**Useful reading list for AQA Philosophy (don’t worry you aren’t expected to have to read all of this)**

*In addition to your class notes and homework you should be doing additional reading using some or all of these texts. ISBN number can be found in brackets. Highlighted works are available in the library. It is hoped there will eventually be a copy of all books on this list shortly.*

**I would also recommend a subscription to ‘Dialogue magazine’ if possible, you can find the at this link -** <https://www.dialogue.org.uk/>. Rather than subscribe which is expensive, it may be best to buy a back issue of two (which can be much cheaper), just to have a read and start to explore the subject, don’t worry, it is doesn’t really matter if it isn’t the latest issue as many of the debates you will look at have been going on for a few centuries (so are unlikely to change much).

**A little bit of fun in Philosophy (to help you get into philosophy)**

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| 791.4572 | Kowalski, Dean A. | 24 Jan 2014 | A | 1118074556 | The Big bang theory and philosophy : rock, paper, scissors, Aristotle, Locke |
| SF | Gaarder, Jostein | 28 Aug 2012 | A | 1897580428 | Sophie's world : a novel about the history of philosophy |
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**Stephen Law ‘The Philosophy File’ (978-1842550533)**

*Is there a God, should I eat meat, where does the universe come from, could I live for ever as a robot? These are the big questions you will be wrestling with in this thoroughly enjoyable book.* *The text uses lively cartoons, and there is a list of philosophical jargon at the end.*

This is a great book, which is quick and fun to read. Although it is easy to read it does have good examples and still makes you think.As straightforward as they come, it gives a modern insight into how philosophy works and how to think about the big questions in life. Probably the easiest introduction you can get.

**Sophie’s World -** *14-year-old Sophie encounters a mysterious mentor who introduces her to philosophy. This book draws you into the world of Socrates, Descartes, Spinoza, Hegel and all the great philosophers.*

A good introduction to follow on from Stephen Law’s ‘The Philosophy File’. Very much a beginner’s guide to Philosophy. This book teaches what can be a complex subject in a relatively understandable way.

**Other useful reading (if you want to or have the time)**

**God/Christianity and Science**

**The Bible (New International Version)**

Read especially Genesis chapters 1- and the creation story.

**Darwin’s ‘On the Origin of Species’**

*Darwin challenges many of the most deeply held beliefs of the Western world. His insistence on the immense length of the past and on the abundance of life-forms, present and extinct, dislodged man from his central position in creation and called into question the role of the Creator.*

While not always the easiest of reading, you can’t really understand Darwin, until you have read Darwin.

**Dawkins ‘The selfish gene’ (978-0199291151)**

*Dawkins gives his views on Evolution.*

Richard Dawkins explain a scientifically difficult subject to practically everybody. His style is easy to read, understandable, occasionally funny, and he uses examples to explain his ideas. Gives an interesting perspective on evolution.

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| 211 | Lucas, Ernest | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 1844741206 | Can we believe in Genesis today? |
| 211.8 | Dawkins, Richard | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 055277331X | The God delusion |
| 215 | Alexander, Denis | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 1844740765 | Can we be sure about anything? : science, faith and postmodernism |
| 215 | Collins, Francis S. | 08 Oct 2009 | A | 1847390927 | The language of God : a scientist presents evidence for belief |
| 215 | Berry, R. J. (Robert James) | 08 Oct 2009 | A | 1854248847 | Real scientists, real faith : 17 leading scientists reveal the harmony between their science and their faith |
| 215 | Lennox John C. | 08 Oct 2009 | A | 0745953034 | God's undertaker : has science buried God? |
| 239 | Keller, Timothy J. | 08 Oct 2009 | A | 0340979321 | The reason for God : belief in an age of scepticism |
| 501 | Horgan, John | 19 Oct 2006 | A | 0316640522 | The end of science : facing the limits of knowledge in the twilight of the scientific age |
| 818.607 | Henderson, Bobby | 18 Jun 2009 | A | 0007231601 | The gospel of the flying spaghetti monster |

**Arguments for the existence of God**

**Palmer ‘The Question of God’ (978-0415223874)**

*This book introduces six great arguments for the existence of God and it is ideally suited to A-Level and even university students. It covers the Ontological Argument, the Cosmological Argument and the Argument from Design.*

This book aims to logically put together arguments in a precise, yet understandable way. It contains the depth of the subject and also provides exercises for you to complete - often testing the understanding of the concepts.

**Hume ‘Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion’ (978-0199538324)**

*David Hume is one of the most provocative philosophers to have written on various subjects. Here he asks if belief in God can be inferred from the nature of the universe or whether it is even consistent with what we know about the universe, including miracles*.

While never explicitly stating he was an atheist, Hume uses empirical evidence in making judgements about many philosophical issues, often bringing into question traditional religious beliefs.

**Cole ‘Philosophy of Religion’ (978-0340957783)**

*It provides a solid basis for those who are starting and studying an A level course in Religious Studies or Philosophy. Sections on traditional arguments for the Existence of God and the Problem of Evil.*

This book is a vital reading for all philosophy students. Very useful, easy to read and contains most of the key arguments.

**Paley ‘Natural Theology’ (978-0199535750)**

*In*Natural Theology*William Paley set out to prove the existence of God from the evidence of the beauty and order of the natural world. Famously beginning by comparing the world to a watch, whose design is self-evident, he goes on to provide examples from biology, anatomy, and astronomy in order to demonstrate the intricacy and ingenuity of design that could only come from a wise and benevolent deity.*

One of the main arguments that tries to prove God’s existence. Here you can see Paley’s original argument.

**Dawkins ‘The God delusion’ (978-0552773317)**

*Dawkins attacks God in all his forms. He looks at the major arguments for religion and demonstrates, in his view, the supreme improbability of a supreme being.*

Stimulating and challenging - at times scathing - but something which gets people to think about the idea of God.

**Dawkins ‘The Blind Watchmaker’ (978-0141026169)**

*Paley argued that just as finding a watch would lead you to conclude that a watchmaker must exist, the design of the world proves that a God exists. Not so, says Richard Dawkins, who in this book sets out to demonstrate that the theory of evolution by natural selection - the unconscious, automatic, blind yet essentially non-random process discovered by Charles Darwin - is the only answer to the biggest question of all: why do we exist?*

A must read to get a different perspective on the origins of life.

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| 215 | Collins, Francis S. | 08 Oct 2009 | A | 1847390927 | The language of God : a scientist presents evidence for belief |
| 215 | Berry, R. J. (Robert James) | 08 Oct 2009 | A | 1854248847 | Real scientists, real faith : 17 leading scientists reveal the harmony between their science and their faith |

**Evil and Suffering**

**Vardy and Arliss ‘The Thinker’s Guide to Evil’ (978-1903816332)**

*Book covering different aspects of the problem of evil.*

An excellent account of many of the traditional arguments with excellent modern examples to show that the problem of evil is still relevant. The content is superb - to a standard which will maintain your interest and help develop your understanding to A Level standard.

**Cole ‘Philosophy of Religion’ (978-0340957783)**

*It provides a solid basis for those who are starting and studying an A level course in Religious Studies or Philosophy. Sections on arguments for the Existence of God and the Problem of Evil.*

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| 202.118 | Phillips, D. Z. (Dewi Zephaniah) | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 033402966X | The problem of evil and the problem of God |
| 231.8 | Wright, N.T. | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 0281057885 | Evil and the Justice of God |

**Religious Language**

**Ayer ‘Language, Truth and logic’ (978-0486200101)**

*If you can't prove something, it is literally senseless - so argues Ayer in this book. Statements are either true by definition (as in maths), or can be verified by direct experience. Ayer rejected metaphysical claims about God as being nonsense.*

While a heavy read, it is the original place to find Ayer’s ideas on verificationism. You may want to read it with a dictionary on standby.

**Flew ‘There is a God: How the world’s most notorious atheist changed his mind’ (978-0061335303)**

*Philosopher and former atheist Antony Flew set the agenda for modern atheism with his essay "Theology and Falsification". However, he found God later in life and wrote this book in his 80’s, with some help from Roy Varghese. Some accused Varghese of taking advantage of Flew, because of his age and claimed they weren’t really Flew’s ideas in this book. Flew’s response to this was "I have rebutted these criticisms in the following statement: "My name is on the book and it represents exactly my opinions. I would not have a book issued in my name that I do not 100 per cent agree with. I needed someone to do the actual writing because I'm 84 and that was Roy Varghese's role. The idea that someone manipulated me because I'm old is exactly wrong. I may be old but it is hard to manipulate me. That is my book and it represents my thinking."*

Not vital to the course but certainly an interesting read to see how one of the main contributors to the theory of falsification came to change his mind and views about religion in later life.

**Jaspers and Bultmann ‘Myth and Christianity: An Inquiry into the Possibility of Religion without Myth’ (978-1591022916)**

*A discussion of Bultmann’s and Jaspers ideas on the language of myth, in Christianity.*

Interesting to see how these two well-known philosophers examine the idea of myth and its use. Not the easiest book you will ever read, particularly when you get to Jaspers. Useful to get some key ideas from on this topic.

**Wittgenstein ‘Philosophical Investigations’ (978-0631231592)**

*Ludwig Wittgenstein′s Philosophical Investigations presents his philosophical views on mind, language and meaning. Contains some of his ideas on Language games including the classic phrase ‘form of life’ in reference to using language.*

This version, has the original German version, but also the English translation, useful when looking at Language Games.

**Religious Experience**

**Hume ‘Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion’ (978-0199538324)**

David Hume is one of the most provocative philosophers to have written on various subjects. Here he asks if belief in God can be inferred from the nature of the universe or whether it is even consistent with what we know about the universe, including miracles.

While never explicitly stating he was an atheist, Hume uses empirical evidence in making judgements about many philosophical issues, often bringing into question traditional religious beliefs.

**William James ‘The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature’ (978-0140390346)**

*William James’ views on Religious Experiences. One of the main commentators on this topic.*

You can’t study Religious Experience without reading James, find out more about James’ ideas here.

**Swinburne ‘The Existence of God’ (978-0199271689)**

*Richard Swinburne’s ideas on a variety of subjects, including Religious Experience and Miracles.*

A modern approach to some of the main topics we study, Swinburne is a useful philosopher to learn about and pick up some key idea from.

**Cole ‘Access to Religious Studies: Religious Experience’ (978-0340846841)**

*The Access to Religious Studies: Religious Experience series offers a concise and readable introduction to Religious Experience for students as a starting point.*

A comprehensive on Religious Experience and a good overview of religious experience as a concept, also very readable and useful as a primer on the topic.

**Vardy and Arliss ‘The Thinker’s guide to God’ (978-1903816226)**

*This book concisely explores the range of approaches to God that has influenced the western Christian tradition in an easy-to-read style. Contains sections on Religious Language, Life and Death and Miracles.*

This is as accessible a work as you will find on philosophy and theology. Difficult concepts are very well explained and demonstrated, and theories linked together.

**Palmer ‘The Question of God’ (978-0415223874)**

*This textbook introduces six great arguments for the existence of God and it is ideally suited to A-Level and even university students. It covers Miracles.*

This book aims to logically put together arguments in a precise, yet understandable way. It contains the depth of the subject and also provides exercises for you to complete - often testing the understanding of the concepts.

**Warburton ‘Philosophy: the Basics’ (978-0415693165)**

***There are not many better short introductions to philosophy. Has a section on miracles.***

A useful stepping stone to discover many aspects of philosophy. With a clear use of language this makes this book easy to understand. It allows easy access to the world of philosophy.

**Cole ‘Philosophy of Religion’ (978-0340957783)**

*It provides a solid basis for those studying an A level course in Religious Studies or Philosophy. Sections on Religious Experience, Miracles, the Nature of God, Life after Death and Religious Language.*

This book is a vital reading for all philosophy students. Very useful, easy to read and contains most of the key arguments.

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| 291.4 | Donovan, Peter | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 0906165237 | Interpreting Religious Experience |

**Miracles**

**Hume ‘Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion’ (978-0199538324)**

David Hume is one of the most provocative philosophers to have written on various subjects. Here he asks if belief in God can be inferred from the nature of the universe or whether it is even consistent with what we know about the universe, including miracles.

While never explicitly stating he was an atheist, Hume uses empirical evidence in making judgements about many philosophical issues, often bringing into question traditional religious beliefs.

**Swinburne ‘The Existence of God’ (978-0199271689)**

*Richard Swinburne’s ideas on a variety of subjects, including Religious Experience and Miracles.*

A modern approach to some of the main topics we study, Swinburne is a useful philosopher to learn about and pick up some key idea from.

**Life and Death (Main focus is on Descartes but you could also look up Plato and Aristotle)**

**Plato ‘Phaedo’ (978-0199538935)**

*Classic work of Plato which not only discusses the death of Socrates but also allows for final discussions on death, the afterlife, the soul and the body.*

Useful for learning about Plato’s views on the soul and dualist approach to it.

**Aristotle ‘De Anima’ (978-0140444711)**

*In De Anima, Aristotle sought to set out his theory of the soul.*

Here we find a contrast to Plato’s ideas on the soul. You can’t study the soul without looking at Aristotle’s views.

**A more unusual choice:**

**John Bunyan, The Pilgrim’s progress (978-1622452392)**

*The Pilgrim’s Progress, religious allegory by the English writer***John Bunyan,** *published in two parts in 1678 and 1684. The work is a symbolic vision of the good man’s pilgrimage through life. At one time second only to the Bible in popularity.*

The Pilgrim’s Progress possibly is the most famous Christian allegory still in print, it is really useful to be aware of this story when discussing Hick’s ideas such as eschatological verification/The Celestial city. Which is relevant in both Self, Death and Afterlife and Evil and Suffering topics on the course.

**Philosophy General**

**Ancient Greek – Background in Philosophy (but not on the AQA course)**

**Plato ‘The Republic’ (978-0140455113)**

*One of the greatest works of philosophy and political theory ever produced, Plato's The Republic has shaped western thought for thousands of years, remaining as relevant today as when it was first written in the Ancient Greece.*

For those new to philosophy or Plato, then you really should read this book. The book is very much set out like a play. Can be quite heavy at times.

**Aristotle ‘The Metaphysics’ (978-0140446197)**

*Aristotle's inquiry into some of the fundamental problems of philosophy, The Metaphysics is one of the classical Greek foundation-stones of western thought, it presents Aristotle's mature rejection of both the Platonic theory.*

Again can be a little heavy, but if you are studying Philosophy you should really take a look.

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| 184 | Annas, Julia | 08 Oct 2013 | A | 019280216X | Plato : a very short introduction |

**Warburton ‘Philosophy: the Basics’ (978-0415693165)**

***There are not many better short introductions to philosophy. Has sections on the traditional arguments for God’s existence and the problem of evil.***

A useful stepping stone to discover many aspects of philosophy. With a clear use of language this makes this book easy to understand. It allows easy access to the world of philosophy.

**Davies ‘Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologiae: A Guide and Commentary’ (978-0199380633)**

*Brain Davies introduces Aquinas’ famous Summa Theologiae, which gives the classic 5 ways arguments, and gives a commentary on his works.*

Brian Davies offers a simpler way to access Aquinas’ famous work, without needing to try and read Aquinas on your own.

**Also in the Library for General Philosophy**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 100 | Blackburn, Simon | 30 Mar 2012 | A | 0192854259 | Think : a compelling introduction to philosophy |
| 100 | Falzon, Christopher | 08 Oct 2009 | A | 0415357268 | Philosophy goes to the movies : an introduction to philosophy |
| 100 | Falzon, Christopher | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 0415237416 | Philosophy goes to the movies : an introduction to philosophy |
| 190 | Robinson, Dave | 04 May 2010 | A | 184046853X | Introducing philosophy |
| 210 | Thompson, Mel | 25 Jun 2013 | A | 1444105000 | Understand the philosophy of religion |
| 210 | Cole, Peter | 26 Nov 2012 | A | 0340957786 | Philosophy of religion |
| **Cole ‘Philosophy of Religion’ (978-0340957783)**  *It provides a solid basis for those studying an A level course in Religious Studies or Philosophy. Sections on Religious Experience, Miracles, the Nature of God, Life and Death and Religious Language.*  This book is a vital reading for all philosophy students. Very useful, easy to read and contains most of the key arguments. | | | | | |
| 210 | Peterson, Michael L. | 09 Nov 2010 | A | 0195156951 | Reason & religious belief : an introduction to the philosophy of religion |
| 210 | Davies, Brian | 26 Nov 2012 | A | 0199263477 | An introduction to the philosophy of religion |
| 215 | Vardy, Peter | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 1842981005 | What is Truth? |
| 230 | Davies, Brian | 04 Nov 2010 | A | 0198267533 | Thought of Thomas Aquinas |
| 231 | Vardy, Peter | 04 Oct 2010 | A | 0006281435 | The puzzle of God |
| 231 | Vardy, Peter | 04 Oct 2010 | A | 190381622X | The thinker's guide to God |

**Vardy and Arliss ‘The Thinker’s guide to God’ (978-1903816226)**

*This book concisely explores the range of approaches to God that has influenced the western Christian tradition in an easy-to-read style. Contains sections on traditional arguments for Existence of God, Religious Language, Life after Death and Miracles.*

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