



## Reading at A-level



Wider reading at A-level is the key to expanding your subject knowledge, exploring alternative ideas and enabling you to practice the skills that are required in further education, such as at University.

Reading good quality literature is also the best way of improving your own writing. As you read a good writer, you will gain a better understanding of the meaning of new vocabulary and the ways in which carefully chosen words and punctuation can add real emphasis to someone's argument.

Different writers express themselves in different ways, and by reading them you will develop your own 'voice'.

However, it is not just academic work that you can read. There is also a numerous amount of literature out there that explores many of the themes that you will encounter at A-level RS; such as, the fight between good and evil, the meaning of life, is there really a God?, and the importance of relationships.

Below you will find a list of academic texts and journals, and a list of general literature. Read, explore and enjoy!



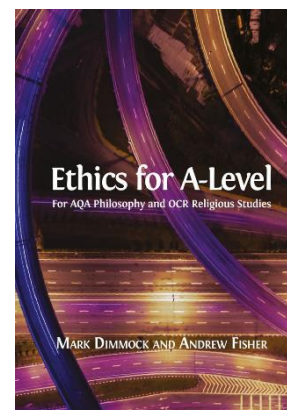
## Academic Reading

### Philosophy and Ethics

- **Ethics for A-Level by Mark Dimmock and Andrew Fisher, 2017**

What does pleasure have to do with morality? What role, if any, should intuition have in the formation of moral theory? If something is 'simulated', can it be immoral?

This is a really accessible and wide-ranging textbook that explores many ethical questions and theories that we will cover at A-level. This book also includes a wealth of real-life examples to illuminate the complexities of different ethical approaches while conveying their modern-day relevance.



What is even better, is that you don't have to purchase this book as it is here free to read thanks to Open Book

Publishers: <https://www.openbookpublishers.com/reader/639#page/10/mode/2up>

- **Challenging Religious Issues**

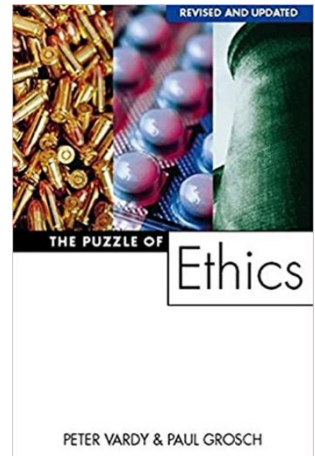
*Challenging Religious Issues* is an online journal supporting A-level Religious Studies for students and teachers. The journal was set up through Welsh Government sponsorship and is now published by the St Mary's Centre. These articles explore a wealth of topics from Creation vs Evolution, to Religious Experience, to the Psychology of Religion and Postmodern movements in Religious Identity.

You can access these journals completely free via this link: <http://www.st-marys-centre.org.uk/resources/Aleveljournal.html>

These articles are also available under the "Wider-reading" tab on your google classroom.

- **Peter Vardy's *The Puzzle of Ethics*, 1999**

Although published over 20 years ago, Vardy's exploration of key ethical issues are invaluable to teachers to A-level students today. Vardy's writing is very accessible to anyone and can be purchased on amazon for £1.50.



- **Peter Vardy's *The Puzzle of God*, 1999**

Also a 20+ year old book, but it is a clear, well-written guide to philosophical thinking about God. Starting with the question of what it means to say we believe in God, and looking at the nature of truth, Peter Vardy goes on to examine ideas about God and their influence on Christian thinking. Also available to purchase on amazon from 70p.

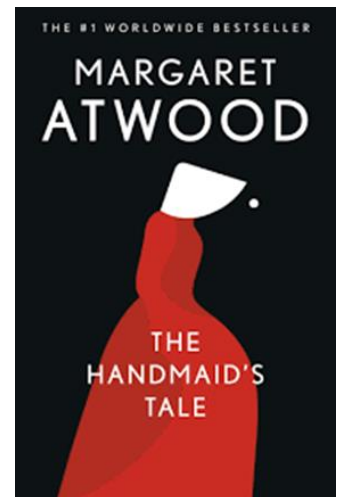
### General Literature:

#### **Life of Pi by Yann Martel**

The story of a young castaway who faces immeasurable hardships on the high seas, and a meditation on religion, faith, art and life.

#### **The Handmaid's Tale - Margaret Atwood**

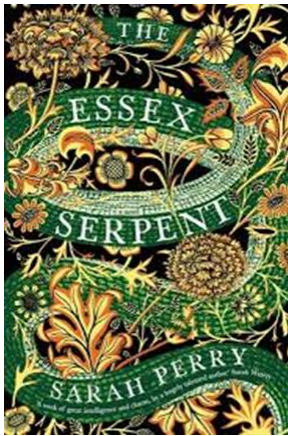
Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead. She may leave the home of the Commander and his wife once a day to walk to food markets whose signs are now pictures instead of words because women are no longer allowed to read. The Republic of Gilead offers Offred only one function: to breed. If she deviates, she will, like dissenters, be hanged at the wall or sent out to die slowly of radiation sickness. But even a repressive state cannot obliterate desire - neither Offred's



nor that of the two men on which her future hangs.

You might also like to read the sequel to this amazing book, called **The Testaments** which explores the aftermath of fall of Gilead.

### **The Essex Serpent by Sarah Perry**



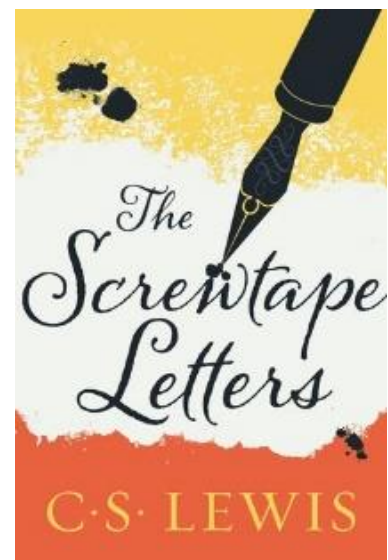
Cora is a well-to-do London widow who moves to the Essex parish of Aldwinter, and Will is the local vicar. They meet as their village is engulfed by rumours that the mythical Essex Serpent, once said to roam the marshes claiming human lives, has returned. Cora, a keen amateur naturalist is enthralled, convinced the beast may be a real undiscovered species. But Will sees his parishioners' agitation as a moral panic, a deviation from true faith.

### **The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor Dostoevsky**

The first "God is dead" narrative, and Ivan Karamazov is its storyteller. In the chapter Mutiny, he explains to Aloysha, his younger brother and novice monk, why he is returning his ticket to be present at the end of time when all those who have suffered are finally redeemed. Focusing on reports of the torture and murder of children with a kind of ecstatic glee, he asks Aloysha whether he himself would make a world that ends with universal love at the cost of a single child's suffering. It is the question all believers must ask themselves and then live with the answer.

### **The Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis**

The Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis is a classic masterpiece of religious satire that entertains readers with its sly and ironic portrayal of human life and foibles from the vantage point of Screwtape, a highly placed assistant to "Our Father Below." At once wildly comic, deadly serious, and strikingly original, C.S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters* is the most engaging account of temptation—and triumph over it—ever written.

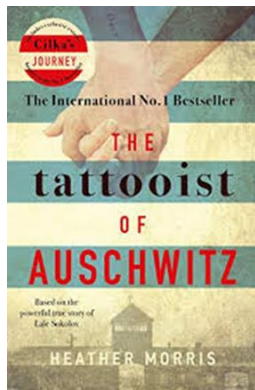




### **The Beekeeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri**

The unforgettable love story of a mother blinded by loss and her husband who insists on their survival as they undertake the Syrian refugee trail to Europe. Moving, powerful, compassionate, and beautifully written, *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* is a testament to the triumph of the human spirit. It is the kind of book that reminds us of the power of storytelling.

### **The Tattooist of Auschwitz by Heather Morris**



In April 1942, Lale Sokolov, a Slovakian Jew, is forcibly transported to the concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau. When his captors discover that he speaks several languages, he is put to work as a Tätowierer (the German word for tattooist), tasked with permanently marking his fellow prisoners.

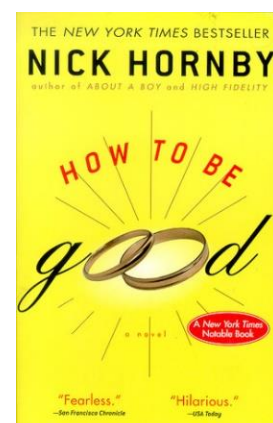
A vivid, harrowing, and ultimately hopeful re-creation of Lale Sokolov's experiences as the man who tattooed the arms of thousands of prisoners with what would become one of the most potent symbols of the Holocaust, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* is also a testament to the endurance of love and humanity under the darkest possible conditions.

### **10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World by Elif Shafak**

For Leila, each minute after her death brings a sensuous memory: the taste of spiced goat stew, sacrificed by her father to celebrate the long-awaited birth of a son; the sight of bubbling vats of lemon and sugar which the women use to wax their legs while the men attend mosque; the scent of cardamom coffee that Leila shares with a handsome student in the brothel where she works. Each memory, too, recalls the friends she made at each key moment in her life - friends who are now desperately trying to find her. .

### **How to Be Good by Nick Hornby**

In Nick Hornby's *How to Be Good*, Katie Carr is certainly trying to be. That's why she became a GP. That's why she cares about Third World debt and homelessness, and struggles to raise her children with a conscience. It's also why she puts up with her husband David, the self-styled Angriest Man in Holloway. But one fateful day, she finds



herself in a Leeds parking lot, having just slept with another man. What Katie doesn't yet realize is that her fall from grace is just the first step on a spiritual journey more torturous than the interstate at rush hour. Because, prompted by his wife's actions, David is about to stop being angry. He's about to become good--not politically correct, organic-food-eating good, but good in the fashion of the Gospels. And that's no easier in modern-day Holloway than it was in ancient Israel.

### **Plain Truth by Jodi Picoult**

The writer of "My Sister's Keep" - Jodi Picoult is a fantastic novelist exploring many important issues that we face in the world today. In this book, *Plain True*, Katie Fisher is Amish. For eighteen years, she has grown up in a community set apart from the modern world by lifestyle and belief. It is a community fiercely protective of its way of life. To turn your back on it is to lose everything - your church, your home, and your family.

### **A Spark of Light by Jodi Picoult**

A powerful and provocative new novel about ordinary lives that intersect during a heart-stopping crisis. In this book, Jodi Picoult tackles a complicated issue: How do we balance the rights of pregnant women with the rights of the unborn they carry? What does it mean to be a good parent? *A Spark of Light* will inspire debate, conversation... and, hopefully, understanding.

Here is a link to her official site for you to explore many more of her novels about love, relationships and the consequences of our choices:

<https://www.jodipicoult.com/>

