Supporting Statements

# **Teacher Notes**

# Why this activity works?

# The activity requires students to evaluate the statement and decide whether it is an argument for or against (AO2).

# This is an easy way for students to be introduced to different scholars and the supporting statements can be amended with short quotes (AO2).

# After discussion, students can then use the template to write their own answer.

Ontological Argument

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘The ontological argument proves the existence of God.

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TS: The ontological argument fails to prove the existence of God.

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Supporting Statements

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| Gaunilo’s Perfect Island |
| Anselm: things that exist in reality are superior to things that exist in mind alone |
| Anselm: Necessary beings are superior to contingent beings |
| Kant: Existence is not a predicate |
| Gasendi: perfection can only be discussed for something that exists |
| Descartes: existence is a predicate for a perfect being |

Cosmological Argument

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘The cosmological argument proves the existence of God.

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TS: The cosmological argument fails to prove the existence of God.

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Supporting Statements

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| Hume: Infinite regressions are impossible |
| Russell: Just because a treasure hunter looks for treasure doesn’t mean there is treasure |
| Hume: we have a tendency to see cause and effect |
| Anscombe: magicians rabbit from hat |
| Aquinas: Argument from contingency |
| Aquinas: Argument for uncaused causer |
| Aquinas: Argument for unmoved mover |
| Betrand Russell: Mother Argument |

Teleological Argument

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘The teleological argument proves the existence of God.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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TS: The teleological argument fails to prove the existence of God.

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Supporting Statements

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| Pale’s Watch |
| Fine Tuning in universe |
| Design in nature |
| Evolution explains design |
| Dawkins: Blindwatchmaker |
| Weak Anthropic Principle: The universe's constants all seem perfectly tailored to be suitable to human existence. The reason that this is so is because if it were any other way, we would not be around to observe it. |

Aristotle

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Aristotle’s theory of causation explains why things exist’.

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TS: ‘Aristotle’s theory of causation is unconvincing’.

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Supporting Statements

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| Heraclitus - ‘cant step into same river twice’ world is always changing |
| Derived from observation |
| Sartre - ‘Existence precedes essence’ – man not born with a telos |
| Russell - Universe is just there and has no purpose |
| Causes can be readily applied to objects in world |
| If Prime Mover is transcendent cannot interact with universe |
| Flew - Design points to existence of Prime Mover |
| Studying empirical world has real world benefits e.g. medicine and science |

Plato

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Plato’s theory of forms is convincing’.

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TS: ‘Plato’s theory of forms is unconvincing’.

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Supporting Statements

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| Explains why evil is in the world |
| Heraclitus ‘cant step into same river twice’ - Empirical knowledge is flawed |
| Aristotle - Third Man Argument |
| Aristotle – No single form for goodness |
| Explains why we recognise the same essential elements in something |
| Dawkins – forms just ideas like memes |

Mind and Body

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘The mind and brain are distinct substances’.

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TS: ‘The mind is the brain’.

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Supporting Statements

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| Descartes: Argument from Divisibility |
| Descartes: Argument from Doubt |
| Ryle: Ghost in the Machine |
| Dawkins: Selfish Genes |
| Zombie Argument |
| Searle: Chinese Room Experiment |

Utilitarianism

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Utilitarianism provides a helpful method of decision making’.

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TS: ‘Utilitarianism is not a helpful method of decision making’.

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Supporting Statements

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| It is simple - Only one principle to apply |
| Bentham: Hedonic Calculus - it is scientific; applies quantitive measurements |
| No rest objection |
| Problem of Incummersurability |
| Difficulty of Predicting Consequences |
| Difficulty of Defining Pleasure |
| Nozick: Utility Monster |
| It considers the consequences e.g. lying to save a life |
| Minority can suffer e.g. gladiator, slavery |

Kantian Ethics

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Kantian Ethics provides a helpful method of decision making’.

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TS: ‘Kantian Ethics is not a helpful method of decision making’.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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Supporting Statements

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| It guarantees respect for human life |
| McIntyre: Universizability Principle can be amended to justify anything |
| It is based on reason and not following feeling |
| You can universalise trivial actions |
| It protects the minority unlike utilitarianism |
| It yields unqualified absolutes and disregards consequences e.g. lying to save life |
| Conflicting Duties |
| Hume: morality is founded on feelings of sympathy |

Natural Law Theory

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Natural Law provides a helpful method of decision making’.

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TS: ‘Natural Law is not a helpful method of decision making’.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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Supporting Statements

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| Basic Principles common to all cultures so Natural Law is reasonable |
| It establishes clear-cut approach to morality |
| There is greater degree of flexibility than Kant e.g. role of reason and DDE |
| Darwin: If evolutionary theory is correct, there is no design |
| Nielsen: There is not a single human nature common to all societies |
| G.E. Moore: Naturalistic Fallacy |
| Searle: It is possible to derive ought from is |

Situation Ethics

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Situation Ethics provides a helpful method of decision making’.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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TS: ‘Situation Ethics is not a helpful method of decision making’.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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Supporting Statements

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| Problem of defining most loving action e.g. abortion |
| Jesus’ Greatest Commandments to Love God and Love Neighbour |
| Problem of predicting the future |
| Considers both motive and consequences |
| Robinson: An ethic for ‘man come of age’ |
| Richard Mouw: Wrong to prioritise one law (agape) over other cf.‘If you love me, keep my commandments’ |
| Potential to justify anything |
| Macquarrie: Situation Ethics is incurably individualistic |

Augustine

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Augustine’s theory of human nature is convincing’.

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TS: ‘Augustine’s theory of human nature is unconvincing’.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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Supporting Statements

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| Rousseau: humans basically good |
| Locke: tabula rasa- blank slate |
| Sartre – humans have no nature – form our own through choices  “man is condemned to be free”; |
| Augustine encourages humanity to take responsibility for its own actions and recognise its failings |
| Pelagius: argues that humans can live morally pure lives after the Fall if they tried hard |
| Augustine understands and attempts to account for human emotions |
| He makes valuable distinctions between love of material goods and love of others. |
| He does not pretend that anything is possible for humanity as long as they try hard enough;  instead he emphasises human dependence on the grace of God. |

Natural & Revealed Theology

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘We can come to know God through reasoning’.

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TS: ‘We can only come to God through divine revelation’.

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Supporting Statements

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| Paley’s Teleological Argument |
| Barth: Human reasoning is fallible |
| Augustine: Original Sin prevents people from knowing God |
| Swinburne: Order, Regularity, Purpose in universe |
| Calvin: Universe is ‘mirror of God’ |
| Aquinas’ Five Ways |
| Moses and Burning Bush |
| Paul demonstrates logic in his debate with the Jewish leaders as he tries to show them similarities between the Messiah they are expecting and the figure of Jesus. |
| Kierkegaard: leap of faith |

Bible

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Christians can use the Bible as a guide to moral life in the twenty-first century’.

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TS: ‘Christians cannot use the Bible as a guide to moral life in the twenty-first century’.

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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| Impossible to read Bible without interpretation |
| Mouw: there can be parallels between the history recorded in the Bible and present issues |
| There are different styles within the Bible e.g. John more mystical, Luke writing to non-Jewish audience so explains different aspects of Judaism, Mark is simple Greek |
| Jeremiah ‘I have put my words in your mouth.’ (**Amanuensis)** |
| There are conflicting commands e.g. Jesus’ teaching on Sermon on Mount contradict some earlier teachings in the Hebrew Bible |
| Neil Messer: guidance in Bible found not just commandments but in role models and stories |
| Hays: Bible cannot be interpreted in vacuum but shaped by the Church |
| William Spohn: scripture cannot be interpreted in isolation from Christian communities and traditions in which it functions |
| Vatican II: Bible and Sacred Tradition linked |

Bonhoeffer

**Match the supporting statements in the table to the correct topic sentence.**

TS: ‘Bonhoeffer is irrelevant today’.

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TS: ‘Bonhoeffer is relevant today’.

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Supporting Statements

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| Solidarity with poor relevant today |
| Christianity should adopt modern values e.g. state loyalty |
| Bonhoeffer is ‘stuck on the cross’ |
| Bonhoeffer encourages us to pass through our own cross |
| Bonhoeffer encouraged distorted view of God’s will |
| Common life reduces risk of distorted meanin |