



SAFFRON WALDEN
COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

SWCHS SIXTH FORM SUMMER WORK

A Level Philosophy

TASK
<p><u>The Essential Guide to Philosophy</u></p> <p>If you have any queries regarding this work please email ecarne@swchs.net</p> <p><u>Task</u></p> <p>There are 4 tasks based around the book: <i>Philosophy: The Essential Study Guide</i> by Nigel Warburton. This includes an active reading task, an active listening task and an active discussion and writing task.</p> <p><u>How will this work be used in lessons?</u></p> <p>This will be used as part of the lessons on the first half term for Epistemology taught by Miss Carne.</p> <p><u>How long will this task take?</u></p> <p>2-3 hours</p>

Philosophy summer work 2023

Dear philosophers in training,

Well done for having selected a great course to study! Pure philosophy is a wonderful subject, but it is not an easy choice. Our summer work for you is preparing you in the core skills in philosophy so that the transition is smoothed. We have based this around the short book *Philosophy: The Essential Study Guide* by Nigel Warburton. This is a great introduction to the skills needed in the subject.

There are copies in the sixth form study centre, or you can get a copy for a few pounds second hand if you would like to read more. We would suggest that you start with Task 1, to give you a sense of where the tasks are going, and then complete the remaining tasks in any order which you prefer. Each introduce you to a key source for further study in philosophy and you may wish to investigate these further.

Enjoy your summer and we look forward to welcoming you in September!

Miss Carne and Mrs Popple

Task 1: Introducing philosophical study

Read the short introduction to philosophical study from the *Essential Guide* [HERE](#)

Make some short notes focusing on:

1. What makes philosophy different from other subjects?
2. Why might the historical details and biography be important when considering a thinker?
3. What does Schopenhauer say about the difference between a scholar and a thinker?
4. What are Warburton's 4 skills?
5. Why does he emphasise the *active* part of these skills?

In one of the first lessons after the summer we will consider the reading and discuss how it will apply to your own study of philosophy both inside and outside of the classroom.

Task 2: Active reading

Linked below is a short article from the excellent magazine *Philosophy Now* which has accessible articles written by philosophers and teachers aimed at sixth form and undergraduate level students. This article references Descartes who is a recurring thinker from the course, who has considered almost every aspect we cover over the two years.

After you read it through once, try following Descartes method and then write a short summary of what the key point of Descartes methodology are. Do this on a bookmark so that you can keep it with you. A template bookmark is included in the folder

[I Re-Read, Therefore I Understand – Kimberly Blessing](#)

Task 3: Active listening

Podcasts are an excellent resource for philosophy study. Philosophy Bites has a series that are short (under 20 minutes) so are excellent for short walks, bus journeys and waiting for friends. The links below both take you to the same podcast, one from the Philosophy Bites website, and the other from Spotify which might make it easier to listen to on your phone.

This podcast focuses on the Moral Philosophy part of the course, considering what it means for a moral theory to be normative. **As you are listening note down ideas you think are important, and any questions you have ready to bring into your moral philosophy lesson. This will form part of one of your first lessons.**

<https://philosophybites.libsyn.com/john-skorupski-on-normativity> (Also available where you get your podcasts if this link doesn't work)

Task 4: Active Discussion & Active writing

Active discussion is obviously a hard one to set if you are potentially not going to be interacting with others on your course before September! As such this task is asking for some active writing, which will then feed into a discussion in some of your first lessons in Epistemology. Epistemology is the study of what we can truly know.

Below are two copies of the same painting by Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Arcimboldo was an Italian artist from the 1500's. He was a master at tricking the eye reimagining everyday objects such as fruit, vegetables, flowers, books and even fish to create the illusion of faces. Arcimboldo arranged the produce with precision that the painting still gave a very recognizable likeness to the actual subject of the painting. This painting can be displayed either way up, one way it appears to represent a bowl of vegetables, the other, a face.



Using the image as an inspiration for your own thoughts, please write no more than 500 words (handwritten, which will be about a side of A4, or typed) about a philosophical topic. This could be about how our senses deceive us, what counts as being 'real', whether symbolism is helpful, or indeed anything else that you are inspired to write on. Please aim to convince us of a point of view on whichever topic you are writing about. If you wish you can research this topic further, but we do not require this. **This will be fed into a discussion in your epistemology lessons in September and the written work will be collected and a comment given.** This will help us to know what teaching and practice might be needed in writing persuasive arguments.