design Argument

- St Thomas Aquinas – The fifth of Aquinas' five ways. He argues that the world exists towards a purpose. This, he argues, shows guidance and design. This could be an intelligent designer is responsible for the world behind it. This, for Aquinas, is God.
 - FR Toynbee – Invariant, there is much beauty observable in the world, and all this beauty has no function biologically, and no advantage other than aesthetic. It is not explained by science; therefore, he argues that it is the work of a designer talking to us.
 - Richard Swinburne – Argues that the evidence of design and order leads to the more plausible to believe that God exists than that God does not exist. While he admits it could simply be a brute fact, it is more likely as an explanation that God does exist.
- Causal fallacy – Similar effects/events do not mean these effects had a similar cause.
 - Weak analogy – The analogy within the argument is weak because there is no direct comparison occurring in nature and objects made by man.
 - Unknown cause – Hume argues that the design argument only goes so far as to suggest there is not a known designer such as God.
 - Based on part, not whole – Hume argues that the argument is based on looking at a part of the world which cannot speak for the whole world; this is an assumption and a jump in logic.
 - Could point to a designer, but tells us nothing about him, her or it – Hume argues that the design argument does go so far as to logically suggest there could be a designer, this tells us nothing about the designer, therefore, garnering a concept of what God is like from the design premise is not logical.
 - Attribution of human features to non-human – In comparing the cause to a watchmaker, the argument commits anthropomorphism.
- A posteriori
 - A priori

4. The design argument is based on the following inductive premises reasoning:

Premise 1: Man-made things in the world have been created by a designer with a purpose. e.g. a watch and a watchmaker, a toy and a factory worker.

Premise 2: The world looks as though it has been designed for a particular purpose. The world has many intricate, complex parts.

In conclusion, the world must have had a designer. This designer must have been intelligent.

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5.

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No content within the answer which is relevant to the question.
1	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant content used with their correct meaning / in their correct context. Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. Answer only gives a superficial understanding of religious ideas/beliefs.
2	3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, with some specific content and words, with some mistakes. Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some incorrect statements. Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs.
3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with content used with continuity throughout answer. A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to show a good understanding.

Students could include any of the following details:

- William Paley proposed the watchmaker analogy form of the design argument. He argued that the complexity of the world is beyond what could be explained by natural processes and problems with analogical reasoning.
- Therefore, although his argument is often called the analogy of the watch, Paley's argument is an analogy between natural and man-made objects.
- Instead, he argues that both natural and human objects have a particular purpose. Although natural objects are different from a watch, both show a complexity that suggests they were made by an intelligent designer.
- He argues that if we just found a watch on the ground, we would not assume it was there by chance. We found a stone on a heath, however, we might be able to say this. Paley argues that the world is different so that we need to ask why it is there.
- Paley says the answer is that it was put there to serve a particular purpose. The watch was designed in order to have the purpose of telling the time.
- In the same way, Paley is arguing that the world is intricately designed in order to have a purpose. The world is not just a random collection of things.
- The point Paley is trying to make is that both the watch and the world look like they were designed by chance.
- They are so well designed that they must have had a designer. The designer of the watch is a watchmaker. The designer of the world, for Paley, is God.

6. Students should express a personal view on the different arguments. They should be able to explain the different arguments and be able to justify their reasoning as to their opinion using evidence.
7. Students could make notes here in any style which will help them to remember the details. An example could be:

J S Mill: argues that the existence of evil and suffering in the world shows the world is not the work of a benevolent and omnipotent God. He argues that a benevolent and omnipotent God would have created a world in which animals do not harm others and where volcanoes and earthquakes did not cause destruction. It is the work of a cruel designer. He also argues that within the world he can see no evidence of design.

Darwin: Charles Darwin is credited with developing the scientific theories of natural selection and evolution. He argued that animals most suited to their environment survive and pass on their genes – known as survival of the fittest. This is an explanation of the world's complexity called 'design' without the need for a designer, as this has been explained by evolution.

Dawkins: Dawkins argues that the explanation of evolution strongly opposes the idea of God as it provides the means by which the elements of the world have developed. He also argues that the flaws within the world point more towards a watchmaker than a designer. He also argues that the flaws within the world point more towards a watchmaker than a designer. He also argues that the flaws within the world point more towards a watchmaker than a designer.

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1.2 Cosmological Argument

1. a) Something which can create a chain of cause and effect, without being caused by anything and is commonly thought to be God.
- b) A being or entity which depends on something else for its existence and cannot exist on its own.
- c) A being which cannot be conceived of as not existing and was not brought into existence by anything.

2. Motion – C, Efficient Cause – B, Contingency and Necessity – A

3. Leibniz's version of the cosmological argument starts with the idea that there need to be a sufficient reason for the world rather than nothing existing – a sufficient reason. Even if the world exists, there will need to be a reason for its existence. As this cannot come from the world itself, it must come from something outside the world. A complete and sufficient reason cannot be the world but of the world as a whole. Therefore, for Leibniz the only sufficient reason for the world is that God created it, and, therefore, God must exist.

4. 'Since everything that begins to exist has a **cause** of its existence, and since the universe began to exist, therefore, the **universe** has a cause of its existence... Transcending the **cause** which has brought the universe into **being**.'

He also argues that there is no **sufficient** explanation that can provide a **scientific** explanation of the universe, such as why the **Big Bang** happened. Therefore, the cause of the universe must be something that is not subject to the same laws as the universe.

5. The Kalam argument is a causal argument form of the cosmological argument. It is based on the following premises:
Premise 1: The world must have a cause, just as everything else has a cause.
Premise 2: The world can't have been created out of nothing.
Premise 3: The world must have been created at a particular point in time.
Premise 4: The cause of the world must be something which isn't caused itself.
Premise 5: This being must be God.
Conclusion: Therefore, God exists.

The Kalam causal argument is different from the contingency cosmological argument because it argues that the universe has a beginning. This is the key difference between these types of arguments. If the universe has a beginning, then there needs to be a reason that the universe started. This means that there must have been a start of the universe, whereas the contingency argument argues that contingent beings need a first cause with necessary existence.

6. b) – Infinite regress

7.

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No content within the answer which is relevant or accurate.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant language used with their correct meaning / in their correct context. Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. Answer only gives a shallow understanding of relevant concepts.
2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, making use of specific terms and words with some mistakes. Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. Developing knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate a basic understanding.
3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high level of knowledge demonstrated with correct language and continuity throughout answer. A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate a detailed understanding.

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Students could include any of the following details:

- His argument has four prongs.
- Firstly, Hume rejects the notion of necessary existence (drawn from the ontological argument) because he argues it is always a possibility for us to imagine something that has never existed.
- Secondly, he argues that it is an assumption that everything has to have a cause and that this is always true.
- While we have never experienced this, it is something that we can conceive of and therefore it is an assumption which is a weak argument.
- Thirdly, Hume argues that there is no reason given why the world itself could be necessary. He argues there is no reason why God should be attributed the quality of necessary existence.
- While there is no reason pointing towards a necessary world, he argues that we have no reason to understand it.
- Finally, Hume also argues that we cannot infer from one smaller thing what something larger of the universe can appear to be caused, this does not necessarily mean that the universe is caused.

8. **Bertrand Russell** – He argues that if one follows the logic of the cosmological argument, it entails that God must have a cause. This contradicts the ideas of God in traditional theism, namely necessary existence. It appears to be self-contradictory. He argues also that it is always possible to imagine something that has always existed and for this reason there would be no need for God to be a cause. This argument is also posited by Hume. However, Russell completely rejects the idea of God to be an entire explanation for the existence of the world. For Russell, the universe is self-explanatory.

Immanuel Kant – Kant's arguments against the cosmological argument are much stronger than those against the design argument. He argues that Aquinas' argument from movement is not univocal. He rejects the illogical nature of infinite regress as he argues that this could feasibly go on forever. While the argument does go far enough as to point towards a cause, there is not enough to conclude that the cause is the God of classical theism.

1.3 Ontological Argument

1. Anselm of **Canterbury** first put forward the **ontological** argument. He sets out the core of his argument as follows:
 - 1) God is the **greatest** conceivable being
 - 2) To be the **greatest conceivable** being, God must exist in **reality**.
 Conclusion: God **exists**
2. A priori
3. a) *In intellectu*
b) *In re*
4. a) **René Descartes**
In his Fifth Meditation, Descartes puts forward his version of the ontological argument. He argues that there are things which exist within the mind which don't exist anywhere else. He uses the analogy of triangles. He argues that these things are not real. He uses the analogy of triangles. He argues that this means that you can acknowledge they have some properties, e.g. their angle is 90 degrees. In the same way, he argues that God is a supremely perfect being. One of the properties of a supremely perfect being is existence. Therefore, the idea of existence – something cannot be supremely perfect if it doesn't exist. Therefore, God exists.
- b) **Norman Malcolm**
Malcolm builds on Anselm's argument. He presents three potential options: 1) he has a necessary existence, 2) he has a contingent existence, 3) he has a contingent existence. Malcolm rejects option 1 because it would be limited, thereby not fulfilling the criteria of God. He rejects option 2 because it would be limited, thereby not fulfilling the criteria of God. He rejects option 3 because it would be limited, thereby not fulfilling the criteria of God. He rejects option 3 because it would be limited, thereby not fulfilling the criteria of God. He rejects option 3 because it would be limited, thereby not fulfilling the criteria of God. Therefore, he must conclude that God exists.

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c) **Alvin Plantinga**

Plantinga uses modal logic to reformulate the traditional ontological argument. The concept of a being of 'maximal excellence' which is omnipotent, omniscient, and would also have to be maximally great in each possible world. Therefore, his argument is: 1) If it is a possible world with a maximal being. 2) Such a being would exist in all possible worlds. 3) Therefore, such a being must exist in this world.

5. **Gaunilo posited a rebuttal to Anselm's ontological argument.**

- ➔ His reply was entitled 'On Behalf of the Fool'.
- ➔ His argument tries to highlight the flaw in reasoning in Anselm's argument by using objects (apart from God) which clearly do not exist. He uses the example of a perfect island.
- ➔ Overall, Gaunilo is arguing that there needs to be some kind of (**empirical**) proof to establish the existence of God.
- ➔ He concludes that it is not possible to give a definition of (**God**) and from this to deduce that God exists.

6. a) **Essence** – Descartes uses 'essence' to mean something fundamental to what something is. For example, the part of the essence of a triangle is that it has three sides.b) **Aseity** – The idea of a being which is independent and exists in and of itself.c) **A priori** – A form of reasoning which is independent of experience – through logic.d) **Predicate** – An attribute or quality of something that can be possessed or lacked.7. a) **Bertrand Russell**

Russell argues that not only was existence not a predicate, as Kant had argued, but that existence can only be described as having existence when occurrences can be found in the world. For example, examples can predicates be discussed. Therefore, to say that 'Tom exists' is not meaningful because Tom's hair colour can only be meaningfully discussed on the basis of his hair colour.

b) **Immanuel Kant**

Kant rejects the ontological argument on the grounds that it falsely treats existence as an attribute or quality of something that can be possessed or lacked. Predicates are attributes or qualities that can be possessed or lacked. For example, to understand the nature of an animal, e.g. a predicate of a zebra is having black and white stripes. To know how to define an animal, e.g. a zebra; if an animal did not have black and white stripes, it would not be a zebra. Kant said that knowing something exists does not help us to know anything about it (e.g. a zebra would) – knowing a zebra exists does not help us to know anything about it (e.g. a zebra would). We can only recognise one if we saw one. Kant argues from this basis that we must know something exists before we discuss predicates. He argues that while it is contradictory to think of a triangle that does not have three angles, it is not contradictory to think of a triangle that does not have four angles. The same applies to God – even though it is contradictory to think of God as not having all the characteristics (or predicates) that would go with this, existence is not contradictory to think of God as not existing. Therefore, perfectly conceivable and non-contradictory to think of God as not existing.

c) **David Hume**

- Hume focuses his attack on Anselm's argument on the basis of the possibility of necessary existence. He argues that the notion of necessary existence has 'no meaning' because we can always conceive at any time to conceive the non-existence of something we formerly conceived as existing. Something is only demonstrable if stating the opposite involves a logical contradiction. This says this is not the case with God's existence – there is no contradiction in stating that God does not exist. This makes God's existence contingent, rather than necessary.
- Whatever we conceive as existing, we can also conceive as non-existing. For example, a zebra whose non-existence implies a contradiction. Consequently there is no demonstrable necessary existence.
- He also raises the question of why this is attributed only to God. Even though we can conceive of the world does have necessary existence, this could still be explained by natural laws. We can't understand.

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8.

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No content within the answer which is relevant or
1	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant but with their correct meaning / in their correct context. Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some Answer only gives a very shallow understanding of religious
2	3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, specific terms and words, with some mistakes. Give any good examples of religious ideas/beliefs and incorrect statements. Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs
3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct continuity throughout answer. A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs and statements. Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to show understanding.

Students should be able to give any of the following weaknesses:

- Gaunilo, a monk at Marmoutier, France, and a contemporary of Anselm, wrote an article entitled 'On Behalf of the Fool'.
- His argument tries to highlight the false reasoning in Anselm's argument by pointing to objects (apart from God) which clearly do not exist.
- Kant rejected the ontological argument on the grounds that it falsely treats existence as a predicate.
- He argues that while it is contradictory to think of a triangle that does not have three angles, it is not contradictory to think of a triangle and its angles as not existing. The same is true of God; it is not contradictory to think of God as not the greatest conceivable being, and all that would go with this, existence is not one of his essential characteristics. It is, therefore, not contradictory to think of God as not existing.
- Russell argues that not only does existence not a predicate, as Kant had argued, but that existence can only be described as having existence when occurrences can be found in the world. Examples can be given of things that can be discussed. Therefore, to say that 'Tom exists and is tall' is like saying 'Tom is blue'. To say 'Tom is blue' can only be meaningfully discussed on the basis that there is a Tom who is blue.
- As existence cannot be said of God, he argues the argument does not work.
- Hume focuses his critique of Anselm's argument on the basis of the possibility of necessary existence. He argues that the notion of necessary existence has 'no meaning' because 'it would be as meaningless to conceive the non-existence of something we formerly conceived to exist as it would be to conceive the non-existence of something we formerly conceived to exist'.

Students should be able to give any of the following strengths:

- It appeals to our sense of logic, and in a vacuum it does work.
- While many argue that it has not proved God's existence, it has demonstrated that the existence of God is a logically possible.
- More modern versions such as Plantinga's apply a more scientific logic to the argument, which is helpful for proponents of the argument.

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2 The Nature and Influence of Religious Experience

2.1 The Nature of Religious Experience

- There are two different categories of religious experience. The **indirect** religious experience is contact with something other than this world. The **direct** is contact with the divine / God.
- Examples which could be included within the spider diagram include: corporate, numinous experiences, seeing visions, etc. Answers are not limited to the examples given. Other examples will be accepted.
- The terms you use should be followed, with sufficient explanation within the space provided.
 - Ineffability – the experience should be beyond the capability of human words.
 - Non-rationality – the experience should be beyond human knowledge to understand what we would consider to be normal.
 - Transiency – the short-lived nature of a religious experience (but it may not be for the person having it).
 - Passivity – the feeling that during the experience your own will is being taken outside yourself.
- a) *Mysterium* b) *Tremendum* c) *Fascians*

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No content within the answer which is relevant or accurate.
1	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant language used with their correct meaning / in their correct context. Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. Answer only gives a partial understanding of relevant concepts.
2	3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, making some use of relevant terms and words, with some mistakes. Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies or incorrect statements. Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs to some extent.
3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct terminology throughout answer. A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate a good understanding.

- Any relevant example of a recorded religious experience will be accepted. This is general. The example with which they can individually engage and which they can understand. Throughout the example they give, they should highlight the different ideas of Otto von Guericke. This constitutes a religious experience. They might use an example which is one of the examples from the spider diagram. An answer which demonstrates engagement with the concepts will be accepted.

Students should provide any of the following details:

- Freud argues religious experience can be explained as arising out of a psychological need to cope with a hostile world.
 - This is demonstrative of Freud's view of religion as a whole.
 - Religion is a means for individuals to project or transfer their psychological needs and an attempt to alleviate them.
 - Freud called religion a neurosis.
 - In his view, it was a form of mental illness or delusion.
 - Religion and God are, therefore, a creation of the human mind, rather than objective reality.
 - His ideas are enthusiastically challenged by biologist Richard Dawkins, who adopts the view that religious faith is nothing more than a form of neurosis.
- Any relevant example of a recorded religious experience will be accepted. This is general. The example with which they can individually engage and which they can understand. Throughout the example they give, they should highlight the different ideas of Otto von Guericke. This constitutes a religious experience. They might use an example which is one of the examples from the spider diagram. An answer which demonstrates engagement with the concepts will be accepted.

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7.

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No content within the answer which is relevant or
1	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant la with their correct meaning / in their correct contex Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with so Answer only gives a shallow understanding of rele
2	3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good demo. st. tific knowledge on the topic, n specific ce. s and words, with some mistakes. Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, incorrect statements. Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs t
3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct continuity throughout answer. A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs statements. Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to understanding.

Students should provide any of the following details:

- Religious experiences are incredibly varied and difficult to describe.
- They differ depending on the individual or group that experiences them, and itself.
- Students could give examples of the various different types of religious experience content, ranging from meditation to a corporate large-scale religious experience.
- Students could give an example of a religious experience from a particular religion, such as the vision and conversion of St Paul.
- Students could describe the terms developed by Otto regarding religious experience and describe religious experiences (*mysterium tremendum* and *fascians*).
- Students could describe the terms developed by James regarding religious experience: noetic quality, transiency, ineffability.
- Students could include other explanations for religious experience as positive/negative.

2.2 Religious Experience as an Argument for God's Existence

- The **inductive** argument for the existence of God on the basis of **religious** experience. If I have experienced **God** through induction, then, as with other inductive experiences, I can generally

It can be set out like this:

Premise 1: **Experience of x indicates that x exists.**

Premise 2: **God can be experienced.**

Premise 3: **Experience of God indicates that God exists.**

In conclusion: **God exists.**

- Richard Swinburne** claimed that his **two** principles gave weight to the **likelihood** of God's existence were as those who experience them claimed.
 - The principle of **verification** states that unless there is evidence against a claim, we should not accept the testimony of the experienter.
 - The principle of **credulity** states that unless there is evidence against a claim, we should accept what we are as they appear to be.
 - Some philosophers argue that we should not instantly assume that people have **misunderstood** their religious experiences.

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3. **His arguments:**

- 1) Experiences can be deceptive.
- 2) Psychosocial pressures can influence experience and interpretation.
- 3) There is no way of verifying the truth of experiences.
- 4) Accounts of religious experience vary hugely.

His replies:

- 1) Not all experiences are deceptive – especially with some.
- 2) There are not always psychosocial pressures involved.
- 3) There are arguably some methods of verification.
- 4) You can agree that something exists without agreeing about its nature.

4. Something which is **increasing**. Some people argue that there is testimony that there have been religious experiences.

Therefore weighing up the evidence for and against, the existence of God seen in religious testimony is in the favour of **(theists)**. The problem with this argument is that, it only shows that God is **(likely)** to exist.

5. b) – Principle of credulity

6. Vardy opposes the use of religious experience as an argument for God's existence. Religious experiences are unlikely to be true, being supernatural in nature and infrequent. Principles of testimony and credulity need to be questioned. He equates religious experiences to Loch Ness Monster or UFOs. He argues there is greater investigation needed in order to know if they have ever been true. He also argues that bias can unduly influence accounts of religious experiences. Individuals' backgrounds and personal beliefs will influence the way in which they describe the experience.

7.

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0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No content within the answer which is relevant or accurate.
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2	3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, making use of specific terms and words, with some mistakes. • Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. • Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs to some extent.
3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct terminology and continuity throughout answer. • A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. • Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to show a good understanding.

Students might include any of the following details:

- **Dr Michael Persinger** is a well-respected Canadian scientist. He argues that religious experience is a phenomenon that can be explained by forces outside the body, but rather within the brain.
- He argues that the source of religious experience is not necessarily from outside the brain itself, more specifically within the temporal lobe.
- He argues that supernatural experiences are believed to be from God, but can in fact be explained by the brain.
- To test this theory, Persinger has invented the 'God Helmet', a device which is used to stimulate the temporal lobe of the brain using electrodes.
- The results in some people sounded very similar to what could be termed to be a religious experience, reporting a 'sense of presence'.
- Therefore, Persinger argues, it is not a religious phenomenon but a psychological one. Religious experiences and psychosis are incredibly similar, leading to a possible explanation for this phenomenon which does not lead to an argument for the existence of God.
- He argues that those experiencing a religious experience are instead suffering from a condition which is uncommonly found on psychiatric wards.
- He argues that those with psychosis fervently believe what they are seeing/saying is true. In the same way, religious people may believe what they are experiencing to be true.

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3 The Problems of Evil and Suffering

3.1 The Problems of Evil and Suffering

1. a) Evil b) God is omnipotent c) God is omnibenevolent d) Inconsistent Triad
2. a) God is all powerful b) God is all-knowing c) God is all-loving
3. An answer should be along the lines of the following: The problem of evil refers to suffering exist in the world and why. God is understood to be omnipotent (powerful enough to create a world without evil), omnibenevolent (all-loving so would not want to create a world with evil) and all-knowing. This is an **inconsistent triad**. This means that there are three statements which cannot all be true at the same time; all three cannot logically be believed to be true at the same time.
4. Students should be able to identify the two types of evil – moral evil (evil caused by human beings) and natural evil (evil caused by events occurring in nature). Any relevant examples should be accepted. For example, natural evil could include a flood, an earthquake, a tsunami, a murder, rape, theft, genocide.
5. The problem of **A evil** is one of the biggest points of philosophical contention for **B inconsistent** that evil can exist with an omnipotent and benevolent God.

The problem remains that:

1. **C evidence** for evil cannot be denied
 2. the **D omnipotence** of God is central to Christian teaching
 3. the **E benevolence** of God is central to Christian teaching
6. a) Evil is considered by some Christians to be the fair punishment by God for sin.
 - b) The experience of suffering is considered a test of an individual's faith in God. Many people believe in God despite their personal suffering. This is a belief of many religions including Christianity and Judaism.
 - c) Some Christians believe that there is evil in the world because of the Devil (Satan). The Devil is a being who chose, through its free will, to turn against God. The Devil is responsible for much of the suffering in the world.
7. Students should use their own words here to represent the problem of evil in a way that is easy to remember and help them to remember it for exam purposes. This might take many forms, e.g. a triad, or an argument layout. However, it should contain the main major ideas of the problem of evil, the existence of evil and the religious belief regarding the omnipotence and benevolence of God.

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3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct continuity throughout answer. • A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some inaccuracies. • Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to show a good understanding.

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Students could include any of the following details:

- J L Mackie argues that these three principles are inconsistent and cannot be made true.
- He suggests no valid solution has been found that does not compromise or remove God's omnipotence.
- He believes the problem of evil to be harder for theologians to grapple with than God's existence.
- Traditional arguments against the belief in God, he argues, can be overcome by believing that there might not be a logical, rational support for belief in God, but that this is not true and all would be revealed after life.
- He believes that the problem of evil poses a greater challenge because it is a logical problem for beliefs held by theists.

9. Students could be asked to provide any example of suffering experienced by or linked to an aspect of a religion on the sheet. Examples could include, but are not limited to:

- **Christianity** – The suffering of the Apostle Paul is a New Testament example of suffering. While a huge number of his struggles are at the hands of men and can be seen as a recorded instance of suffering that would pose a potential issue with theism, it is mentioned in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10, where he states he was in pain due to an affliction that prevented him from preaching; however, the Scripture tells us that God refused to soothsieve and alleviate his suffering; however, the Scripture tells us that God refused to soothsieve and alleviate his suffering; however, the Scripture tells us that God refused to soothsieve and alleviate his suffering. I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me, lest I should become conceited. Three times I pleaded with the LORD to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'
- **Islam** – Hardship is presented within the Qur'an as being a test from God, as stated in the Qur'an: 'Verily, We shall put you to test with some fear, and hunger, and with some loss of life and property, and with some loss of children. And (O Muhammad) convey good tidings to those who are patient, who say, "Verily we are of God and verily to Him shall we return;" upon them are the rewards of a great bounty.'
- **Judaism** – The problem of evil and suffering within the Torah is displayed through the story of Job, a man suffering innocently – a God-fearing man, a righteous servant of God – who was subjected throughout the book of Job to immense emotional and physical suffering. He was afflicted with painful sores all over his body, as well as the loss of his children. He experienced social upheaval as well as financial collapse. The problem of suffering is a central theme in the book of Job.

3.2 Theodicies

1. A theodicy is an attempt to solve the problem of evil from a religious perspective. It is an attempt to show that an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God can exist despite the existence of evil. The theories show how God's plan for humanity is justified.
2. A Irenaeus, B Augustine, C John Hick
3. **Privation** – The loss or absence of something, e.g. the privation of evil.

Epistemic distance – An argument by Hick that God created humans at a special distance from God but not so close they had no choice not to believe in him.

4. John Hick worked on the ideas of Irenaeus, referring to what is termed his soul-making theodicy. Hick believed that humans went through a process of moral development and that the existence of good and evil helps with this process; it helps humans develop good characteristics. For example, experiencing the suffering of others can help to develop empathy. Similarly, experiencing the outcome of lies might make someone more honest. Hick's soul-making theodicy argues that this makes the existence of evil justified.

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5. A) The weaknesses of Augustine's argument include God's omnipotence and omniscience being challenged by the solution offered by Augustine. The counterargument given is that God creates humans with free will in order for human beings to have the free choice to love him. It is not technically a true theodicy because it does not maintain God's omniscience.
- B) There are weaknesses within Irenaeus' theodicy. It does not necessarily explain why human beings, then how come so much suffering is caused by natural events which are beyond human control? There are weaknesses within this argument which overlap with the two arguments are linked. It also does not explain the issue of why bad things happen.
- C) The weaknesses of Irenaeus' argument are similar to the issues with Irenaeus' theodicy. The process of soul-making does not explain why it allows extreme suffering, such as natural disasters. It also does not explain why such a loving God wouldn't give us longer than a human lifespan. It also does not explain why humans were morally good before they experienced suffering, so this is not a true theodicy.

6.

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3	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct terminology and continuity throughout the answer. A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs used to support the answer. Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs to a high level, showing a deep understanding.

Students should provide the following details:

- Process theodicy is an important theodicy.
 - It has been posited and developed over time by many different philosophers.
 - It is a theodicy which is based on observation of the natural world.
 - It posits that the world is always changing, and that there is a natural order.
 - Good occurs when the natural order works as it should.
 - Evil occurs when there is discord, as a result of human free will.
 - It presents God as being part of the world and, therefore, a fellow sufferer.
7. The free will defence is a form of theodicy that uses the argument that evil exists because of free will. Alvin Plantinga is the best-known proponent of the free will defence. He argues that free will and God's omnipotence are compatible. There is much value in free will as it is essential to moral goodness. God creates creatures of moral good, therefore he must create creatures of moral evil. Plantinga is heavily in his argument. He rejects Mackie's argument that an omnipotent God could create a world with free will who always choose correctly because this would contradict libertarian free will.

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