

Theme C - Existence of God

Belief in God	<p>Agnostic - someone who is unsure of God's existence</p> <p>Theist - someone who believes in one God</p> <p>Polytheist - someone who believes in more than one God</p> <p>Atheist - someone who believes there is no God</p>
Christian belief in God	Christians believe in One God expressed in three forms - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - known as the Holy Trinity
Muslim belief in God	Muslims believe in the oneness of God - Tawhid . Allah is the name of the Muslim God.
Design Argument (teleological argument)	The idea that the world is too complicated to be an accident - so it must have been designed: designer = God. William Paley (Christian clergyman) champions this argument.
First Cause Argument	The idea that the world was the result of something causing it. Thomas Aquinas (Catholic priest) said that if the world began with the big bang, God must have caused it.
Revelation (God revealing himself)	<p>General Revelation - God, indirectly revealing himself e.g. through nature such as snow flakes</p> <p>Special Revelation - God directly revealing himself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Christians believe in special revelation e.g. through a vision such as Saul/Paul • Muslims believe that God reveals his messages in a special way to humans but that this is done through angels because God is too special to be seen by humans.
Humanism	A belief system which does not include God, but sees as central the morally good behaviour of humans.
Illusion	That something is not real but a trick of the mind.
God's Involvement with the world	<p>Immanent - The idea that God is at work in the world e.g. performing miracles.</p> <p>Transcendent - That God is beyond space and time and not at work in the world.</p>
Relationships with God	<p>Personal - the idea that people can relate with God - e.g. through prayer</p> <p>Impersonal - the idea we can not relate personally with God.</p>
Characteristics of God	<p>Omniscient - all knowing</p> <p>Omnipotent - all powerful</p> <p>Benevolent - all loving</p>
Miracles	Good events which are considered impossible and inexplicable by science
Visions	Images seen in the wind or in a dream, especially as part of a religious or supernatural experience.

Christian (Bible) Quotes

- *'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit'*
- *'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?'* (St. Paul's special revelation)
- *'What is impossible with man is possible with God.'*

Muslim (Qur'an) Quotes

- *'Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; None is born of Him, nor is He born; And there is none like Him.'*

Atheist Quotes

- *'If God exists, I hope he has a good excuse.'* Woody Allen
- *'All the biblical miracles will at last disappear with the progress of science.'* Matthew Arnold

Contrasting beliefs	Most Christians	Contrasting Belief
Visions	Many Christians claim to have had visions that have confirmed their faith and encouraged them to act on it. An example is Fred Ferrari - a dangerous criminal who changed his ways and become a Christian.	In Islam, Allah does not reveal Himself directly to humans. It would be impossible for humans to be able to look upon Allah. Any messages from Allah have been sent through the medium of an angel.
Miracles	Many Christians believe in miracles. There are several examples of Jesus performing miracles in the Bible e.g. Jesus cured the blind man and turned water into wine. More recently, cancer sufferers have been miraculously cured after Christians prayed to the late Mother Theresa.	An atheist would dispute the fact that God performs miracles because they do not believe that God exists. They say that an explanation will eventually be found through science. <i>'All the biblical miracles will at last disappear with the progress of science.'</i> Matthew Arnold
Nature as general revelation	Many Christians view nature as an example of revelation because it shows God's creation. William Paley uses nature and all of the complexities of the world as evidence that God must be the world's creator.	An atheist would say that nature reveals nothing about the existence of God. Nature is purely scientific and is not an example of God revealing himself.