



2016 specification
first exams in 2018

Revision Summaries for A Level Year 2 Eduqas

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

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Teacher's Introduction

These revision summaries are designed to provide students with a detailed overview of everything they need to know for their A Level exam. It follows the Eduqas Religious Studies specification for Component 2, which focuses on Philosophy of Religion only. All topics for Year 2 of the A Level programme are covered. The AS or Year 1 topics are covered in a separate resource.

All students of different academic abilities will benefit from this overview as it provides a clear and concise account of what to revise. The best way to use these overviews is by providing students with a copy of a particular topic once it has been taught in class. It is also possible to give the entire pack to the students before they start their final revision for the exams.

Each topic follows a set structure detailed below:

- **Glossary:** A clear list of important terminology students need to know when studying the topic.
- **Overview:** A look at the major themes of the topic, with a brief introduction to the major points of discussion and disagreement.
- **Key Points:** The main body of the summaries for each topic, they are a clear and concise set of notes that help students support their own knowledge and understanding of the topic.
- **Key Texts/Scholars:** A set of notes around any important philosopher and their works students may require background information and understanding of.
- **Year 1 Refreshers:** A brief look at how students may incorporate Year 1 knowledge and understanding into Year 2 topics.
- **Student Checklist:** A helpful guide to what students need to know by the end of the revision summary and a way to check their understanding and progress through a particular topic.
 - ! **Note:** The checklist is presented in question format and these questions would be ideal to set for homework or revision so that students can build the skills they need in order to progress to longer exam-style questions.
- **Exam-style Question:** A practice essay question with helpful assessment objectives, complete with levelled mark schemes and indicative content at the end of the resource. These are useful for students approaching their end-of-year exams or wishing to improve their essay technique on a particular topic.

Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

At the end of the resource there is a true or false quiz which students can do as a quick test of their knowledge and understanding of the entire material.

This structure clearly ensures students have not only a grasp on the key themes of each topic, but also a way to understand their place within the specification as a whole. Students who may have missed lessons or not made detailed notes may benefit greatly from these revision summaries, especially in helping their recollection of key topics closer to their final exams.

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Challenges to Religious Be

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Agnosticism	This is the belief that it is impossible to know whether God exists or not (strong version) or that God may exist (weak version).
Anima	This is a Jungian term that relates to the female side (attitude).
Animus	This is a Jungian term that relates to the male side (attitude).
Antitheism	This is the view that theism has a negative influence on people.
Apologists	This refers to people who defend their faith against critics.
Archetypes	These are shared symbols in everyone's unconscious psyche that are part of the psyche's archetypes.
Atheism	This is the view that God does not exist. Negative atheism is the view that God does not exist. Positive atheism presents arguments that ask believers to present their reasons as well.
Collective neurosis	This is a Freudian term. It refers to a neurosis (a mental illness) that a large group of people suffer from.
Collective unconscious	This is a Jungian term that refers to the unconscious shared by all humans.
Ego	In Freudian terms, this is the element of the psyche that is conscious and is the superego.
Evolutionary theory	Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection is the result of the struggle for survival between organisms. It is the result of the struggle for survival between organisms that have developed advantageous features that have allowed them to survive. These features are passed on through inheritance and eventually become the dominant features of a species.
Id	In Freudian terms, this is the element of the psyche that is unconscious and is the most primitive part of a person.
Individuation	This is a Jungian term. It is the goal of all humans to become a whole person. Once individuated, a person is a balanced and integrated individual.
New Atheism	This is the current trend of atheism. New atheists believe that religion is a harmful force on human society. They might, for example, campaign against Christianity as a definite explanation for things because they believe that it is about what to believe.
Oedipus complex	This is a problem that boys are sexually attracted to their mothers and (in fear of) their fathers. It is named after Oedipus from a Greek myth who was marrying his mother and killing his father. When he realised his situation, he fled in shame.
Persona	This is a Jungian term for a common archetype. It is often used to describe the public face of a person. It reflects the fact that people often put on an act rather than being their true selves.
Primal horde	This is an idea that originates from Darwin but was also used by Freud. It suggests that early tribes, where males were killed or driven away by the males that were seen as a threat, eventually led to the tribe needing a totem to replace the figurehead. This totem was worshipped and replaced by God.
Psychoanalysis	This is the study of all parts of the psyche. In order to discover the unconscious, which is considered the prime cause of mental and emotional problems, techniques such as free associations and dream interpretations are used. These are used to access the unconscious mind.
Reductionist	This describes an approach within a theory. A theory is reduced to its parts that are less complex.
Shadow	This is a Jungian term for a common archetype. It is often used to describe the dark side of someone. It reflects the fact that people have a side to them that is socially unacceptable.
Superego	In Freudian terms, this is the part of the psyche that is like the conscience. It is the part of the psyche that is like individual their morals and conscience.

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Overview

This topic looks at the challenges to religious belief. It considers two religions but have opposing views: Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. It also considers the recent New Atheism. These challenges are not without their weaknesses. These will help you answer the evaluative exam questions.

Key Points

Sigmund Freud

Basics:

- Freud was the founder of psychoanalysis. He was an atheist, not an empiricist and a naturalist. He argued that the study of the psyche could be made scientific. He divided the mind into three parts: the ego, the superego and the id.

Religion as neurosis:

- Freud saw similarities between his patients who suffered from an obsessive neurosis and the beliefs of collective neurosis.
- The difference is that religious believers know what they are doing, those with neurosis do not.
- Freud thought that one explanation for buried traumas in people which lead to neurosis was Darwin's theory on the primal horde. In primal hordes the sons who killed their fathers to establish order in the tribe again, they used a totem to replace their fathers in the form of animals. Totems also represented certain rules, such as not being from the same tribe or eating the worshipped animal. Eventually the totem, which represented the father with superhuman qualities. This became God.
- Supporting evidence of the primal horde comes from Darwin's ideas that all organisms have a need to survive and reproduce.
- Freud presented another theory that explained religious behaviour. This is his theory of the Oedipus complex. The idea that sons are attracted to their mothers and want their fathers out of the way. The id is suppressed into the unconscious mind. If this is not dealt with, the neurotic behaviour such as that practised by religious people.
- Freud also agreed with the ideas of Ludwig Feuerbach who argued that the gods are just the humans of what they want to be. God and religion are a wish fulfilment.
- Freud also saw religion as a reaction against helplessness. This means that religion provides a sense of control in the natural world in order for people to feel secure. Having explanations for things makes people feel in control and, consequently, safer. Also, religion protects people against dangers by imposing religious rules that forbid such actions. This also makes people feel safer.
- Freud based his findings on evidence from his patients. A famous example is the case of Hans, a young boy with a phobia of horses after being bitten by one. Freud linked his phobia to the castration anxiety (the fear of losing the penis as part of the Oedipus complex). Hans's fear of horses symbolised his fear of castration.

Challenges to Freud:

- There is no anthropological evidence of the primal horde theory developed by Freud. Darwin did not present the theory in the way that Freud thought he had. It is also important to note that Darwin's theory was developed in a different context.
- There is no universal evidence of the Oedipus complex. Freud argued that the Oedipus complex is a universal feature of human behaviour. Anthropological evidence suggests this is not a universal feature of human behaviour. Freud's theory is ethnocentric and focuses on Christian Western ideas of religion. In many cultures, fathers and mothers have no god.
- Freud's evidence is very limited. He drew his conclusions from only a few cases.

Issues:

- How far can religious belief be considered a neurosis? With this issue, you need to consider the weaknesses of Freud's theory that religion is a neurosis. You can look at whether religious beliefs are more acceptable than the Oedipus complex. You can also look at whether all religious beliefs are neurotic.
- The adequacy of Freud's explanation of religious belief. This issue is similar to the issue of whether Freud's theories on explaining religious behaviour are adequate. You can consider whether Freud's theories on explaining religious behaviour are adequate. You can also consider some strengths of his theories before criticising them by using the challenges.

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Carl Jung

Basics:

- Jung was also a psychoanalyst and was a pupil of Freud's for a short time. He believed religion to have a more positive role in people's lives.
- Jung believed the psyche consisted of an individual conscious (ego) and unconscious part.
- An important part of Jung's theory is his idea of archetypes that are the content of the unconscious.

Religion as a product of the mind:

- Jung argues that religions function to help bring the unconscious, both the personal and collective, into the conscious mind. This is necessary if a person is to become self-realised.
- Jung argued that archetypes are understood when they are converted into images. Archetypes can, for example, appear in dreams but also in religious rituals and symbols. They need to be interpreted by the conscious mind.
- Jung recognised four main archetypes that are linked to the process of individuation: the persona, the shadow, the anima/animus and the self.
- All parts of our psyche, including those aspects we do not like, need to be integrated into the whole. This process of integration is individuation. Religion can help with this process. For example, the figure of Christ is an archetypal image of that part of the psyche that lacks the shadow side. The Virgin Mary is an archetypal image of the anima.
- Jung believed religion was necessary for personal growth. God is to be seen as internal rather than external therefore, internal in the psyche rather than an external being.
- Jung developed his theories based on evidence from different cultures and religions. He believed that people had lost touch with their Self due to scientific developments, materialism and modernism. Religion can help people find themselves and so is a source of comfort.
- Jung also recognised that all religions promote individuation in one way or another. Religious symbols are not just seen as objects. Evidence showed that religious people are more social.

Challenges:

- Jung's theories are unverifiable and lack empirical evidence. There is also the problem that archetypes in different cultures are evidence of archetypes, but they might be evidence of different things.
- Jung's views on religion are reductionist. He reduces complex symbols, such as Christ, to an archetype. Christ is much more than this for religious believers. Religious believers believe God to be something internal but a real being external to the mind.

Issues:

- The extent to which Jung was more positive than Freud about the idea of God is a matter of debate. Freud saw collective neurosis, which is not positive. Religion, for Freud, is a mental illness. Jung believed in the positive effects that religion has on a person's life. This is very positive. However, by seeing God as an external expression of archetypes could be seen as a negative. It suggests that God is internal rather than external and so not something that is objectively true. There is a need to consider and defend when deciding whether Jung is actually more positive than Freud.
- The effectiveness of empirical approaches as criticisms of Jungian views on religion is a matter of debate. Consider whether the challenges to Jung's theory are effective. Is it necessary to criticise everything, including Jung's theory of archetypes? Jung thought he had empirical evidence that even he thought that empirical evidence was necessary in supporting his theory. There are a number of points to consider under this issue.

Atheism

Rejection for belief in deities:

- Diagoras of Melos (from the fifth century BCE) is believed to be the first ever person to be accused of seeming to have rejected any god and as a consequence was forced to flee.
- In ancient Greek times, the term 'atheism' meant not believing in a particular set of gods.
- The term atheism goes as far back as the Renaissance period. This does not mean that people were atheists. This would have led to being burned at the stake. 'Atheism' was a term used to describe someone who had no morals.

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- With the development of science in the Enlightenment period (eighteenth century) the Church started to be questioned. The last person to be jailed in the UK for blasphemy was John Helyoake in 1842.
- Before the 1960s, most people were religious and attended church on a Sunday. In the 1960s, traditional values were challenged. In 1963 John Robinson wrote *Honest to God* which argued that God is within rather than external.
- More recently, religion has been under attack from New Atheism.

Differences between agnosticism and atheism:

- Atheism is the belief that God does not exist. It can come in two forms: negative atheism and positive atheism. Negative atheism asks believers to present reasons why they believe in God and asks atheists to present arguments for why they do not believe in God and asks believers to present arguments for why they do believe in God.
- Protest atheists refuse to believe in God because of the evil and suffering in the world.
- Agnosticism is the belief that it is impossible to know whether God exists or not. It is a weak version of atheism.
- New Atheism is a new strain of atheism that claims religion is a destructive force on society.

The rise of New Atheism:

- New Atheism is an antitheist approach to religion. It states that religion is a bad thing. Richard Dawkins gave the example of 9/11 to illustrate this.
- There are four main proponents of New Atheism known as the Four Horsemen: Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris and Christopher Hitchens.
- New Atheists argue that religion is irrational and opposes evidence. People are questioning their faith. Dawkins has actively worked to get rid of religion because he believes they should be given a choice what to believe and not be told that they must believe. The fact that religion is irrational means it is also dangerous as it can lead to violence.
- New Atheists also believe that religion offers an infantile view of the world. Science offers a more mature explanation of the world that rules out God.
- New Atheists are proponents of scientific progress and they believe that religion hinders progress. Religion stops children from learning about science. Science is important for the advancement of society in the future.

Religious responses to New Atheism:

- New Atheism is described as secular fundamentalism. It is just as fundamentalist and infallible as religion. New Atheists go about trying to stop religion from being a force for good against freedom of speech and belief.
- Religion is not incompatible with science. There are many scientists who are religious. Polkinghorne. Science explains how, whereas religion explains why.
- The rise of New Atheism has led to some religious believers becoming more militant. That secularisation and the rise of atheism have led to social moral decline.
- In response to New Atheism, there has been an increase in the number of Christians who have left their religion on rational grounds; for example, Richard Swinburne, Alistair McGrath.

Issues:

- The success of atheistic arguments against religious belief. This issue requires a comparison of arguments presented by atheism in general, and New Atheism in particular, with the responses achieved by religious apologists. Things to consider include the rise of fundamentalist Christianity, the success of New Atheism, the rise of religious apologists as well as the success of some of the campaigns to promote religion.
- The extent to which religious responses to New Atheism have been successful. Have these responses been successful in countering the rise of New Atheism? Have they been successful in gaining more believers? Several surveys have shown that there is a rise in atheism and religion is often ridiculed on TV. However, there is still a large number of Christians in the UK and Britain is still described as a Christian country.

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Key Texts/Scholars

Charles Darwin (1809–1882)

Charles Darwin is one of the most famous biologists in the history of Western thought. He is best known as the theory of evolution by natural selection. He argues that species can evolve through the process of evolution by natural selection. It counters the ideas of creationists who believe that every individual organism that lives on Earth.

Richard Dawkins (1941–)

Dawkins is a British biologist who came to fame with his book *The Selfish Gene*. The book argues that genes are just vehicles for a selfish gene that wants to survive and reproduce. In recent years, he has argued that religion should be rejected. One of his most famous books in this respect was *The God Delusion*. He has also appeared on TV numerous times discussing religion with both the religious and the secular. He is one of the Four Horsemen of New Atheism.

Daniel Dennett (1942–)

Dennett is an American philosopher and cognitive scientist who runs projects in cognitive science. He argues that evolution explains how morality and free will have come about. His most famous book attacking religion is *Breaking the Spell*. It gives evolutionary reasons why religion exists.

Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872)

Feuerbach was a German philosopher. He was an atheist and materialist. He argued that God is the ideal human. People should instead attempt to become like God themselves rather than worship a non-existent being.

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939)

Freud was the founder of psychoanalysis which recognised the existence of a subconscious. He was an empiricist and an atheist and believed that his new science of the mind could explain religion. He argued that religion is for the immature. He studied patients with mental illnesses as his evidence.

Sam Harris (1967–)

Harris is one of the Four Horsemen of New Atheism. He is an American neuroscientist and philosopher. He believes that religion misuses intelligence and that religious beliefs should be rejected in favour of explanations available from science.

Christopher Hitchens (1949–2011)

Hitchens is one of Four Horsemen of New Atheism. He was a British–American author and journalist. He was diagnosed with cancer. He opposed religious people who would try to reassure him as he suffered from cancer. He argued that these people were disrespecting his atheistic beliefs.

Carl Jung (1875–1961)

Jung was a student of Freud's for a short time. He was a Swiss psychiatrist who developed his own version of psychoanalysis. He argued that religion has a positive role as it assists in the process of individuation. This is the process of becoming a whole, or self-realised.

Diagoras (5th century BCE)

Diagoras was a Greek poet who is marked as the first known atheist in Western history. He wrote several works except that he rejected the gods and had to flee where he lived as a result.

John Polkinghorne (1930–)

Polkinghorne is a theoretical physicist and theologian who defends religious beliefs. He became a vicar in 1977 and has written extensively on science and religion. He argues that the anthropic principle is evidence that God exists. He also supports the existence of evil and suffering in a world that was created by an omnipotent and omniscient God.


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Year 1 Refreshers

In Year 1, you studied various arguments for the existence of God. These arguments were used by Christian apologists to defend their faith against the claims of New Atheism. You also explored challenges to religious experiences. He argued that religious experiences are not unique and can be explained in alternative explanations for the emergence of life on earth, rather than by Darwinism. Darwinism is supported by Freud and by the New Atheists, but it can also be accepted by Polkinghorne and F R Tennant, who developed the anthropic and aesthetic principles, arguing that they are being compatible with the existence of God.

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Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹️	Some Idea 😊	
What does it mean to say religion is a collective neurosis?			
What did Freud mean by religion is a neurosis (both the primal horde and Oedipus complex need to be included)?			
Explain what Freud meant when he said that religion is an illusion.			
What supporting evidence does Freud give for his theories?			
What are the challenges to Freud's theories?			
To what extent can religious belief be considered a neurosis?			
Explain what Jung meant by religion is necessary for personal growth (include both the idea of collective unconscious, archetypes, individuation and the God within).			
What supporting evidence is there for Jung's theories?			
What are the challenges to Jung's theories?			
To what extent are Jung's ideas about religion more positive than those of Freud?			
How effective are the empirical critiques of Jungian theory?			
What is atheism (background and differences between atheism and agnosticism)?			
What is New Atheism?			
What are the main criticisms of religion that New Atheism puts forward?			
What are the religious responses to New Atheism?			
Are atheistic arguments successful in arguing against religious belief?			
To what extent are the religious responses to New Atheism successful?			

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Exam-style Questions

A. Compare the ideas of religion from Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung (20 marks)

HINTS

- o This question is testing your knowledge and understanding (Assessment Objective 1). It should be recognised by the term 'examine'. Other command words include 'compare', 'contrast' and 'outline'.
- o At A Level the AO1 question is out of 20 marks, not 25.
- o The examiners will be looking to place your answer in one of the following bands:

Marks Band	Level	What type of answer
5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that is thorough, correct and relevant. • The answer is entirely clear and answers the question. • There is depth to the answer, showing insight and good examples. • There are references to texts and/or scholars. • Specialist terminology is used consistently.
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that is correct and relevant. • The answer addresses the question and is well-structured. • There is some depth and detail with good examples. • References to texts and/or scholars are made. • The answer is clear and specialist terminology is used.
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that has a lot that is correct or relevant. • The answer addresses most of the aspects of the question. • There is some development and depth with good examples. • Some references are made and there are some connections between scholars and/or texts and some specialist terminology is used.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited answer which shows some knowledge and understanding. • The answer addresses the question in a limited way. • Some connections are made between scholars and/or texts. • There is some reference to alternative points of view with a few examples. • Few references to texts to illustrate points. • Some specialist terminology is used.
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The answer shows some basic knowledge and understanding. • The question is partly answered with some relevant points that are relevant or accurate. • The question is partly answered with some relevant points but most of the answer is incorrect or underdeveloped. • There is limited depth where the answer does not make few or no connections between texts and/or scholars. • There is little or no reference to scholars and/or texts. • Specialist terminology is very rarely mentioned.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Here is a suggestion of what you could put in each paragraph:

- o Your first paragraph could be about Freud's theory. Include as many points as you can.
- o The second paragraph could then focus on Jung's ideas of religion. Make sure you mention how they differ from Freud so as to highlight the fact that you are comparing.
- o You could have a final paragraph summing up the main differences.
- o Alternatively, you could structure your answer by having each paragraph focus on one of the areas where they differ. For example, you could have a paragraph about how the psyche is made up of, that Jung believes in a collective unconscious, or that Jung sees religion as having a positive effect on people.

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B. 'Jung is more positive than Freud with his views on religion'. Evaluate

HINTS

- o This question is testing how well you can analyse, assess and evaluate (Objective 2 or AO2). This can be recognised by the term 'evaluate'. It is an inverted comma.
- o At A Level the AO1 question is out of 30 marks, not 25.
- o It is important at A Level to make sure your evaluation is not formulaic. It should not be one argument for, one argument against, one argument for. The answer should flow from one point to the next and sometimes this can be two or more points in favour consecutively.
- o The examiners will be looking to place your answer in one of the following bands.

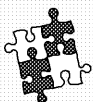
Marks Band	Level	What type of answer
5	25–30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The answer is well-reasoned with detailed analysis and evaluation. The answer is appropriate to the question. There is an insightful discussion. • There is critical analysis with good examples. • Textual references are included. • Specialist terminology is used consistently and correctly.
4	19–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are presented and evaluated based on the points made. • Most of the answer is appropriate to the question. • There is some critical analysis with examples. • Textual references are included to illustrate points. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
3	13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are considered with some evidence or textual references. • The answer has a lot that is correct and relevant. • There is some depth with examples or evidence. • Most of the scholarly and/or textual views are relevant. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
2	7–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited answer that is one-sided. • The answer is basic in answering the requirements. • There are a limited number of points made with some evidence. • There are textual references to support the points made clearly. • Some specialist terminology is used.
1	1–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an answer to the question, but this is limited. • Most of the answer is inaccurate or irrelevant. • Little development of the points made. • Limited reference to textual sources. • Specialist terminology is very rarely mentioned.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Here is a suggestion of what you could do in each paragraph:

- o In your first paragraph you could explain why Jung might be considered more positive than Freud with his views on religion. Explain why his thoughts are and how that might encourage a more positive view. Give examples to illustrate the fact that Jung saw religious symbolism as useful (e.g. his views on Buddhism).
- o In your next paragraph you could then explain how not all religious believers would agree with Jung's interpretation of religion as something internal. Religious believers might disagree with Jung's interpretation of religion as something internal. Give some examples of Jungian interpretations of religion which are lacking as far as Jung was concerned. Jung believed that the Christian Trinity is not complete.
- o In your conclusion give a final answer to the question and support your answer with one of the points you argued in one of your points in the main body of your answer.

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Activity: Now have a go at writing your own responses to the question above OR using your own ideas.

Religious Experience

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Anti-realism	This is the position that holds that there is no one truth but dependent on who is viewing them. Truth is determined by
Contingency miracle	This is an event described as a miracle because it is miraculous. It is contingent, or dependent, on the person making the claim. It is considered a miracle by someone who has another explanation. Hume gave the example of a child playing on the train track. The child sees an approaching train and the driver of the train cannot see the child. The brakes and the train stops seconds before hitting the child. The child would interpret this as a miracle. Another person would see it as an accident.
Faith healer	A faith healer is a person who can heal someone through prayer or other religious practices. It is usually associated with certain Christian churches (e.g. Pentecostal and some Anglican churches).
Natural law	These are laws that govern the universe. They are used by scientists. There is one such natural law.
Omnipotence	This is an attribute of God. It means God is all-powerful and can do anything.
Realism	This is the position that holds that there is a real truth about the world that exists and is external to people's minds. Truth is not dependent on who is viewing it but is determined by the thing in question itself.

Overview

This topic delves deeper into the importance of religious experience, practice and faith. There is an examination of the different definitions of miracles and Swinburne. Miracles could be considered to be events that go against nature, like the Red Sea. Some consider ordinary events to be miracles, such as the miracle of the sun and moon. Some miracles happen. Christianity, which is founded on the miracle of Jesus' resurrection, is called a miracle. Miracles are unlikely, subjective or impossible. Hume presents some arguments against the belief in miracles. Hume has challenged. The effectiveness of Hume's criticisms and Swinburne's responses

Key Points

The Influence of Religious Experience on Religious Practice and Faith

Value for religious community, including affirmation of belief system:

- Most religions have a founder who has had a religious experience.
- The religious experiences count as evidence for the teachings of that founder.
- Siddhartha Gautama who became the Buddha and the founder of Buddhism. He achieved enlightenment.
- Muhammad, the founder of Islam, who had a vision of the angel Gabriel who revealed the Qur'an.
- There are many in Christianity, including the angel Gabriel, who appeared to the mother of Jesus that she was to give birth to the Son of God.
- These religious experiences affirm to believers that their faith system is the truth. Some person of significance has confirmed this.

Value for religious community, including promotion of faith value system:

- Some religious experiences promote the faith value system when a divine event occurs.
- God revealed the Ten Commandments to Moses (Exodus 20: 1-17). This is a value system in Christianity by claiming they are God-given.
- In Hinduism, the Vedas contain revelations received by ancient rishis. The Rigveda contains the revelations about the varna (caste) system.

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Strengthening cohesion of religious community:

- Religious experiences can strengthen religious communities when a community has a shared religious experience. For example, Muslims celebrate Id-ul-Fitr, which is the time when Muslims remember the death of Muhammad.
- Religious experiences can strengthen religious communities when they come together for a shared religious experience. This is the case in many Pentecostal churches, where worshippers experience the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- Worshippers coming together in a church, mosque or mandir could be seen as strengthening religious communities. Worshippers experience something communally when they pray and perform rituals. The sense of being able to do this strengthens religious communities.

Value for individual in restoring faith:

- Faith is understood as something personal and internal. It is 'belief in' something that is not visible or tangible. A person can lose faith when something bad happens.
- Personal religious experiences can restore a person's faith. This could be an individual religious experience but also a communal experience where a community feels the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- Religious experiences experienced by others can also restore a person's faith.

Value for individual by strengthening faith in face of opposition:

- A person can lose their faith if they are in the minority or if something happens that challenges their faith. For example, people losing their family in a tsunami might convince a person that their religion is wrong.
- A religious experience can help restore that faith. For example, praying for a miracle to restore a person's faith.
- A religious experience might also strengthen faith when the believer is one of many. For example, when the disciples of Jesus were being persecuted, they felt the presence of the Holy Spirit which strengthened their faith.

Value for individual where a religious experience helps renew the commitment to a religion:

- A religious experience can encourage a person to renew their vows to a religion.
- One example is of confirmation in Christianity. Some individuals may decide to be confirmed after a religious experience (usually children are confirmed a few years after being baptized). This need to renew their faith after having a religious experience.

Issues:

- The impact of religious experience upon religious belief and practice. This issue is about how religious experiences have a significant impact on religious belief and practice or how religious experiences are more significant. Maybe religions are defined by their religious experiences. Religious experiences are highly significant. Make sure you include examples from different religions to illustrate this.
- Whether religious communities are entirely dependent on religious experiences. Consider whether there are other factors that religious communities rely on besides religious experiences. Christianity, for example, does seem to rely on many religious experiences (the virgin birth, the immaculate conception, Jesus' resurrection). However, these experiences have been challenged and yet people still keep their faith. What are the reasons for this? Do people need to belong without believing?

Different Definitions of Miracles**Realist views:**

- Realist views on miracles as events that happen in the world. Christian realists would see the resurrection as a miracle that actually happened.
- The realist view on miracles means they are events that are mind-independent. They do not require witnesses. These miraculous events that happen in the world are considered to be objective.

Aquinas:

- Thomas Aquinas defined miracles in a realist sense. He saw them as events that are outside the normal order of things. He recognised three types of miracles:
 - There are miracles that God does that nature can never do. For example, making the sun fly backwards.

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- There are miracles that nature can do but not in the same order. For example, nature can bring the dead back to life but not in the same order.
- There are miracles that nature can do but God does instead. In some cases, God performs a faith healing. The pastor is being guided by the Holy Spirit and someone of an incurable illness.

Hume:

- David Hume focuses on miracles that go against natural laws (see overleaf unit 2)
- Hume takes a realist position concerning miracles.
- An example is Moses parting the Red Sea (Exodus 14).

Swinburne:

- Richard Swinburne agrees with Hume that miracles are events caused by God but he adds further clarification.
- Swinburne uses the following word for miracles: miracles are 'an occurrence of an instance to a law of nature'.
- Swinburne also adds that miracles hold a deeper meaning than just being an event.

Anti-realist

- Anti-realists have a different idea of miracles. They view them as events that are mind-dependent.

Holland:

- Another type of miracle is one that is of a beneficial nature, yet coincidental. For example, a train driver who later finds out the train has crashed would be an example.
- R F Holland gives an example of a contingency miracle, a miracle that others would not expect.
- The example he gives is of a child playing on the train track. The train is speeding towards the child. The train driver faints on the brakes and the train stops millimetres from the child. The mother of the child is a religious believer and believes God has intervened to save the child. A non-believer would just see it as a coincidence that the train driver fainted.

Further considerations:

- Religious believers accept that miracles occur because God is defined as being omnipotent, God is able to do anything, including breaking laws of nature in the world. God is also considered to be omnibenevolent and so he may intervene. The miracle of Jesus' resurrection could be considered a miracle that is used to save the world (Jesus died for our sins, Christians believe) and not on their own. God's love is what Christians can follow and mimic in order to be redeemed of that sin.
- Evidence from sacred writings. Most religions report miracles happening in their scriptures.
- Affirmation of faith traditions. Miracles, as well as religious experiences, can be used to show that the particular deity is present. In addition, people witnessing a miracle can become religious.
- Personal experience. Miracles, like religious experiences, can be personal experiences. For example, a non-believer who sees someone being miraculously cured by a faith healer.

Issues:

- The adequacy of different definitions of miracles. For this issue, you will need to define different definitions and evaluate which one is better. For example, Aquinas recognises miracles to be actual events in the world. This means they can be witnessed by non-believers. As miracles are considered to be acts of an omnipotent God, they are not actually real but contingent on the believer, then they would have less value. The issue could also allow for people to believe despite there being no evidence of divine intervention. The issue could also allow for religious language to be incorporated into this issue where you demonstrate that miracles are an example of Wittgenstein's language games. Religious language is a language game that non-believers will not understand.
- How far different definitions of miracles can be considered as contradictory. Consider whether realist and anti-realist views of miracles cancel each other out. For example, if a realist view of miracles accepts that miracles happen but an anti-realist view of miracles accepts that miracles are mind-dependent, then they are contradictory.

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other hand, you may consider them to be complementary and accept that both are just two ways of God demonstrating his presence in the world. Another problem is that miracles in different religions conflict with each other, Swinburne seemed to think that this could also be argued that Hume's definition does not make sense. Natural laws can be broken and so miracles are impossible.

Contrasting Views on the Possibility of Miracles from David Hume and Richard Swinburne

Hume:

- Hume defines miracles as a 'transgression of a law of nature by a particular violation of the law of nature and is done deliberately by God.'
- Hume takes a realist position. Religious believers' claims about seeing a miracle are not based on evidence.
- Hume is an empiricist and so his focus is on evidence. A witness's statement that it must be reliable the more unlikely the claim is. It is more probable that a witness is lying than that a miracle has occurred.
- As a consequence, Hume argues that a wise man proportions his belief to the evidence. An educated person will therefore refuse that there is more evidence against a miracle than there is for it.
- Witnesses of miracles tend to be uneducated.
- People believe miracles happened because people are, by nature, gullible.
- Miracles come from 'ignorant and barbaric nations'.
- Miracles from different religions cancel each other out.

Swinburne's views on the possibility of miracles:

- Swinburne uses 'a non-repeatable counter-instance' rather than 'a violation of a natural law' to describe a miracle.
- If a miracle were a repeatable counter-instance of a natural law, then the natural law would be false.
- For the non-repeatable counter-instance to count as a miracle it also has to be a violation of a natural law. If it is not, then it has no significance and is unlikely to be a miracle.
- Swinburne finds that Hume's criticism that miracles from different religions cancel each other out is incorrect. Swinburne gave the example of a Catholic priest seeing a tabernacle and a Protestant minister seeing lightning strike the tabernacle. These two miracles do not cancel each other out.
- Swinburne responds to Hume's criticism that miracles are witnessed by uneducated and gullible people by stating that there are plenty of educated people and plenty of people who witness a miracle.

Issues:

- The effectiveness of the challenges to belief in miracles. This issue requires you to evaluate Hume's definition of miracles made by Hume. Hume argues against miracles using induction. His argument is that miracles do not happen. With inductive arguments, the conclusion is not that a miracle could happen. Hume's criticism that miracles come from 'ignorant and barbaric nations' (referring to Spain and Italy), is offensive and incorrect. You could include Swinburne's response that they offer a better explanation but do not spend too much time on Swinburne's response. You could also consider the realist and anti-realist approach to miracles. The realist approach to miracles does not support the anti-realist position.
- The extent to which Swinburne's responses to Hume can be accepted as valid. This issue requires you to evaluate Swinburne's definition of miracles and how well he responds to Hume's challenges to miracles. Swinburne's definition of miracles is not as strict as Hume's. In fact, Hume may not have thought of miracles within a religious context. For example, a Hindu who witnesses a statue of Ganesh bleeding and a Christian who witnesses a statue of the Virgin Mary bleeding. Do you find all his counterarguments to Hume's challenges to miracles?

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Key Texts/Scholars

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274)

Aquinas was a very famous theologian and Dominican monk based in France. He was a philosopher who adapted his work to Christianity. Aquinas presents five ways that God must exist. The first three arguments are versions of the cosmological argument, the second is an argument from degree and his fifth way is a version of the design argument. He wrote about religious language, how to write or know God and what type of miracles there are.

Exodus

Exodus is the second book in the Old Testament and Bible. It describes the emergence of the followers of God and their leader Moses. In Exodus 20:1–17, it reports on how Moses received the Ten Commandments from God.

R F Holland (1923–2017)

Holland was a follower of Wittgenstein and the idea that truth is dependent on the language you belong to. He believed that miracles are to be regarded as contingent on the language.

David Hume (1711–1776)

Hume is a philosopher who appears in many topics in Philosophy of Religion. Hume wrote *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Hume was an atheist and empiricist. Hume distinguished between the analytic (Hume's fork). He argues that you cannot combine the a priori with the synthetic. There are two ways of gaining knowledge. A priori relates to the analytic only; things you reason about that are true in all possible worlds. Necessary truths – truths that are true in all possible worlds – are a priori truths and are worked out through reasoning alone, according to Hume. On the other hand, the synthetic, a posteriori and contingent truths. These relate to the world of experience.

John

This is the Gospel of John. It is one of four gospels that form the first part of the New Testament (of the Bible). The gospels talk about the life and teachings of Jesus.

Richard Swinburne (1934–)

Swinburne is a contemporary British philosopher of religion. He has added to the philosophy of religion by including evolutionary theory and also believes that the argument from religious experience should also be taken into consideration when proving religious beliefs. Swinburne is a Christian apologist and so defends the occurrence of miracles against the criticisms of naturalism.

Year 1 Refreshers

In Year 1, you studied religious experiences. Although miracles may appear to be religious experiences, they are not. From a realist perspective, miracles are not religious experiences but something that actually happens in the world. Religious experiences are subjective events. From an anti-realist perspective, miracles differ from religious experiences. Religious experiences are interpretations of events in the world. Some of the criticisms against religious experiences are used against miracles. For example, you could still argue that miracles are difficult to explain. From a realist perspective, miracles from a realist perspective are ill-

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Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹	Some Idea ☺
What value do religious experiences have for communities and the affirmation of their belief systems?		
What value do religious experiences have for communities and the promotion of their faith value systems?		
What value do religious experiences have in strengthening the cohesion of religious communities?		
What value do religious experiences have for individuals in restoring their faith?		
What value do religious experiences have for individuals in strengthening their faith in the face of opposition?		
What value do religious experiences have for individuals in renewing their commitment to religious ideals and doctrines?		
What impact do religious experiences have on religious belief and practice?		
Are religious communities entirely dependent on religious experiences?		
How did Aquinas define miracles?		
How did Hume define miracles?		
How did Holland define miracles?		
How did Swinburne define miracles?		
Why do religious believers accept that miracles occur?		
What evidence is there of miracles from sacred texts?		
How do miracles affirm faith traditions?		
How are miracles personal experience?		
Are the different definitions of miracles adequate?		
Are the different definitions of miracles contradictory?		
What are Hume's challenges to the occurrence of miracles?		
How does Swinburne defend the occurrence of miracles in response to Hume's challenges?		
Are Hume's challenges to the occurrence of miracles effective?		
Are Swinburne's responses to Hume's challenges valid?		

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C. 'Hume's definition of miracles is adequate'. Evaluate this claim (30 marks)

HINTS

- o This question is testing how well you can analyse, assess and evaluate (Objective 2 or AO2). This can be recognised by the term 'evaluate'. It is an inverted commas.
- o At A Level the AO1 question is out of 30 marks, not 25.
- o It is important at A Level to make sure your evaluation is not formulaic. The answer should not be one argument for, one argument against, one argument for. The answer should flow from one point to the next and sometimes this means making two or more points in favour consecutively.
- o The examiners will be looking to place your answer in one of the following bands:

Marks Band	Level	What type of answer
5	25–30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The answer is well-reasoned with detailed analysis and evaluation. The answer is appropriate to the question. There is an insightful discussion. • There is critical analysis with good examples. • Textual references are included. • Specialist terminology is used consistently and correctly.
4	19–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are presented and there is some evaluation based on the points made. • Most of the answer is appropriate to the question. • There is some critical analysis with examples. • Textual references are included to illustrate points. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
3	13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are considered and there is some evidence or textual references. • The answer has a lot that is correct and relevant. • There is some depth with examples or evidence. • Most of the scholarly and/or textual views are relevant. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
2	7–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited answer that is one-sided. • The answer is basic in answering the requirements. • There are a limited number of points made and little evidence. • There are textual references to support the points made, but not clearly. • Some specialist terminology is used.
1	1–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an answer to the question, but this is limited. • Most of the answer is inaccurate or irrelevant. • Little development of the points made. • Limited reference to textual sources. • Specialist terminology is very rarely mentioned.
0	0	Nothing worth commenting on.

Here is a suggestion of what you could put in each paragraph:

- o In your first paragraph you can look at why Hume's definition might be inadequate. Miracles are events that break the laws of nature. Explain how Hume's definition is inadequate with this way of defining miracles and why.
- o In the next paragraphs you could explain how other definitions might be better. For example, you might think the anti-realist definitions of miracles are better. You might think Aquinas' definitions are better. The fact that Swinburne's definition suggests it was not adequate or was adequate but needed a religious perspective.
- o In your conclusion give a final answer to the question and support your answer with what you argued in one of your points in the main body of your answer.

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Activity: Now have a go at writing your own responses to the question above OR using your own ideas.

Religious Language 1

G₂ L₁ O₁

Analogical	This is a way of describing something by comparing it to something else.
Analogy of attribution	This is a type of analogy that compares something to something else based on shared attributes or qualities.
Analogy of proportion	This is a type of analogy that compares something unknown to something known. For example, 'as the soul is to the body, so God is to the world'. It suggests that something unknown is considered to be bigger or smaller than what is being compared to.
Analytic	This refers to statements. In an analytic statement, the predicate says something about the subject. An analytic statement is one where the predicate adds nothing to the subject. Definitions are analytic. If the predicate is already contained in the subject, then the predicate does not add anything new.
Atheism	The position that holds that there is no God.
Blik	This is a specific term used by Richard M Hare. It refers to a person's view or perspective that they are convinced about. Nothing can persuade them to change their view/blik.
Cognitivism	This is an approach to language that considers language to be about what can be shown to be true or false.
Coherence Theory of Truth	This is the idea that truth is decided among people. Something is true if it makes sense in their world view.
Correspondence Theory of Truth	This is the idea that truth is based on what can be observed in the world. Something is true or false because it can be checked in the world.
Equivocal	This is language that involves terms that have more than one meaning. For example, 'a box' could mean to put something in a box or to fight with a box.
Eschatological verification	This is verification or proof after death.
Falsification	This is the ability for something to be proven false.
Hume's fork	This is the term for the approach that David Hume took to knowledge. It is represented by one prong to a tuning fork) is the analytic. Knowledge gained through reasoning and only relates to logic and introspection. The other side (or prong) is the synthetic. This is knowledge gained through observation and relates to the world around us. These two types of knowledge are separate and cannot be related to one another but they are two respectable types of knowledge. According to Hume, 'should be committed to the flames'.
Hypothesis	This is a proposed explanation for something.
Non-cognitivism	This is an approach to language that sees language as expressing attitudes rather than stating facts.
Synthetic	This refers to a type of statement where the predicate adds something to the subject. The predicate is based on experience. For example, 'the box is on the table' is synthetic because the concept of a box that it should be on the table and the fact that it is on the table are based on observation.
Theism	This is the view that God exists.
Univocal	This is language that involves terms that mean the same thing in all contexts.
Verification	This is the ability for something to be proven true or checked against reality.

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Overview

This topic examines the nature of religious language and how religious language is viewed. Religious language is language about something that is otherworldly which is not language about ordinary things in the world. It could be the case that religious language is about actual things at all but about how people should live their lives. These different views have been debated among twentieth-century philosophers, in particular. Should religious language be viewed as that expresses facts or as something expressing attitudes or a way of life? This section examines these views and their strengths and weaknesses.

Key Points

Inherent Problems of Religious Language

Limitations of language for traditional conceptions of God:

- Language is a means of communication about things we experience around us.
- Religious language is about things that we cannot experience (at least in an empirical sense) as finite and timeless. This is not something we can experience.
- This presents a problem for religious language because it is about something that is beyond language.

Challenge to sacred texts and religious pronouncements as unintelligible:

- Religious language communicates about religious things but not all things that are easy to understand.
- Religious language that describes things beyond ordinary reality is difficult for us to understand. This might be language that describes a deity or a religious experience.

Challenge that religious language is not a common shared base and experience:

- Ordinary language is about a world we all share. Religious language is not always shared.
- This means that there is no common shared base and experience to religious language.
- For example, an atheist will not understand the reality that a Christian tries to describe. There is nothing that they share and can agree on. You can agree on a statement 'there is a tree' because you can both check the statement by looking in the tree in the world. You cannot check a statement such as 'there is life after death'.

The differences between cognitive and non-cognitive language:

- If religious language is to be viewed cognitively, then it must be language that can be understood in this world. The cognitive view relates to the correspondence theory of truth.
- Religious language might be better understood as a way of expressing an attitude. It may be symbolic or analogous. This is a non-cognitive approach. Religious language is not about facts because it concerns the otherworldly which we have no knowledge of. It could be true or false, but we do not know what it is not. The non-cognitive view relates to the coherence theory of truth.

Issues:

- The solutions proposed by religious philosophers for the inherent problems of religious language. This issue will need to bring in points from the topics that follow. You could attempt to solve the problem by arguing that religious language is analogous to ordinary language. Religious language is symbolic. You may consider these approaches inadequate. Religious believers view religious language. Religious believers tend to think of religious language as expressing facts. Solutions to the inherent problems of religious language have been proposed by positivists and Anthony Flew who argue that religious language is meaningless.
- The exclusive context of religious belief for an understanding of religious language. Religious believers consider whether religious language is exclusive to religious believers. Is it possible to understand religious language if it is explained? If it were possible, does that mean that non-believers can believe religious language? Make sure you use examples from religious language.

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Religious Language as Cognitive

- The traditional way of looking at religious language is a cognitive way.

Logical positivism:

- Logical positivism is a school of thought that takes a cognitivist approach to religion. Logical positivists view language only in terms of whether it can be about things that can be verified. Statements are either analytic statements or synthetic statements. Anything else is meaningless. They agree that religious language is meaningless.
- Logical positivism claims that language must be about things that can be verified. If it cannot be verified, it is meaningless. They follow the principle of verification.
- A J Ayer was a logical positivist who argued that religious language cannot be verified. 'God exists' is nonsense as it refers to an entity that is not in this world and cannot be verified. 'There is a yellow patch over there' on the other hand can be verified by looking at it.
- Religious language is, therefore, meaningless.

Falsification:

- Anthony Flew used the Wittgenstein's parable of the gardener to demonstrate that religious language is not cognitive. He took a cognitivist approach in proving that language must be about things that can be verified. There is enough evidence to disprove it. Religious believers will not accept that their belief cannot be supported with evidence. They modify their claims each time they are challenged against the religious hypothesis. As Flew says, 'a fine brash hypothesis is killed by a thousand qualifications'.
- Religious language cannot be disproved and so it is meaningless.

Criticisms of verification:

- Logical positivism is just a theory itself and cannot be verified. You cannot verify logical positivism (that only things that are verifiable are meaningful) as it is an opinion itself.
- It is also the case that historical facts and universal scientific statements cannot be verified. We believe these.
- John Hick uses the parable of the celestial city to demonstrate that religious language is cognitive. The parable can be summarised as follows: two travellers are walking down a road. One traveller believes that the road leads to the celestial city. This traveller represents a theist and the celestial city is heaven (the celestial city). The other traveller does not believe the road leads to the celestial city. This traveller represents the atheist who does not believe there is any religious purpose to life. The truth of the statement 'there is a celestial city' (or there is life after death) is verified when they reach the end of the road. The truth of the statement 'there is life after death' is verified when they reach the end of the road. This is eschatological verification.
- Religious language can, therefore, be verified.
- Religious language is, therefore, meaningful.

Criticisms of falsification:

Hare:

- R M Hare uses the parable of the lunatic student to illustrate that religious belief is not cognitive. No amount of evidence can convince them from their belief.
- The parable can be summarised as follows: there is a lunatic student who is convinced that there is a celestial city. He is introduced to a theist who tells him that there is no celestial city. He is introduced to an atheist who tells him that there is no celestial city. He is still not convinced. This is similar to religious believers who have a belief in God. No amount of evidence will dissuade them from believing. Their belief in God is a blik. Atheists have another one.
- Hare has demonstrated that religious language is used by those who have a belief in God. It is not meaningful. It affects their life.
- Religious language is, therefore, meaningful despite not being falsifiable.

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Mitchell:

- Basil Mitchell makes the claim that certain things are meaningful even if they cannot be verified or falsified.
- Mitchell illustrates his point with the parable of the partisan and stranger.
- The parable can be summarised as follows: a partisan (representing a believer) and a stranger (representing God) to believe he is on his side, the side of the resistance. He sometimes is, but he must have faith that he is. The partisan sometimes is on the side of the resistance and other times not (God allowing for natural occurrences that appear as if God does not exist, by analogy). The partisan believes in the stranger because of what he told him. These are the grounds for his belief despite acts that suggest he is not on the side of the resistance. In the same way, religious language is meaningful despite not being able to be falsified.

Swinburne:

- Richard Swinburne argues that religious language is meaningful even though it cannot be verified or falsified.
- Swinburne gives the example of toys in a cupboard that come alive when a child is not looking.
- The toys coming alive cannot be verified or falsified because they only come alive when the child is not looking.
- In the same way, religious belief cannot be verified or falsified but religious language is meaningful.

Issues:

- The persuasiveness of arguments asserting either the meaningfulness or meaningfulness of religious language. This issue asks you to look at the persuasiveness of all these approaches to religious language, their strengths and weaknesses to all these approaches. The idea that only things that can be verified or falsified are meaningful is simple and avoids having to try to explain factual things such as ethical or religious experiences based on opinions. Logical positivism and the principle of verification is a way of avoiding the need for evidence for beliefs. The principle of verification would rule out things such as religious experiences that are ineffable. This is important because anyone could then claim they have had a religious experience. However, logical positivism is too strict. It does not give credit to things that are meaningful. This is demonstrated by Hare, for example. Falsification is a further challenge to religious language. Theories to be considered even more likely. Hare's parable responds well to Flew's challenge. Religious language cannot be falsified and is, therefore, meaningless. Hare recognises that religious language is meaningful for religious believers. Their blik shapes the way they see life and live their life. It is not something that can be falsified. Ultimately every viewpoint, including science or atheism, is falsified. If things can be verified but not falsified, then they are not as secure as things that can be both verified and falsified. Flew and his reliance on falsification is too strict in the same way as verification is too strict. Meaning cannot be falsified. There are plenty of examples of people who have given up their religious beliefs, such as tsunamis killing their loved ones. This shows that they have given up their religious beliefs because they have been falsified. Flew responds by pointing out that religious people are making their own world when they say such things as 'God's creation'. This would mean that religious language is not something that can be verified or falsified. Hare's approach means that religious language is meaningful. It follows that you won't be able to prove them.
- How far logical positivism should be accepted as providing a valid criterion for meaningfulness of religious language. This issue is similar to the previous one but requires you to focus on the principle of verification. Logical positivism and the principle of verification is a way of avoiding the need for evidence for things that are not factual. The principle of verification would rule out religious experiences that are ineffable. This is important because anyone could then claim they have had a religious experience to prove their beliefs. However, logical positivism is too strict. It does not give credit to things that are unverifiable but meaningful. Hick demonstrates that the truth of religious language is meaningful when it cannot be verified and is meaningful. Hick still uses verification as a criterion. However, verification is not something that can be verified during a lifetime which is what matters. Religious language cannot be verified, when you die there will be nobody to claim the theist has been proved right. Verification is needed.
- To what extent do the challenges to logical positivism provide convincing arguments for religious believers? This issue asks you to consider whether the views of Hare and Mitchell are convincing for religious believers. Do religious believers think that their religious belief is just something that can be verified or falsified? Do religious believers think that all you need are grounds for your belief? The fact that religious believers think that all you need are grounds for your belief suggests that more than just logical positivism. Do religious believers consider non-cognitive responses as challenges to logical positivism. Do religious believers think that religious language is an attitude towards life rather than something factual?

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Religious Language as Non-cognitive and Analogical

Aquinas:

- Aquinas believed religious language is not concerned with terms that are equivocal.
- Religious language can only describe the metaphysical by comparing it to what we know.
- Aquinas recognises two forms of analogical language. The first form of analogy is attribution. There are certain good attributes of created things that God will have in common with them. For example, a kind human being will have acquired the attribute of kindness. A kind being that creator, would have to know what kind is in order to create it.
- The second is analogy of proportion. Here the analogy is drawn between things and God. God is so much greater and so these qualities will be in proportion to his greatness. For example, certain humans are described as wise. God's wisdom will be so much wiser than theirs.
- This approach is cognitive because it is based on observations in the world. We can observe that we have or the fact that greater things will have more of the same attributes but in greater proportion.

Ramsey:

- Ian Ramsey argued that a religious experience is a religious experience.
- Occasional people can have disclosures that confirm this.
- These disclosures are difficult to explain using ordinary language.
- The best way that this can be done is through using qualifiers to ordinary language.
- An example of a qualifier is describing God as 'almighty' father. This qualifier is not just any ordinary father.

Challenges:

- Analogies cannot give meaningful insights into religious language. Viewing religious language as analogical means that it cannot be criticised in the same way as if it were univocal or equivocal.
- Aquinas' view does not help in understanding religious teachings:
 - God is transcendent and beyond our comprehension so how do we know his attributes in proportion to his greatness?
 - It is impossible for an analogy to work if you do not know what you are comparing. If God cannot be known so how can we compare him to something known?
- Even though Aquinas thought that God could not possess negative attributes such as being cruel. This could also be in proportion to his greatness.
- Ramsey's view does not help in understanding religious teachings:
 - Ramsey and Aquinas assume God's existence.
 - Ramsey's use of qualifiers accentuates the fact that we cannot know or understand God.

How these two views can be used to help understand religious teachings:

- Aquinas and Ramsey demonstrate how religious language is meaningful despite being unfalsifiable.
- Aquinas' analogies of proportion and attribution and Ramsey's qualifiers show how religious language can be explained by using what we know.
- Explaining the religious in terms of what we do know can help with some understanding of reference.

Issues:

- Whether non-cognitive interpretations are valid responses to the challenges of religious language. This issue asks you to consider non-cognitive views such as those of Tillich and Bultmann. It can also include other non-cognitive views covered in the next theme (Tillich's religious language as symbolic or Bultmann and religious language as mythical). Consider whether you think that religious language is an attitude towards life rather than something that refers to a reality.

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Key Texts/Scholars

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274)

Aquinas was a very famous theologian and Dominican monk based in France. He was influenced by the philosopher Aristotle and adapted his work to Christianity. Aquinas presents five ways to prove God must exist. The first three arguments are versions of the cosmological argument, the second is an argument from degree and his fifth way is a version of the design argument. He wrote about religious language and how to write or know God.

A J Ayer (1910–1989)

Ayer was a logical positivist who wrote *Language, Truth and Logic*. In this work, he introduced the principle of verification. He criticises religious language for not being verifiable and therefore being nonsense.

Anthony Flew (1923–2010)

Flew was a British philosopher and atheist. Apart from arguing that God could have no evidence, he also argued that you should assume God does not exist until there is strong evidence. He argued that religious belief cannot be falsified (disproved). He argued this using John Wisdom's argument. The point is that it does not matter how much evidence you show a religious believer, they will come up with a response to defend their faith.

Richard M Hare (1919–2002)

Richard Hare was a philosopher at Oxford who wrote about ethics and philosophy. He was a philosopher who possessed the Christian blik which supported him in living a good and moral life.

John Hick (1922–2012)

Hick was a theologian who is famous for his soul-making theodicy, his pluralism (the idea that all aspects of the truth), his replica theory and his arguments that claim that religious beliefs come across his theories in other topics in Philosophy of Religion.

Basil Mitchell (1917–2011)

Mitchell was an English philosopher of religion. He took part in the university debates about religious language by making the point that it is meaningful because religious language is used in university debates were held between himself, Hare and Flew. He made this point during the 1950s and was a partisan and stranger.

Ian Ramsey (1915–1972)

Ramsey was an Anglican bishop of Durham and philosopher of religion. His most famous work is *Language* which he wrote in 1957. In this work he writes about the nature of religious language.

Year 1 Refreshers

In Year 1, Hick's soul-making theodicy was examined as a way of resolving the problem of evil. Theodicy rests on the idea of a teleological justification. You will recall that this is the idea that the good in life are good enough to compensate for the amount of evil and suffering there is in the world. Hick returns to the importance of eschatology. This time it is what there is at the end of life) rather than the journey (trials and tribulations of life).

There are also links to the problem of evil in this topic of religious language. The problem is that there is evidence that falsifies religious belief in God.

Proving God's existence through the teleological, ontological or cosmological arguments is a difficult task. Looking at religious belief and the language used. From a non-cognitive perspective, a different approach is needed.

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Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹️	Some Idea 😊
What are the inherent problems with religious language?		
What is cognitivism and non-cognitivism?		
What are the solutions to the inherent problems of religious language offered by various philosophers?		
Does there need to be a cognitive context of religious belief for the meaningfulness of religious language?		
What does logical positivism state about religious language?		
What does Flew argue about religious language?		
What are the criticisms of verification?		
What does Hick say about religious language?		
What does Hare argue about religious language?		
What does Mitchell argue about religious language?		
What does Swinburne argue about religious language?		
How persuasive are the arguments asserting the meaninglessness of religious language?		
How persuasive are the arguments asserting the meaningfulness of religious language?		
How far can logical positivism be accepted as providing a valid criterion for meaning in the use of language?		
To what extent do the challenges to logical positivism provide convincing arguments to non-religious believers?		
What does Aquinas argue about religious language?		
What does Ramsey argue about religious language?		
What are the challenges to Aquinas and Ramsey concerning religious language?		
Are non-cognitive interpretations valid responses to the challenges to the meaning of religious language?		

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Exam-style Questions

A. Examine the contributions of Aquinas and Ian Ramsey to a study of religion

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- This question is testing your knowledge and understanding (Assessment Objective 1). It should be recognised by the term 'examine'. Other command words include 'analyse', 'discuss' and 'outline'.
- At A Level the AO1 question is out of 20 marks, not 25.
- The examiners will be looking to place your answer in one of the following bands:

Marks Band	Level	What type of answer
5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that is thorough, correct and relevant. • The answer is entirely clear and answers all parts of the question. • There is depth to the answer, showing insight and good examples. • There are references to texts and/or scholars. • Specialist terminology is used consistently and correctly.
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that is correct and relevant. • The answer addresses the question and develops a clear line of argument. • There is some depth and detail with good examples. • References to texts and/or scholars are made. • The answer is clear and specialist terminology is used correctly.
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that has a lot that is correct and relevant. • The answer addresses most of the aspects of the question. • There is some development and depth with some examples. • Some references are made and there are some connections between scholars and/or texts and some knowledge is shown. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited answer which shows some knowledge and understanding. • The answer addresses the question in a limited way. • Connections are made between scholars and/or texts. • There is some reference to alternative positions and examples. • Few references to texts to illustrate points are made. • Some specialist terminology is used.
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The answer shows some basic knowledge and understanding of the question. • The question is partly answered with some relevant points but most of the answer is incorrect, unclear or irrelevant. • There is limited depth where the answer lacks detail and few or no connections between texts and/or scholars. • There is little or no reference to scholars or texts. • Specialist terminology is very rarely mentioned.
0	0	Nothing worth commenting on.

Here is a suggestion of what you could put in each paragraph:

- In your first paragraph you could explain the inherent problems of religion and the cognitive and non-cognitive ways of trying to solve these problems.
- In your second paragraph, you need to examine Aquinas' view on religion. You should include and explain key terms such as equivocal, univocal and analogical. You should also illustrate.
- In the third paragraph, you need to explain Ramsey's views on religion.

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B. 'Non-cognitive interpretations of religious language are more valid claim (30 marks).

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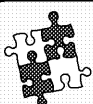
- o This question is testing how well you can analyse, assess and evaluate (Objective 2 or AO2). This can be recognised by the term 'evaluate'. It is important to use inverted commas.
- o At A Level the AO1 question is out of 30 marks, not 25.
- o It is important at A Level to make sure your evaluation is not formulaic. The answer should not be one argument for, one argument against, one argument for. The answer should flow from one point to the next and sometimes this can be done by making two or more points in favour consecutively.
- o The examiners will be looking to place your answer in one of the following bands:

Marks Band	Level	What type of answer
5	25-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer is well-reasoned with detailed analysis and evaluation. • The answer is appropriate to the question and shows an insightful discussion. • There is critical analysis with good examples. • Textual references are included. • Specialist terminology is used consistently and correctly.
4	19-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are presented and evaluated based on the points made. • Most of the answer is appropriate to the question. • There is some critical analysis with examples. • Textual references are included to illustrate points. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
3	13-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are considered with some evidence or textual references. • The answer has a lot that is correct and relevant. • There is some depth with examples or evidence. • Most of the scholarly and/or textual views are relevant. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
2	7-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited answer that is one-sided. • The answer is basic in answering the requirements. • There are a limited number of points made with little evidence. • There are textual references to support the points made clearly. • Some specialist terminology is used.
1	1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an answer to the question, but this is limited. • Most of the answer is inaccurate or irrelevant. • Little development of the points made. • Limited references to textual sources. • Specialist terminology is very rarely mentioned.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

- Here are some suggestions of what you could put in each paragraph:
- o In your first paragraph you could explain why non-cognitive views are more valid. You could discuss how religious language is not factual. Discussions among cognitive theologians might be better to take the non-cognitive approach.
 - o On the other hand, religious believers do tend to regard religious language as fact. They make statements such as 'God exists', they think of that as a fact.
 - o In your conclusion give a final answer to the question and support your answer with what you argued in one of your points in the main body of your answer.

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Activity: Now have a go at writing your own responses to the question above OR using your own ideas.

Religious Language 2

G₂ L₁ O₁

Anthropocentric	This means human-centred. It is based on the Greek word <i>anthropos</i> referring to taking the central place.
Anti-realism	This is the position that holds that there is no one truth but different ones on who is viewing them. Truth is determined by who is asserting it.
Cognitivism	This is an approach to language that considers language to be about what can be shown to be true or false.
Coherence Theory of Truth	This is the idea that truth is decided by a group of people. Something is true if it is coherent with their world view.
Correspondence Theory of Truth	This is the idea that truth is based on what can be observed in the world. It is false if it cannot be checked in the world.
Demythology	This is to interpret the myths in religious texts so that they make sense.
Demythicism	This is to reveal that a text is mythical and fictitious and not factual.
Ex nihilo	This is the Latin phrase that means 'out of nothing'. It is often used to describe how things come into existence.
Form of Life	This is a term used specifically by Ludwig Wittgenstein. It refers to how we understand certain linguistic terms in the same way: a community.
Language Games	This is a term used specifically by Wittgenstein. This refers to the use of language with a specific meaning within a particular community. The same word can have a different meaning in a different community. Each community has rules for the language game that the community understands.
Non-cognitivism	This is an approach to language that sees language as expressing something that is not anything that is factual.
Relativism	This describes a theory or approach that views things to be different depending on who is viewing them. There is no absolute truth because truth differs depending on who is viewing it.

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Overview

This theme looks at other non-cognitive approaches to religious language. It looks at religious language as symbolic, as Paul Tillich and John Randall do, as mythical or as a language game to use Ludwig Wittgenstein's terminology. These are more recent views on religious language that have been influenced by developments in religious belief and practice.

Key Points

Religious Language as Non-cognitive and Symbolic

- Religious language as symbolic is meant to be symbolic rather than literal. This is a non-cognitive view of religious language.
- Viewing religious language as symbolic appreciates that religious language has no literal meaning.
- Viewing religious language as symbolic can help explain what religious experiences are.
- Viewing religious language as symbolic is an anti-realist view.

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Tillich:

- Paul Tillich views religious language as symbolic. For example, God is a symbol.
- Tillich recognises six characteristics of religious symbols:
 - symbols refer to something beyond themselves,
 - symbols participate in the reality they refer to,
 - symbols work on a soul-level,
 - symbols open up realities that are normally closed to us,
 - symbols are unintentional, and
 - symbols develop and fade away.
- Tillich's view explains why religious language has different meanings for different people.

Randall:

- John Randall considers religious language as symbolic. Religious belief relates to something that is not directly accessible to the senses.
- Randall recognised the difference between symbols used in science and symbols used in religion. Symbols in science refer to actual knowledge whereas in the arts and religion they refer to something that is not directly accessible to the senses.
- Randall observes four functions that religious symbols display:
 - As a means of communication
 - As a way of clarifying matters that might not be able to be explained in ordinary language
 - As a way to motivate into action those people who use symbols
 - As a social function, to bring people together

Challenges:

- Tillich's point about symbols participating in the reality to which they refer is challenged by the fact that symbols are not the reality itself.
- Symbols might not be able to give the right insight. For example, the Hindu symbol of the swastika was used by Nazis to symbolise their ideology.
- Symbols change over time and change in meaning.
- Concepts, such as God, are not symbolic for most religious believers. They believe in them as actual realities.
- Randall argues that symbolic religious language is non-cognitive and so it cannot be compared to empirical and objective knowledge. Randall has not done much to rescue religious language from the positivism that claims that knowledge that is neither synthetic nor analytic is not knowledge at all.

Support for these views:

- Tillich's and Randall's views can be used to help understand religious teaching about something that is difficult to articulate in normal ways.
- Randall talks about how religious language provides a kind of intuitive knowledge. Religious belief are gained through symbols that cannot be gained through normal language.
- Tillich talks about how religious language uses symbols because they can provide a deeper understanding of reality in dimensions more easily than any other form of communication.

Issues:

- To what extent can symbolic language be agreed on having adequate meaning? This issue requires you to assess whether viewing religious language as symbolic is justified. Viewing religious language as symbolic takes an anti-realist perspective on reality. The consequences are that symbols do not refer to actual things in the world. Not all religious people would take this view according to most religious believers. They really do believe in the resurrection for example. Some religious believers do believe a lot of religious events are real, especially as science has proved some of the events in scripture to be impossible. One of the main issues with viewing religious language as symbolic is that language becomes unclear. People can understand it differently, they change over time, have different levels of meaning and they do not mean what they actually do mean.
- How far can the works of Randall and Tillich provide a suitable counter-challenge to religious positivists? The focus in this issue is on how well viewing religious language as symbolic solves the problem of religious positivists. It would seem that Tillich and Randall have had to accept that religious language is not verified and so an alternative is to view religious language as an attitude towards reality.

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cognitive). The question is whether this still allows religious language to be meaningful. Viewing religious language as symbolic suggests that it is better to have language exist in the world. This is clear and provides a shared reference point. On these areas in life (for example, in advertising) where symbolic language is used and religion? Randall pointed out the functions that symbols perform and Tillich discussed. This could be considered a valuable reason to accept symbolic language although logical positivism advocates.

Religious Language as Non-cognitive and Mythical

Complex form of mythical language:

- Understanding religious language as mythical in religious studies refers to the way it conveys truths communicated through images or symbols.
- Interpreting mythical language helps make sense of the myth. Understanding the process of interpreting myths.
- Mythical language communicates truths and insights into the purpose of existence and religious truths.
- Mythical language uses metaphors, symbols and analogies.
- Myths exist in all societies with some common themes reoccurring: creation, destruction, death and rebirth.
- Religious language as mythical follows the coherence theory of truth because truths are understood in a certain way depending on the culture and religion using different symbols.
- Rudolph Bultmann discusses the difference between demythologisation and demythification. Demythologisation is about finding out what myths mean to us today. Demythification is about myths to be false in light of scientific evidence.

Types of myths

Creation myths:

- Mircea Eliade regarded creation myths as the essential form of a myth because they came into existence.
- The creation myth in Abraham religions proposes the world came out of nothing.
- In Genesis 1, the world was originally a void with primordial water. This chaotic world was ordered from chaos and the water would signify something mysterious. This would have thought that the oceans, for example, were a mystery because of the ability to cross them.
- In Genesis 1 God orders this chaos. God represents the ordering principle. The increasing presence of light in the darkness as creation progresses.
- Creation myths from other cultures show some similar features. Philip Freuchen describes the creation myth of the ancient Egyptian religion where Khepri emerges from the darkness.
- Most creation myths in religion are anthropocentric and place humans at the center of the universe.
- Creation myths have the function of giving our existence purpose and the rest of creation.

Heroic myths:

- Myths with stories about heroes have the function of advising us on how to live.
- Mythical heroes inspire. The life of Jesus is considered a heroic myth. Christians follow Jesus' footsteps in order to be eternally rewarded. In other words, by living a good life, you will be rewarded in this life or another.
- In other religious traditions, gods played the part of heroes. For example, in Greek mythology, Heracles, son of Zeus (king of all gods) and a mortal woman, went through many obstacles. This inspires others to persist in spite of the many obstacles.

Good versus evil myths:

- Many religions include myths about good characters versus evil characters.
- In Christianity, Jesus' resurrection symbolises his victory over evil. Jesus was then survived because of his purity. He also returns at the end of times to deliver the Book of Revelation.

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- In Hinduism, Kali (the feminine force of Shiva) fights evil demons and wins. Other Hindu epics, such as the Ramayana, where demons kidnap Rama's wife Sita.
- The evil characters are usually defeated because of the good qualities of the

Challenges to Myths

- One of the problems is that there are competing myths. One myth might contradict another. For example, in Buddhism there is no creator god and the universe is destroyed. In Christianity, God created the universe. These conflicting views of different myths.
- Meanings of myths change over time because societal attitudes change. Myths that were true at that time. This suggests that myths are societal constructs and do not provide objective truth. The use of such language is then called into question.
- Bultmann's method of the demythologisation of myths results in varying interpretations. For example, the myth of Jesus walking on water to mean that he was a miracle worker but it could also mean something different to someone else.
- Myths are often incompatible with a scientific understanding of the world. Theological language is not meant to provide scientific proof. It is for this reason that Bultmann felt that the myth of Jesus had to be demythologised in order to get rid of any descriptions that could be challenged.

Issues:

- The effectiveness of the terms non-cognitive, analogical and mythical as solutions to the problem of religious language. This issue requires you to assess whether the non-cognitive, analogical or mythical view on religious language, solves the inherent problem of religious language. Material from previous topics on non-cognitivism and symbolical language could be used. Points on mythical language could be that mythical language appears to be meaningful but would suggest that it is important despite not being factual. It is language that is meaningful to individuals but also cross-culturally. Myths contain important insights into human lives. This is something that factual language cannot provide. Perhaps you could offer advice. Provide examples to illustrate your points.
- How relevant are religious language issues in the twenty-first century? This is a question about whether discussions about religious language are still relevant today. Logical arguments about the unfalsifiable nature of religious language may have convinced some that religious language is meaningless and so there is no point in discussing it further in philosophy. There have been counterarguments to Flew and logical positivism, especially the non-cognitive approach to religious language that still demonstrate its meaningfulness. One of those approaches is the idea of religious language as mythical. Myths contain insights that are important in guiding people through life. This is something that factual language cannot provide. Perhaps you could offer advice. Provide examples to illustrate your points.

Religious Language as a Language Game

Wittgenstein:

- Ludwig Wittgenstein developed the idea of language games that are played within a particular form of life.
- Wittgenstein argues that religious language is meaningful within a religious community as it has a function rather than referring to an actual thing. Religious language has a use within a community.
- Religious language is language understood in a particular way to religious believers. It has a specific meaning to the religious.
- The word 'God', for example, does not refer to an actual being but to how the religious community uses the word. Some may see the word God as security or as a purpose in life.
- This meaning is not understood by those who are not religious. Those who do not share the same form of life will not understand religious language in the same way.
- The value and meaningfulness of religious language are dependent on the community using it.
- Religious language is, therefore, not something that expresses a fact that everyone can understand.
- The idea of religious language as a language game within a particular form of life is a key part of Wittgenstein's theory of truth.
- Wittgenstein understands religious language as an expression of belief. In this view, religious language is not about religious language.

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- Wittgenstein's approach means that things other than what can be verified
- It also accepts that there is a lot more to language than its literal meaning.

Challenges:

- People from different forms of life will not understand each other as they understand the words differently. So, no communication between different forms of life is possible.
- Religious language cannot be empirically verified if it is viewed as a language game. Religious believers do think they are talking about something factual in the same language.
- If what Wittgenstein says is true, then there is no need for arguments for the proof that God exists.
- Wittgenstein uses the analogy of a game, but this analogy can be questioned. Games can be explained to those who do not understand the semantics of a language.

Issues:

- The extent to which language games provide a suitable way of resolving the issues of religious language. For this issue, you could consider the inherent problems with religious language from the previous theme (Religious Language 1). Wittgenstein's theory was a response to the issues of logical positivism (which reduced meaningfulness of language to things that can be empirically verified) in that Wittgenstein acknowledges the importance of language in the way we use. However, there is still the issue that religious language does not share a common basis. Wittgenstein's theory highlights the fact that there is no shared common basis between different forms of life you belong to.
- Whether the strengths of language games outweigh the weaknesses. Some of the strengths of his approach include: Wittgenstein's approach means that things other than what can be verified are of importance. His approach also accepts that there is a lot more to language than its literal meaning. Some of the weaknesses of his approach include: people from different forms of life will not understand the words differently. So, no communication between different forms of life is possible. Religious believers do think they are talking about something factual in the same language. If what Wittgenstein says is true, then there is no need for arguments for the proof that God exists. Any other proof to prove God exists.

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Key Texts/Scholars

Rudolph Bultmann (1884–1976)

Bultmann was a German theologian. He is famous for wanting to deconstruct scriptures by demythologising them. He drew the distinction between demythologisation and the former interprets myths for a modern audience and the latter dismisses myths as

Mircea Eliade (1907–1986)

Eliade was a Romanian historian of religion and professor at the University of Chicago. He was interested in myths and religious practices in all different religions.

Philip Freund (1909–2007)

Freund was a Canadian novelist who wrote *The Creation of Myths*. His book examines myths from different cultures and religions.

Genesis 1

This is the first book in the Bible and the Old Testament. It explains how the world came into existence.

John Herman Randall (1899–1980)

Randall was an American philosopher. He wrote works on the history of philosophy between science and religion.

Book of Revelation

This is the last book in the Bible and New Testament. It explains what will happen in the future.

Paul Tillich (1886–1965)

Tillich was a Christian theologian famous for viewing religious language as symbolic and ethics as a normative ethical approach (see ethics section of your course). Tillich's approach is (see next topic).

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951)

Wittgenstein is one of the most famous philosophers of the twentieth century. His work is divided into two phases. The first phase was his period as a logical positivist. His second phase was his work on language games. Wittgenstein was an anti-realist and was keen to point out how language and the communities we belong to.

Year 1 Refreshers

For this last topic, you could incorporate religious language expressed in religious experiences. These can be interpreted symbolically and mythically. Descriptions of mystical experiences should be taken as symbolic or mythic. Descriptions of other religious experiences should be taken as a particular language game that those who have them will not understand.

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Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹️	Some Idea 😊
Explain how religious language is symbolic.		
What are the functions of symbols, according to Randall?		
What does Tillich suggest about religious language being symbolic?		
What are the challenges to religious language being symbolic?		
How might religious language as symbolic help in understanding religious teachings?		
Can symbolic language give an adequate meaning as a form of language?		
Do Randall and Tillich provide a suitable counter-challenge to logical positivism?		
What does it mean to say religious language is mythical?		
What are the different types of myths?		
What are the challenges to religious language being mythical?		
How effective are the terms non-cognitive, analogical and mythical as solutions to the problems of religious language?		
Are the religious language issues still relevant in the twenty-first century?		
Explain how religious language is a language game.		
What are the challenges to Wittgenstein's theory of language games?		
Do language games provide a suitable way of resolving the problems of religious language?		
Do the strengths outweigh the weaknesses of Wittgenstein's language game theory?		

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Exam-style Questions

A. Examine the contributions of Tillich, Randall and Wittgenstein to a ... (20 marks).

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- This question is testing your knowledge and understanding (Assessment Objective 1). It should be recognised by the term 'examine'. Other command words include 'outline'.
- At A Level the AO1 question is out of 20 marks, not 25.
- The examiners will be looking to place your answer in one of the following bands:

Marks Band	Level	What type of answer is expected
5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that is thorough, correct and relevant. The answer is entirely clear and answers all parts of the question. • There is depth to the answer, showing insight and good examples. • There are references to texts and/or scholars. • Specialist terminology is used consistently and correctly.
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that is correct and relevant. • The answer addresses the question and develops ideas. • There is some depth and detail with good examples. • References to texts and/or scholars are made. • The answer is clear and specialist terminology is used correctly.
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that has a lot that is correct and relevant. • The answer addresses most of the aspects of the question. • There is some development and depth with good examples. • Some references are made and there are some connections between scholars and/or texts and some knowledge of specialist terminology.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited answer which shows some knowledge and understanding. • The answer addresses the question in a limited way. Some connections are made between scholars and/or texts. • There is some reference to alternative positions. • Few references to texts to illustrate points or examples. • Some specialist terminology is used.
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The answer shows some basic knowledge and understanding of points that are relevant or accurate. • The question is partly answered with some relevant points but most of the answer is incorrect. • There is limited depth where the answer lacks detail and few or no connections between texts and/or scholars. • There is little or no reference to scholars or texts. • Specialist terminology is very rarely mentioned.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

Here is a suggestion of what you could put in each paragraph:

- In your first paragraph you could explain the inherent problems of religious language. You could discuss cognitive and non-cognitive ways of trying to solve these problems. Tillich's idea of the 'ground of being' and his idea of 'being-in-itself' could be used to take a non-cognitive approach to religious language.
- In your second paragraph you need to explain Tillich's understanding of religious language as symbolic. Give details of why Tillich sees religious language as meaningful.
- In your third paragraph explain Randall's functions of symbolic language.
- In your final paragraph explain Wittgenstein's idea of language games. Give examples of a non-cognitive way of viewing religious language. Give examples to illustrate this.

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B. 'The strengths of language games outweigh the weaknesses'. Evaluate

HINTS

- o This question is testing how well you can analyse, assess and evaluate (Objective 2 or AO2). This can be recognised by the term 'evaluate'. It is an inverted commas.
- o At A Level the AO1 question is out of 30 marks, not 25.
- o It is important at A Level to make sure your evaluation is not formulaic. It should not be one argument for, one argument against, one argument for. The answer should flow from one point to the next and sometimes this means making two or more points in favour consecutively.
- o The examiners will be looking to place your answer in one of the following bands:

Marks Band	Level	What type of answer
5	25–30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An answer that is well-reasoned with detailed analysis and evaluation. The answer is appropriate to the question. The answer shows a thoughtful discussion. • There is critical analysis with good examples. • Textual references are included. • Specialist terminology is used consistently and correctly.
4	19–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are presented and evaluated based on the points made. • Most of the answer is appropriate to the question. • There is some critical analysis with examples. • Textual references are included to illustrate points. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
3	13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sides to the argument are considered and supported with evidence or textual references. • The answer has a lot that is correct and relevant. • There is some depth with examples or evidence. • Most of the scholarly and/or textual views are relevant. • Specialist terminology is used correctly.
2	7–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited answer that is one-sided. • The answer is basic in answering the requirements. • There are a limited number of points made and supported with evidence. • There are textual references to support the points made. • Some specialist terminology is used.
1	1–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an answer to the question, but this is limited. • Most of the answer is inaccurate or irrelevant. • Little development of the points made. • Limited reference to textual sources. • Specialist terminology is very rarely mentioned.
0	0	Nothing worthy of credit.

- Here is a suggestion of what you could put in each paragraph:
- o In your first paragraph you could explain the strengths of Wittgenstein's theory. This might include how it solves the issue of religious language not being meaningful. Another strength is that it explains why logical positivists of the importance of religious language are because they play a different language game. You could also mention the strengths, why you think they are helpful.
 - o You will also need to consider the weaknesses to Wittgenstein's theory. You could discuss how language games, how can they communicate meaningful things. How do they think they are talking about something factual in the same language. If what Wittgenstein says is true, then there is no need for God or any other proof to prove God exists. Explain why you think the weaknesses to Wittgenstein's theory. Back your final decision up with the main body of your answer.

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Activity: Now have a go at writing your own responses to the question above OR using your own ideas.

True/False Quiz

1.	Freud believed in a collective unconscious.
2.	Jung saw the positive role religion played in people's lives.
3.	Freud believed that religion was a collective neurosis.
4.	Jung recognised the trickster figure as an archetype.
5.	Jung used the case of Little Hans as evidence for his theory.
6.	Jung's archetype of the shadow can be found in the Christian idea of the Holy Trinity.
7.	New Atheism is antitheist.
8.	Sam Harris is a Christian apologist.
9.	Hume takes an anti-realist position on miracles.
10.	Hume talks about miracles being contingency miracles.
11.	Swinburne defines a miracle as a non-repeatable counter-instance that has deeper religious significance.
12.	Hume criticises miracles for being believed by the uneducated.
13.	Swinburne thinks that witnesses of miracles are unreliable.
14.	Religious language has no shared common base.
15.	Logical positivists believe religious language is meaningful.
16.	Hick believed religious language is meaningful.
17.	Flew used John Wisdom's parable of the gardener to prove that religious language is meaningless.
18.	Mitchell talks about religious language being a blik.
19.	Hare believes religious language is meaningless.
20.	Ramsey talks about religious language using analogies of proportion.
21.	Ramsey talks about religious language using qualifiers.
22.	Viewing religious language as factual means it has cognitive content.
23.	Randall views religious language as cognitive.
24.	Randall views religious language as being verifiable.
25.	Tillich views religious language as non-rational.
26.	Communication is one of the functions of religious language according to Wittgenstein.
27.	Bultmann believes religion should be demythicised.
28.	Hero myths may feature alongside good-versus-evil myths.
29.	Wittgenstein takes a non-cognitive view of religious language.
30.	Wittgenstein believes we all play the same language game.

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True/False Quiz Answers

1. False. Jung believed in a collective unconscious.
2. True.
3. True.
4. True.
5. False. Freud used the case of Little Hans as evidence for his theory.
6. False. Jung's archetype of the shadow can NOT be found in the Christian Bible.
7. True.
8. False. Sam Harris is one of the four New Atheists.
9. False. Hume takes a realist position on miracles. He claims that reports of reports of real things happening in the world are more reliable than reports of reports of real things happening in the world.
10. False. Holland talks about miracles being non-intentional miracles.
11. True.
12. True.
13. False. Swinburne argues that some witnesses of miracles are reliable. This method can also be applied to miracles.
14. True.
15. False. Logical positivists believe religious language is meaningless because it cannot be verified.
16. True. Hick believed religious language is meaningful because it can be verified.
17. True.
18. False. Hare talks about religious language being a blik.
19. False. Hare believes religious language is meaningful despite not being able to be verified.
20. False. Aquinas talks about religious language using analogies of proportion.
21. True.
22. True.
23. False. Randall views religious language as non-cognitive and symbolic.
24. False. Randall views religious language as being symbolic. Verification does not apply.
25. False. Tillich views religious language as symbolic.
26. False. Communication is one of the functions of religious language according to Wittgenstein.
27. False. Bultmann believes religion should be demythologised.
28. True.
29. True.
30. False. Wittgenstein does not believe we all play the same language game. We play different language games in different forms of life.

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WJEC/Eduqas website for specification

King James Bible available at biblegateway.com



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