

How to Prepare for Religious Studies A-Level

Summer Work

Philosophy

Definitions of Reason and Faith:

- Reason: the 'rational' part of the human mind: using logic, establishing facts, reaching conclusions, making judgements, supporting our judgements with reasons.
- Faith: trust, or belief, in something or someone (such as God)



Task: Think about the decisions you make and write down examples of decisions and beliefs that are based on reason and do the same with faith. This could be a mind map, list etc. This could be; what school a parent should send their child to, where to go for a special family meal, what car to buy.

Which do you think is the most logical when making a decision/reaching a conclusion –faith or reason? Think - Why might some people use only faith and some use only reason? Write a paragraph exploring this question and explain your opinion also. Use sources or reference to religious teachings in your answer.

Ethics

Task: Research one example of an issue concerning human life and death and one example of an issue concerning animal life and death. The BBC News website is a good source for information. For each issue decide what the ethical dilemma is and what you think is the right thing to do. You could look at Fox Hunting (very topical at the moment), Euthanasia, Abortion, Veganism etc.



For example, Diane Pretty who had Motor Neurone Disease (MND). She wanted to control the time and manner of her death. Due to her condition, she needed help from her husband to die. She asked the government to guarantee that her husband would not be prosecuted if he helped her die. The House of Lords rejected Diane's case. They said that the right to life did not include a right to die. Diane took her case to the European Court of Human Rights. They said that right to life was not determined by quality of life so could not be interpreted as also giving a right to die.

Christianity

Having a knowledge of the Bible will help you to understand key Christian beliefs and teachings. The Gospels are about the life of Jesus. The Acts of the Apostles and Romans tell you about the life of the early Church.

Task: Read the New Testament – try to read The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), The Acts of the Apostles and Romans. The texts are actually quite short and easy to read quickly. We will be referring to scripture throughout the course so even if you cannot remember the texts from memory it will be helpful to have read them at least once. Use www.biblegateway.com for the online Bible.

Task: Choose two of the following videos and make brief notes.

For a background in what the Bible is and how it came to be written, watch this video from The Bible Project - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak06MSETeo4>

To get a sense of the 'Big Story' of the Bible, watch the following video from The Bible Project - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak06MSETeo4>

For particular stories and themes, I would recommend the Biblical Themes playlist which is about 1 hour 30 minutes long if you watch every video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzWpa0gcPyo&list=PLH0Szn1yYNec-HZiVHooeb4BSDSeHhEoh>

The Story of God with Morgan Freeman is also a brilliant documentary series that looks at culture and religion around the world.

