

Week 1 & 2: What are ultimate questions?

Philosophy= (Greek) love of wisdom

Philosophy- is a way of thinking about the world, the universe, and society. It works by asking very basic questions about the nature of human thought, the nature of the universe, and the connections between them.



Ultimate questions- are big questions that do not have an answer, they are a mystery. Examples include what happens when we die? What is the purpose of life? Is there a God?

Truth- is a fact or belief that is accepted as true. There are many different kinds of truths that can help people explore different answers to ultimate questions.

Scientific truths-established by experiments that can be repeated and always produce the same result

Religious truths-people follow a religion and so discover the 'truth' which comes from God or a sacred text. Christians use the Bible to help them answer ultimate questions.

Moral truths- people 'know' what is right or wrong without evidence to prove it

Historical truths-truth based on evidence from documents or archaeology

Our school values –respect, honesty, responsibility and empathy. These are Christian values from the Bible.

Week 3 & 4: Philosophers- Plato and Descartes

Plato –was an ancient Greek philosopher. He challenged people to look around them and ask “What is reality?”.

Allegory– a story with a hidden meaning.

Plato’s cave– Plato’s famous allegory.



Summary of Plato’s Cave– some people were chained in a cave, forced to watch shadows across a stone wall. One day, one of the prisoner’s manages to free himself from the chains and step outside the cave to see the outer world. Once his eyes adjust he sees the real form of things. The prisoner goes back to the cave and tells everyone what he had just witnessed, but no one believes him.



Descartes -René Descartes was a French philosopher, mathematician, and scientist



Descartes is famous for stating “I think, therefore I am.” after pondering on the question “How can we prove we exist?”

Week 5 & 6 : What is the meaning of life?

Purpose– the reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists



Atheists -believe there is no creator or God and believe we exist by chance. They believe we are here because of the Big Bang and Evolution.

Theists- believe in the existence of God. Many religious people believe there is a creator God who designed the universe so argue humans do have a purpose and reason for existence; to serve God and care for his creation.

Christians- believe the purpose of life is summarised in Jesus’ Greatest Commandment- “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbour as yourself.”.



Week 7 & 8: Does God exist?

Uncertain– not known or definite

Theists– believe in the existence of God They have faith that God exists and do not need proof.



Atheists– do not believe in the existence of God They argue there is no proof God exists.

Agnostics– are unsure about the existence of God They are not sure if you need proof but don’t have complete faith either.

Theists– are certain about the existence of God. They believe they experience God through the world and prayer.

Census– an official count or survey, especially of a population.

The Census (2011) shows that the number of people identifying as Christian is decreasing and the number identifying as having no religion is increasing.

Week 9 & 10: What happens when we die?

Soul– the spiritual or immaterial part of a human being or animal, regarded as immortal
Immortal– living forever, never dies
Resurrection– rising from the dead
Samsara- the cycle of death and rebirth



All world religions believe death is not the end. Muslims and Christians believe in resurrection where people go to heaven or hell. Buddhists do not believe in resurrection. They believe in a cycle of death and rebirth called samsara.

Other possible evidence to support life after death include spirits/ghosts, mediums and near death experiences.

Many atheists argue death is the end as there is no real proof of an afterlife. They believe the atoms that make us are repurposed at death. Stephen Hawking said belief in an afterlife is a fairy story.

Week 11 & 12: Do we have a soul?

Immortality– the ability to live forever, eternal lie

Mortal– unable to continue living, having to die

Unique– one of a kind, unlike anything else

Reincarnation-a rebirth of a mental capacity, such as a soul, in a physical life form, such as a body.



Christians believe the soul is what makes humans unique and different to the rest of God’s creation. They believe it is God given and immortal.

The Simpson’s explores this question in the episode ‘Bart Sells His Soul’. At the start Bart claims we do not have a soul and it was made up to control us. Lisa claims it’s the symbol of everything that is fine inside of us, while Milhous claims we do have a soul.

Most atheists do not believe we have a soul as they do not believe in God. They believe humans are mortal. Other atheists believe in the existence of spirits, afterlife, or reincarnation.