

Arguments on God

Worth: 200pts

Length: 1000 words min/max

We've covered two sets of arguments concerning the existence of God

- The Ontological Argument (pro: Anselm | con: Gaunilo, Aquinas, Kant)
- The Design Argument (pro: Aquinas, Paley | con: Hume, Mackie)

For this paper you're asked to do three things:

- 1) Explain (in thorough detail) **either** the **Ontological** or the **Design** argument for God
- 2) Explain (in thorough detail) the **corresponding objections** to the argument you picked
- 3) Explain which argument **you** think is right and **why**. Explain why one is right and the other is wrong.

General Guidelines (Mandatory):

- All arguments should be explained in such a way that someone who had never heard of them could understand the arguments after reading your paper. When writing, imagine that you're explaining the concepts to someone who is unfamiliar with them.
- When explaining arguments and counterarguments, do so as if you agree with the positions. Even if you think the argument is wrong, don't let that show in your explanation. You'll have the opportunity to critique all the arguments in section (3)!
- **Relevant quotes** (and proper page citations) should be employed for **each** position you discuss. Remember to **explain** the meaning of the quotes you use.
- **Provide examples** to help elucidate your or the philosophers' points.
- **Do not** go off track in section (3). Remember that you're evaluating arguments here. Even if you agree with the conclusion (that God exists or that God doesn't exist), that doesn't mean you have to agree that the *argument* is good. Take care to **not** introduce irrelevant information here. For example, if you're discussing the Ontological Argument and its criticisms, section (3) is not the time to discuss a miracle you experienced, since that doesn't have any bearing on the arguments. Keep things on track!
- Remember that we're looking at the strength of the arguments here! Even if you agree with a philosopher's conclusion (for instance, that God exists), that doesn't mean you should feel compelled to think that their *argument* that supports that conclusion is a good one. It's ok to concede that one argument is superior even if you disagree with the conclusion for personal reasons.

Specific Guidelines:

Ontological Argument:

- Take care to explain Anselm's argument as thoroughly as possible. Go through each step and explain how it works toward the conclusion.
- Do the same for the criticisms (all three). Explain them as completely as possible. This will take **more** than a sentence or two for each one.

Design Argument:

- Make sure to explain the Design argument as comprehensively as possible.
- Remember that Hume approaches the issue in the form of a dialog. One speaker defends the design argument while another denounces it.
- Hume offers 3 principle arguments against the Design argument.
- Mackie's points fit nicely with one particular criticism from Hume. Think of which one that is and incorporate it.