

Summer Bridging Work - A Level Religious Studies

Part 1 – Ethics

Ethics is deciding between what's Right and Wrong

Throughout life we make Ethical decisions as to what is the correct, or right course of action when we make a decision. We weigh up the consequences and decide based on the outcome what decision to make. Each Ethical theory that we will learn will have a different focus as to what will produce the best outcome. The first topic is called Utilitarianism and is about acting in a way that will produce the most amount of Happiness or Pleasure.

Task 1: Read this quote and WRITE in great detail (1 side) what you think it means:

Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it . . .

Task 2: Read the Textbook (Green) or if you want a challenge the PDF Greatest Happiness by J Bentham and answer the questions:

1. What is your understanding of the PDF? What was Bentham saying about pleasure/Happiness?
2. Come up with five examples where pleasure outweighs pain
3. Does following the greatest good for the greatest number allow for any atrocities?
4. Research the Hedonic Calculus. Do you think this is a good way of measuring Pleasure.

