**RELIGIOUS STUDIES: Philosophy and Ethics STEP UP TO POST 16 CHALLENGE**

**Minimum Subject Entry Requirements:** GCSE Religious Studies 5+ (if studied)

**Challenge 1: Philosophy**

Using our logic/reasoning can be good, as it can mean we make decisions without emotional bias. It can also be flawed, for example: Imagine God, he is supposed to be the greatest being we can possibly imagine (all-loving, all-powerful, all-knowing) It is greater to exist in reality, than just in imagination, so if God is the greatest being, then he must exist in reality….. But I can imagine lots of things that do not exist, like unicorns!!!

Using physical evidence can also be good, but it can also be flawed- our senses can be fooled. For example, optical illusions, mishearing people and thinking whilst dreaming that what is going on in my sleep is actually real!

Write a paragraph about how we can know if something is real or not.

Write a paragraph about which is better to use: my logic? Or physical evidence I gather using my senses?

Research the meanings of these words, then write out the words and their definitions:

Philosophy, Ethics, Religion, Analogy, Allegory, theory, hierarchy, teleology, empiricism, rationalism, a priori, a posteriori, validity, concept, reality and evaluation.

Research the Philosopher Plato and answer these questions about him:

When was he born?

In which country was he born?

Who was his famous teacher?

Who was his famous student?

**Challenge 2: Ethics**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZ9bht5H2p4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZ9bht5H2p4)

This is a very famous ethical dilemma known as Sophie’s choice. If you cannot watch the video then it shows this situation: You are an inmate in a concentration camp. The guard sees you have two children (a boy and a girl). The guard says he will let you keep one of your children with you, the other one must go to a place to be killed. You must choose who goes to be killed and who will stay with you. If you don’t choose, the guard will kill them both.
Write what you would have done if you were the mother- which of your children would you pick to save and why? How did you come to this decision- what were your values/morals? Did you use logic or something else?

Challenge 3: Skill of questioning

As philosophers, we need to question everything that someone says and does. Often this can actually lead to the real issue or heart of the matter. For example: Is killing in war murder? Why do people kill? Who says we have the right to kill? How do I know when life ends? How do we know when life begins? What is the purpose or meaning of life?

Write out 10 questions that arise from this question: Why are there evil people in the world?

Remember, I do not want any answers, only questions!

Challenge 4: Skill of debating

Record yourself having a 10-minute debate with a member of your family. It is a good idea to prepare the points you want to make and ensure that you can explain them and give examples to support them (rather than just jumping from point to point) Your family member does not need to prepare. You can pick if you are for or against the statement.

“ Murderers should receive the death penalty.”

You can record it on your phone. If you cannot record it, then you will show me your plan and you should write some of the points your family member made in the debate.

If your family member is too busy, then please play both parts in the debate and debate for 6 minutes.

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