**Religious Studies AS Level** Instructions for holiday work

**Independent study using journal articles and primary sources is crucial to your success and understanding at A-level. Your holiday work is to read the four articles that you have been provided with, make detailed notes about all of them and bring in your notes as evidence (first see advice below):**

1. **What do we really know about Jesus Christ?** Gordon Reid

*An introduction to a biblical-critical approach to studying the New Testament*

**(2) When did Jesus live and die?** Theo Knight

*A review of the information available to us from biblical and non-biblical sources.*

**(3) Aristotle & causes of existence** Jon Mayled

*An introduction to a question in philosophy, by looking at Aristotle’s notions from Ancient Greece of how things come about, which have heavily influenced arguments for God*

**(4) Christianity and homosexuality** Jon Mayled

*An introduction to ethical thinking about homosexuality and different Christian attitudes towards it.*

HOW SHOULD I MAKE NOTES?

You should put aside at least two hours to properly read and make notes about *each* article. Some of them are very challenging and so you need to be methodical when you come across material you don’t understand. We do not expect that you will understand everything, but we do expect you to demonstrate that you have attempted to work through the ideas in the articles.

Step 1 – START SIMPLY

* **Read the introduction and concluding paragraphs** first
* Take a pen/highlighter
* Quickly read the whole article
* Highlight/underline **tricky words**
* Look up and **write down definitions** on lined paper – be sure they actually make sense to you

Step 2 - BREAK IT DOWN

* Read **one section** at a time
* Write your own **subtitle/summary for each paragraph** or short section
* Rewrite or summarise sections **in your own words** on lined paper (IMPORTANT for revision)

Step 3 - TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

* Highlight phrases or **quotations you could use** in an exam
* Note scholar’s names or key words as **research ‘pointers’ –** i.e. what you’d next like to know more about
* **Write down questions** you want answered, however simple (THIS IS AN IMPORTANT DISCIPLINE!)
* **Note examples** that clarify an idea for you

Step 4 - FINALLY

* Make sure your notes are **dated and titled** – you will revise from *these* rather than going back to the original
* Create a **mind-map** or diagram summarising the article, to check and consolidate your overall learning

**BRING IN** EVIDENCE OF THOROUGH NOTE-TAKING AND FURTHER RESEARCH

For each article we expect to see: the original article highlighted/underlined; a summary in your own words, key point by key point; glossary of new terms; list of 3-4 quotes for each article; questions you still have; mind-map or diagram to represent the core of what you have learned.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

Find your own articles, videos, podcasts & webpages to take your learning further and pursue your interests.

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

* [Encyclopedia Britannica](https://www.britannica.com/topic/philosophy-of-religion)
* [The Tablet (RC journal) Student Zone](https://www.thetablet.co.uk/student-zone/philosophy-of-religion/introduction) on Philosophy
* [Philosophy Bites podcasts - look at any section, though there is one on religion](https://philosophybites.com/325-bites-interviews-arranged-by-theme.html)
* [Philosophy Dungeon](https://philosophydungeon.weebly.com/) (actually covers Philosophy, Ethics and NT)

RELIGIOUS ETHICS

* [Ethics Unwrapped (University of Texas)](https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/moral-philosophy)
* [The Tablet (RC journal) Student Zone](https://www.thetablet.co.uk/student-zone/ethics/introduction) on Ethics
* [Philosophy Bites podcasts - look at the section on Traditional Ethical Theories and the sections below](https://philosophybites.com/325-bites-interviews-arranged-by-theme.html)
* [Ethics Bites podcasts and some transcriptions of the podcasts](https://www.open.edu/openlearn/whats-on/ethics-bites)

NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

* [The Tablet (RC journal) Student Zone](https://www.thetablet.co.uk/student-zone/religious-texts/introduction) on critical biblical study
* [Mark Goodacre’s New Testament Blog - especially sections on ‘Historical Jesus’ and ‘Synoptic Problem and Q’](http://www.ntgateway.com/historical-jesus/audio-and-video/) (see sidebar)
* [Dale Martin’s lectures from Yale University - see especially on the NT background and the gospels](https://oyc.yale.edu/religious-studies/rlst-152)

Further suggestions for reading

**PHILOSOPHY**

Plato’s Allegory of the Cave

Philosophy: The Essential Study Guide by Nigel Warburton

Philosophy: The Classics by Nigel Warburton

Sophie's World by Jostein Gaarder

Think by Simon Blackburn

The Problems of Philosophy by Bertrand Russell

Philosophy: a Very Short Introduction by E Craig

The Philosophy Gym by Orion

**ETHICS**

The Puzzle of Ethics by Peter Singer

Discovering Right and Wrong by L. Pojman

Practical Ethics by Peter Singer

Causing Death and Saving Life by J Glover

Rethinking Life and Death by Peter Singer

Ethics Made Easy by Mel ThompsonChristianity

The Puzzle of God by Peter Vardy

Christianity: A Very Short Introduction by Linda Woodhead

A Philosophy of the Christian Religion: For the Twenty-first Century by Professor Nancey Murphy

**NEW TESTAMENT**

The Bible: the biography by Karen Armstrong

Jesus and the Four Gospels by John Drane

Zealot by Reza Aslan

Jesus the Jew by Geza Vermes

Suggestions for watching

Documentaries

Panorama - How to Brainwash a Million People

Panorama - America’s Abortion War

Louis Theroux - Choosing Death

Genius of the Ancient World

The Global Philosopher series on BBC

YouTube

Crash Course Philosophy series

School of Life Philosophy series

Films

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

Mr Nobody

Examined Life

The Island (Cloning)

Gattaca (Genetic engineering)

My Sister’s Keeper (Genetic Engineering)

Million Dollar Baby (Euthanasia)

The Cider House Rules (John Irving – abortion)

Birdsong (Sebastian Faulks – War)

Brave New World (Genetic Engineering)

2184 (Martin Parish – genetic engineering)

Noah