

## Introduction

We're so excited to start the A-Level with you all! We know that some of you are approaching this with the GCSE behind you and some of you are brand new to PRE. This material is therefore designed to help everyone start in the same place and get ready for the lessons in Sixth Form.

Good luck and enjoy! We love PRE and we're sure you will too, see you soon!

Mrs Marsden

## Where should I do it?

Please complete any notes either on paper or on a Word document and save it carefully. You might need to use the notes in your lessons. Try to explain yourself as fully as you can. Use sub-headings, highlighters and bullet points to make notes.

## What if I can't answer the questions?

If you are stuck on where to even start, talk to another person about the question. Discussion is how Philosophy began as a subject, so we do it a lot and it really does help you start thinking. Do not worry if you cannot get a complete answer – it's Philosophy, there aren't *meant* to be any final and definitive answers! WHAT an intellectual adventure for us all!

An Introduction to Philosophy		TASK
<b>Something to read:</b>	<a href="https://littlehistory.org/lh-title/a-little-history-of-philosophy-yup/">https://littlehistory.org/lh-title/a-little-history-of-philosophy-yup/</a>  Here you can find the first two chapters of Nigel Warburton's A Little History of Philosophy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find the pages under 'Read an Extract'</li> <li>2. Read the first 2 chapters on Socrates, Plato and Aristotle</li> <li>3. Write a list of interesting things you've learnt about each of the 3 philosophers</li> </ol>
<b>Something to watch:</b>	What is Philosophy (Crash Course) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAKYt3GY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAKYt3GY</a>  <b>Film:</b> Either: The Truman Show (1998)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch the video. I would recommend that you watch it through once fully and then watch it again to make some notes.</li> <li>2. Give a brief summary of what philosophy is</li> <li>3. Summarise 3 key ideas from the video.</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After you've watched the film, ask yourself – how do</li> </ol>

	Or: The Matrix (1999)	you know that you don't live in a reality TV show or a computer simulation?
<b>Something to consider:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a God?</li> <li>2. What evidence could there be that would convince you of the existence of God?</li> <li>3. Where do you think religion came from? (You can watch the following for some ideas – History of Ideas: Religion from The School of Life) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge071m9bGeY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge071m9bGeY</a></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please write answers to the questions.</li> <li>2. Answer them as fully as you can. Try to use examples to explain your meaning</li> </ol>

An Introduction to Ethics		TASK
<b>Something to read:</b>	<a href="http://www.philosophersmag.com/games">http://www.philosophersmag.com/games</a>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Try some of the games here.</li> <li>2. Read the commentaries that go along with them. They raise questions that we'll be covering throughout this course.</li> </ol>
<b>Something to watch:</b>	<p>What is Ethics? <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vWXpzlL7Mo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vWXpzlL7Mo</a></p> <p><b>Film:</b> Minority Report (2002)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch the video. I would recommend that you watch it through once fully and then watch it again to make some notes.</li> <li>2. Give a brief summary of what ethics is</li> </ol> <p>After watching, consider whether catching the criminal before they commit the crime would ever be right?</p>
<b>Something to consider:</b>	Do you think you freely choose your actions?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Think about a decision you made in your life – what was it?</li> <li>2. Did you freely choose that decision?</li> </ol>

		3. What other influences could there have been on that one decision? 4. <b>Extension:</b> Can you see any problems with choices not being free?
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Extras – These are interesting and will help you think more about the world, what is 'right' and other big questions.

### The Story of God with Morgan Freeman (Netflix)



A documentary series exploring key ideas about God from around the world and across religious belief systems, presented by Morgan Freeman.

### Podcasts

<http://www.philosophybites.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04bwydw>

<https://thepanpsycast.com/panpsycast>

All of these contain a huge array of ideas – pick any you might find interesting.

### Books

#### The Handmaid's Tale – Margaret Atwood

After a staged terrorist attack kills the US President and most of Congress, the American government is deposed and taken over by the oppressive, religious and all controlling Republic of Gilead. Offred, now a Handmaid serving in the household of the enigmatic Commander and his bitter wife, can remember a time when she lived with her husband and daughter and had a job, before she lost even her own name. Despite the danger, Offred learns to navigate the intimate secrets of those who control her every move, risking her life in breaking the rules in hopes of ending this oppression.

#### 1984 – George Orwell

*1984* is possibly *the* definitive dystopian novel, set in a world beyond our imagining. *1984* is set in Oceania, which includes the United Kingdom, where the story is set, known as Airstrip One. Winston Smith is a middle-aged, unhealthy character, based loosely on Orwell's own frail body, an underling of the ruling oligarchy, The Party. The Party has taken early 20th century totalitarianism to new depths, with each person subjected to 24 hour surveillance, where people's very thoughts are controlled to ensure purity of the oligarchical system in place. Figurehead of the system is the omnipresent and omnipotent Big Brother.

### **Never Let Me Go – Kazuo Ishiguro**

Friends Kathy, Tommy and Ruth grow up together at a seemingly idyllic boarding school in the English countryside. When they leave the school and the horrible truth of their true purpose is revealed to them, they must simultaneously confront deep-seated feelings of love, jealousy and betrayal that threaten to tear their friendship apart.

### **The God Delusion – Richard Dawkins**

In *The God Delusion*, Dawkins contends that a supernatural creator almost certainly does not exist and that belief in a personal god qualifies as a delusion. With many examples, he explains that one does not need religion to be moral and that the roots of religion and of morality can be explained in non-religious terms.

