

A2 Philosophy PLC

RED
AMBER
GREEN

A2 Philosophy Exam Technique

Writing in timed conditions			
Understanding what the question is <i>asking</i>			
Selecting the <i>most</i> relevant material to include			
Structuring essays			
Writing introductions			
Formulating thesis statements			
Linking to the main philosophical debates of the topic			
Linking back to the question throughout the answer			
Clarity of explanations			
Including key terms			
Including a range of different views			
Evaluating in each paragraph (counter-points and counter-counter...)			
Sustaining an argument			
Writing conclusions			

Religious Language

Religious language - uses and purposes			
The two main philosophical problems in the use of religious language			
Key term: univocal			
Key term: equivocal			
Key term: cognitive			
Key term: non-cognitive			
The verification principle			
The views of the Vienna Circle on religious language			
Key term: Logical Positivism			
Key term: tautology			
Key term: empirically			
Evaluation of the verification principle			
The views of A. J. Ayer on religious language (weak verification)			
Key term: metaphysics			
Key term: analytic statements			
Key term: synthetic statements			
How Ayer differs from the Vienna Circle			
Criticisms of the weak verification principle			
John Hick's story of the Celestial City			
Key term: eschatological verification			
The falsification principle			
Karl Popper and the origins of the falsification principle			
Anthony Flew and the falsification principle			
Flew's adaptation of John Wisdom's parable of the gardener			
R.M. Hare's response: example of the lunatic			
Basil Mitchell's response: parable of the partisan (a resistance fighter)			
Key term: blik			

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Religious Language (continued)

Evaluation of falsification			
The via negativa (Apophatic Way)			
Key term: gnostic			
Strengths of the via negativa			
Weaknesses of the via negativa			
The use of analogy to express human understanding of God			
Thomas Aquinas views on religious language			
Analogy of attribution			
Analogy of proportion			
Key term: anthropomorphism			
Evaluation of the use of analogy in speaking about God			
The use of symbol to express human understanding of God			
The views of Paul Tillich on religious language			
Tillich's distinction between signs and symbols			
Four main functions of symbols for Tillich			
Evaluation of Paul Tillich and symbolic language			
The use of myth to express human understanding of God			
Rudolf Bultmann and 'demythologising' the New Testament			
Evaluation of Bultmann and the use of myth			
The views of Ludwig Wittgenstein on religious language			
The Tractacus ; Wittgenstein's early views			
Wittgenstein on the task of philosophy			
Wittgenstein and Language games			
Key term: fideism			
Other views on the meaningfulness of religious language			
Assessment of whether any approach to religious language is successful in providing an understanding of God			

Religious Experience

Key concept: direct religious experience			
Key concept: indirect religious experience			
Key concept: mystical experiences			
Swinburne's five types of religious experience			
The aims of William James' The Varieties of Religious Experience			
James' definition of religion			
James' criteria for mystical experience: ineffable			
James' criteria for mystical experience: noetic			
James' criteria for mystical experience: transient			
James' criteria for mystical experience: passive			
James' conclusions: empiricism			
James' conclusions: pluralism			
James' conclusions: pragmatism			
Types of religious experience: visions			

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Religious Experience (continued)

Examples of visions			
Types of religious experience: voices			
Examples of the hearing of voices			
Evaluation: are vision and voices genuine religious experiences?			
Types of religious experience: numinous experience			
Examples of numinous religious experience			
Rudolph Otto and the numinous experience			
Friedrich Schleiermacher on religious experience			
Martin Bauber on religious experience			
Types of religious experience: conversion experience			
Examples of conversion stories			
Conversion as evidence for God			
Psychological views on conversion			
Types of religious experience: corporate religious experience			
Examples of corporate religious experiences			
Evaluation of corporate religious experiences			
Argument for the existence of God based on religious experience			
William James' argument			
Richard Swinburne's argument			
Richard Swinburne's argument: principle of credulity			
Richard Swinburne's argument: principle of testimony			
Strengths of the experience argument			
Weaknesses of the experience argument			
Challenges to religious experience: psychological explanations			
Challenges to religious experience: physiological explanations			
Challenges to religious experience: difficulties of interpretation			
Challenges to religious experience: logical impossibility of experiencing God			
Counter points to the challenges to religious experience			
The concept of revelation through sacred writings			
Key concept: propositional revelation			
key concept: non-propositional revelation			
Key concept: general revelation			
Key concept: special revelation			
Evaluation of the view that God is revealed through sacred writings			