

# TRANSITION WORK



## PHILOSOPHY 2020

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*“Awareness of ignorance is the beginning of wisdom.” Socrates*

The first thing to know about Philosophy is that you cannot just come in and be a philosopher straight away. Just like a sportsperson has to practice the basic skills before they can put them all together and to be an elite athlete, so Philosophy requires you to develop basic skills before applying them to different branches of the subject. As Aristotle said, you need to develop the skills through practice and hard work. Essentially, you need to learn how to use the basic tools before trying to build anything. Once you have these basic foundations in place, we can embark on our study of four different branches of Philosophy that we will study; Epistemology, Ethics, Philosophy of Mind and Metaphysics of God.

There are several things that you can do to prepare you for the A Level. The most important thing is to go to **Wakelet** (GCS\_PRE) and complete the **transition booklet**. After this, use the reading list including core course textbooks and useful websites to deepen your knowledge. Reading independently is a key skill. Work your way through the tasks in order and remember, this is not just about ‘getting it done’, it is about understanding what you’re writing. If all you are doing is copying blindly from Wikipedia, it will not help you one bit!

### Reading list (books / academic articles / journals etc)

#### Summer reading

**Julian Baggini – ‘The pig that wants to be eaten’**

#### Primary Textbooks and Resources

- **Lacewing, M. – AQA Philosophy (Year 1) – Routledge**
- **Hayward – AQA Philosophy (Year 1) – Hodder Education**
- **Wakelet – GCS\_PRE**
- **Dimmock, M. and Fisher, A. – Ethics for A-Level (free ebook)**
- <https://books.openedition.org/obp/4401?lang=en>

#### Extra Websites

- The Guardian – Philosophy (philosophy in the news)
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (introductory)
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (advanced)

#### Secondary Books

- Warburton, N. *Philosophy: the Basics* (5th ed.), Routledge 2012: the most popular and enduring introduction of them all
- Baggini, J. & Fosl, P., *The Philosopher’s Toolkit*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010: a very good compendium of clear explanations of concepts and arguments
- Baggini, J. *Philosophy: Key Themes*, Palgrave MacMillan 2002: written for the A Level
- Vardy, P ‘The Puzzle of Ethics’ and The Puzzle of God’

## Podcasts

'Philosophy Bitesize' Nigel Warburton  
'In Our Time – Philosophy' BBC Radio 4

## Written work required

Go to [www.wakelet.com/pre](http://www.wakelet.com/pre) and download the 'Philosophy Transition work' booklet. Work your way through it in order.

A summary of the tasks is below:-

**1 – Key definitions and glossary of technical argument words;** argument, premise, proposition, objective/subjective, fallacy, a priori/a posteriori, assertion, deductive/inductive, true/false, paradox, analytic/synthetic.

**2 – Complete the 'Deductive of Inductive' sheet**

**3 – Research and write a biography of the following people, including the philosophy topic in brackets and what they believed in;**

- a) Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Peter Singer (Utilitarianism)
- b) Immanuel Kant (Deontology)
- c) Aristotle (Virtue Ethics)
- d) Plato (Knowledge)

**4 - Find out what the following mean and some key moral dilemmas within each one e.g. in what situations should eating animals be moral (if at all);**

- a) Eating animals
- b) Stealing
- c) Telling lies
- d) Simulated Killing

**5 – Epistemology is the study of defining what we mean when we use the word knowledge. We use the word 'know' daily, but is it always clear what someone means when they say they 'know' something?**

- a) Try and come up with your own definition of the term knowledge.
- b) Complete the 'Experimenting with ideas' task.
- c) Research and summarise the 3 main types of knowledge: ability, acquaintance and Propositional.
- d) Plato was very influential in the study of epistemology. Read through the extract from his dialogue Meno and summarise the argument being made by Socrates.

**6 – Complete the 'Evaluating Arguments' section of the booklet**