

## Religious Studies A Level Transition work

A Level Religious Studies at SMSJ aims to form individuals into young philosophers; students who love wisdom and learning, and who possess both a critical and analytical mind. To that end, we will introduce you to a plethora of academic texts spanning some 2,400 years; from Aristotle in the 4th Century BC, to the modern day. It is very important that students read and understand the texts provided; many of these are available for you in the handbook.

Area of Study	Detail
<p><b>Baseline assessment test topics</b></p>	<p>An essay of 1 hour under examination conditions. This is to check the efficacy of your essay writing skills. Prepare for this by practising your essay writing skills; choose one of the following and write a 1,000 word essay:</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 'The Problem of Evil and Suffering' - why might this be a problem?</li> <li>* How do I know what is real?</li> <li>* Can we ever truly know anything?</li> </ul> <p>Christianity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* What is the role of religion in society?</li> <li>* The Church Fathers - who are they, and how might they help us?</li> <li>* How should we use the Bible?</li> </ul> <p>Religion and Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Why should I be good?</li> <li>* What is 'goodness'?</li> <li>* Is it possible to have an efficacious normative ethical theory?</li> <li>* Is Morality clear?</li> </ul> <p>You are welcome to do more than one.</p>
<p><b>Skills to develop over the summer</b></p>	<p>The texts you will encounter use sophisticated vocabulary. Thus, your grasp of the English language must improve; native speakers will struggle with the level of English used, at first. To this end, for the set texts outlined in the Handbook, make a glossary of any words you do not know the meaning of.</p>
<p><b>Bridging activities</b></p>	<p>A Level Religious Studies will begin with the study of Paper 1 and Paper 4b: Philosophy of Religion and Christianity. As such, there are several texts which will help you in your understanding of these modules. Read these before you attend the course:</p> <p>Karl Barth - <b>Jesus Christ, the Lord as Servant</b> (2004)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Reconciliation, edited by Geoffrey W.</li> </ul>

Bromiley and Thomas Forsyth Torrance (A&C Black, 2004), Volume IV, Part 1, Chapter XIV, verses 157-357.

J. L. Mackie - **Evil and Omnipotence** (1977)

- The Philosophy of Religion, edited by B Mitchell (Oxford, OUP, 1977), Chapter V, Evil and Omnipotence, pp. 92–104.

Further, it cannot be underestimated the value a Biblical understanding will have in supporting you within this subject. Thus, pertaining to your Christianity module, it is imperative that you read the New Testament; use an English Standard Translation.

It is not expected that you read each of these once, but multiple times.