

RS Work - Beliefs about God and Miracles

Key Words:

Theist – Somebody who believes in God.

Atheist – Somebody who doesn't believe in God.

Agnostic – Somebody who is not sure whether they believe in God or not.

Miracles – An event which goes against the laws of science, that only a supernatural being could do.

Belief: Something you feel is true, but you can't always prove it.

Fact: Something you can prove to be true.

Opinion: Your own personal view on a subject, which others may not agree with.

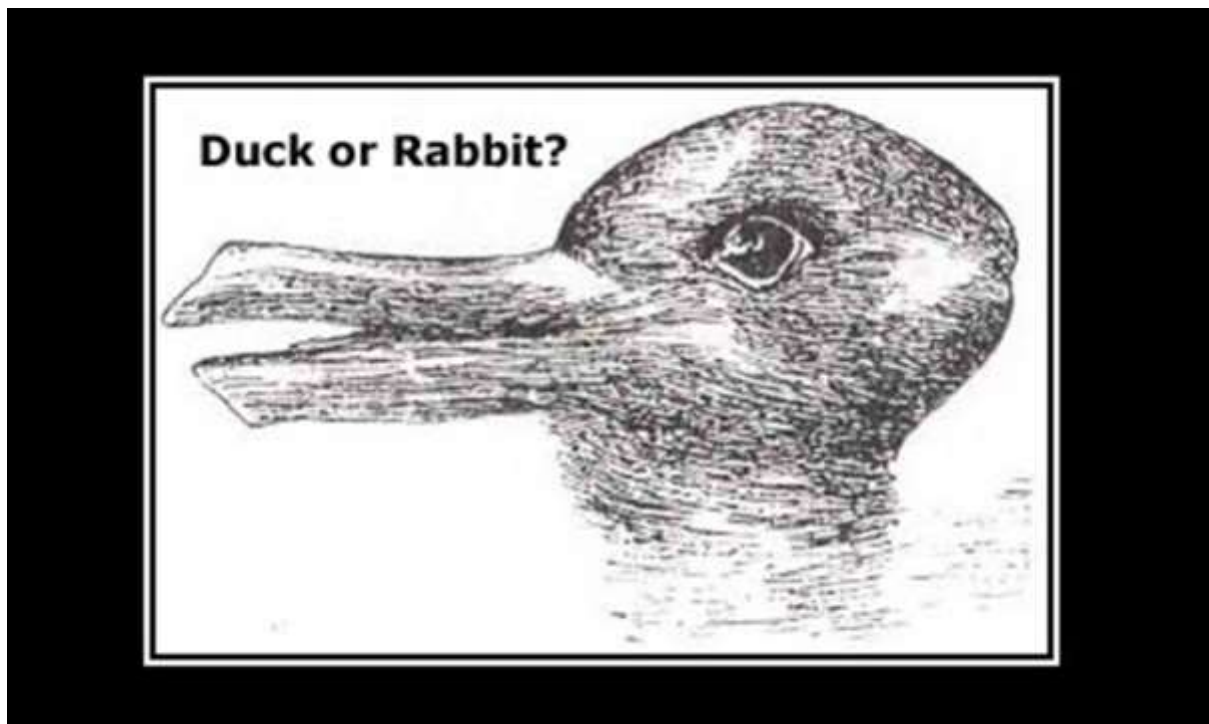
In RS, you will have to learn lots of different key words. The one's above are just some of the words you will need to know! Your first unit of year 7 at Philips High School is about beliefs about God. You will learn different religious beliefs about God. But what actually distinguishes a belief. Have a go at the exercise below.

Task 1: Belief, Fact or Opinion?

- ✓ Read the statement and tick the appropriate box.

	Belief	Fact	Opinion
More people go to a place of worship than go to a professional football match.			
There is life after death.			
Arsenal is the best football team.			
Flowers are beautiful.			
The head of Philips High is Ms Owens.			
God exists.			
The United Kingdom has a Prime Minister.			
There are such things as ghosts.			

Have a look at the picture on the next page. Some people see a duck, and some see a rabbit.
Just because somebody sees something different it doesn't mean that they are wrong.
What do you see? _____



The topic of God is one that lots of people argue on! Over the years, many people have tried to prove God's existence or have come up with reasons why God does or doesn't exist. The next task is to look at the different statements and sort them out. Is the statement a reason why God does exist or a reason why God doesn't exist. Think carefully before you make up your mind!

Task 2: Read the statement and then tick whether it is a reason why God does exist or a reason why God doesn't exist.

Statement	God does exist	God does not exist
Because I'm afraid what might happen to me if I don't believe.		
God did not create man, man created God.		
So many people believe in God – he must exist.		
Because God is silent.		
Because there is no way of communicating with God.		

Because I have 'experienced' God for myself.		
Because of the suffering and chaos in the world.		
If there was no God, life would be pointless. What would happen to us when we die? Just because we can't see him, doesn't mean He's not real. We can't see wind, yet it is real.		
Science proves the Bible is wrong. God did not create the world – the Big Bang saw to that!		
The world is a wonderful and beautiful place – it must have been made by someone.		
If God existed, why would He allow the war, disease and poverty to continue?		

Task 3: What do you believe about God? Are you a theist, an atheist or agnostic? Why do you think this (Hint – maybe use some of the statements above to help you!)?

Lots of religions explain that God exists because they have experienced God in different ways. Theists say that there are ways you can prove that God exists. For example, if you have had a religious experience that has:

1. Changed your life and made you a better person.
2. Changed the lives of others for the better.
3. Revealed spiritual truth and given guidance.

Have a read of this case study and ask yourself whether this shows an experience of God and then think do you believe this story and why?

Saul meets Jesus on the road to Damascus

Saul didn't like the new group of Christians, in fact he wanted to murder and kill anyone who said they wanted to follow the Lord. He was on his way to find the new Christians ready to arrest them and bring them back to Jerusalem.

As Saul was getting near the city of Damascus, a light fell from the sky and flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him:

“Saul, Saul! Why do you hurt me?”

“Who are you, Lord?” he asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you hurt,” the voice said. “But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do.”

The men who were travelling with Saul heard the voice but could not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground and opened his eyes, but could not see a thing. So the men took him by the hand and led him into the city of Damascus. He could not see for three days and during that time he did not eat or drink anything.

A Christian named Adam had a vision. God told Adam to go to Damascus and place his hands on Saul, so that he might see again. Adam was worried because he had heard about the cruel things Saul had done, he was worried he would be arrested. The Lord said to him, “Go because I have chosen him to serve me.”

So Adam went to the house where Saul was staying and placed his hands on him he said: “Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me – Jesus himself, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. He sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” At once something like fish scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he was able to see again. He stood up and after he had eaten his strength came back.

Saul became a Christian after this day and many people followed him. He wrote a lot of letters that we can still read to this day in the Bible.

Task 4: Is this a religious experience? Do you believe this story and why do you feel this way?
