

## Teleological Argument



### Learning Objectives

	Translate the basic components of the Teleological Argument into common terms using modern day examples.	AO1 Band 2-3
	Analyse Aquinas' 3 <sup>rd</sup> Way exploring the details of the Teleological Argument and using Key language.	AO1 Band 4
	Defend or challenge Aquinas' Teleological Argument identifying the strengths and weaknesses.	AO2 Band 3-4

*Tick the objective you are aiming for this lesson*

*At the end of the lesson place a cross on the objective you achieved.*

Name

## Teleological Arguments

### Guidance notes on forming a Teleological Argument

**Premise 1:** In what way does the object you have appear to be designed?

**Premise 2:** How does the object aim to fulfil some purpose? What is the purpose it fulfils?

**Premise 3:** What gave the object its purpose and ability to fulfil its goal?

**Conclusion:** How can we conclude that there is a designer of the object?

<b>Premise 1</b>	
<b>Premise 2</b>	
<b>Premise 3</b>	
<b>Conclusion</b>	

*I understood this argument to be about*

*My argument was an attempt to prove*

Ex: Teleological arguments are

## Thomas Aquinas' Fifth Way – The Teleological Argument

*The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that they achieve their end, not fortuitously, but designedly. Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless it is directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God. – Aquinas, Summa Theologica*

### **Premise 1**

When you look at the natural world you can see that everything in it follows natural laws, even if the things are not conscious or thinking beings.

### **Premise 2**

If things follow natural laws they tend to thrive and have a goal or purpose.

### **Premise 3**

However, if a thing cannot think for itself it does not have any goal or purpose unless it is directed by something that thinks.

### **Conclusion**

Everything in the natural world that does not think for itself heads towards its goal or purpose because it is directed by something which does think. That something we call 'God'.

### Argument analysis skills



#### Level 1: Knowledge and Comprehension

1. What are the **premises**?
2. What are the **conclusions**?
3. What are the **quotes** you can use?

#### Level 2: Application and Analysis

4. What are the **assumptions**?
5. What is the **agenda**?
6. How does the argument seek to **convince**?

#### Level 3: Synthesis and Evaluation

7. Is it **successful**?
8. **Justify or challenge** the argument.
9. **Compare** the argument to other examples.

### Extension: Teleology through Natural Laws

Although the laws of nature determine what takes place in the natural world there must have been an intelligent designer to establish these natural laws. The Laws of nature function regularly and predictably. Aquinas gave the example of an archer:



1. An arrow hits a target even though it does not have a mind of its own.
2. The archer shot the arrow.
3. Things in the natural world follow natural laws even though they do not necessarily have a mind of their own.
4. Someone with a mind of their own caused the natural world to behave in this way. We call this someone God.

## Criticism Analysis Sheet



Anthony Flew



Richard Swinburne



David Hume



Voltaire

Images of philosophers with their criticisms are placed around the room. Students circulate the room engaging with each criticism and completing their 'Criticism Analysis Sheet'.

Solo activity  
15 min

**Summarise** the criticism in the speech bubble.

D-E

**Identify** which part of the 5<sup>th</sup> way the criticism challenges and explain the criticism.

B-C

**Justify** the 5<sup>th</sup> Way or **sustain** the criticism against it.

A-B