



# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

## Bridging Work

A significant aspect of the work you will do in Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics involves reading and analysing (sometimes archaic) arguments and text excerpts. You will need to be able to understand and efficiently summarise the main purpose of the texts and arguments, then evaluate their quality. Below is a famous passage taken from William Paley's book, *Natural Theology*. Carefully read the text, then answer the following question; Other than where you are explicitly told otherwise, you should limit your answers to a short paragraph of no more than five or six sentences.

### TASK

1. "In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there; I might possibly answer that, for anything I knew to the contrary, it had lain there forever. Nor would it perhaps be very easy to show the absurdity of the answer. But suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place; I should hardly think of the answer, which I had before given, that for anything I knew, the watch might have always been there ... the watch must have had a maker: that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers, who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use .... Every indication of contrivance, every manifestation of design, which existed in the watch, exists in the works of nature, of being greater or more, and that in a degree which exceeds all computation. ... yet in a multitude of cases, are not less evidently mechanical, not less evidently contrivances ... than are the most perfect productions of human ingenuity." (Paley, 1809)
  - a.) Annotate the passage, identifying any Tier 2 (academic words found across multiple disciplines [subjects]) and Tier 3 (Subject specific words) vocabulary
  - b.) Summarise the text into no more than four sentences
  - c.) Explain, in no more than two sentences, the main purpose of William Paley's story about crossing a heath
  - d.) Describe the significance of the heath in Paley's story. How, if at all, does it contribute to the overall argument?
  - e.) Analyse the analogy between the watch and the world in Paley's argument. What does Paley suggest about the existence of a designer?
  - f.) Identify the key elements of the watch that Paley highlights in his story. How do these elements support his argument?
  - g.) Evaluate Paley's use of the watch as an example of design. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this analogy in supporting his argument? (Do not limit yourself to five or six sentences when listing strengths and weaknesses)

- h.) Discuss Paley's reasoning behind the conclusion that the existence of a watch implies the existence of a designer. Do you find his reasoning convincing? Why or why not?
- i.) Examine the role of complexity and order in Paley's argument. How does he use these concepts to support his claim about a designer?
- j.) Critically analyse Paley's story in terms of its logical structure and coherence. Are there any logical fallacies or gaps in his reasoning?
- k.) Using contemporary language, create your own analogy which functions as a teleological argument.
- l.) Compare and contrast Paley's argument with the teleological argument for the existence of God. How are they similar, and how do they differ?

### Heckmondwike Grammar School Rubric



Score	Thoroughness	Information	Neatness	Citation	Understanding
<b>4</b>	Notes added address the given topic in a thorough manner so that they are useful for the final products	The information is accurate, focussed and on topic.	The information is recorded neatly (either handwritten or typed) so that it is useful for others.	All notes refer to their source.	Student demonstrates a thorough and sophisticated understanding of the source.
<b>3</b>	Notes are generally detailed and are useful for the final products, but a few areas could use more attention	The information is accurate and on topic.	The information is somewhat neat (either handwritten or typed), but it is still useful for others.	Notes primarily refer to their source.	Student demonstrates a good understanding of the source
<b>2</b>	Notes have some details, but are missing some information that would be useful for the final products	The information is accurate but not entirely on topic.	The information lacks neatness and is somewhat difficult for others to use	Some evidence that notes refer to their source.	Student's understanding of the source is somewhat lacking.
<b>1</b>	Notes lack detail and offer too general information to be useful for the final product	The information is inaccurate and/or entirely off topic.	The information is illegible or sloppy in organisation, prohibiting others' use.	No evidence that notes refer to their source.	Student has a poor understanding of the source.
<b>0</b>	Nothing Submitted	Nothing Submitted	Nothing Submitted	Nothing Submitted	Nothing Submitted

## BACKGROUND TO JAHILIYYA

**T**he time of Muhammad is generally known as pre-Islamic Arabia. For Muslims, however, it is also called jahiliyya, which means “ignorance”. It was an age in which there were beliefs and practices that were the total opposite of what submission to Allah required. The religion, morality, social structure, politics and the general chaotic state of the population underpinned this description.

Religion was polytheistic, animistic and driven by human greed. Idols were sold that they believed would cause their enemies to fear them and served to deliver protection to individual tribes. Religion was practical and through sacrifice and ritual it served the needs of the ignorant public; it was by no means a deep-rooted theological pursuit.

Society was rife with immorality. The tip of this was the feudal system in which life was cheap and there was nothing immoral about killing. Trading for profit and raiding other tribes was the norm; indeed, robbery was not considered immoral unless you stole the goods of kinsmen.

The strong ruled and the weak were oppressed and exploited. Poverty was ignored and charity a rarity. Population control was often by female infanticide and the life of a woman had little value. In general, women, like slaves, were not treated particularly well and had no specific rights, human or legal.

In political terms there was no overall system of government. Rules were there but not written or firmly established; they were also variable and inconsistent.

Many books, written from a monotheistic or Muslim perspective of jahiliyya, record mostly just negative accounts. However, this does not mean that the entirety of pre-Islamic life in Arabia was evil or debased. There were some good qualities of tribal society, such as honour, bravery, hospitality and generosity. There were also areas of society, as evidence by the example of Khadijah, where women were not routinely oppressed.