VCE Philosophy

Prescribed texts for 2025

The following texts are prescribed for the *VCE Philosophy Study Design 2025–2029* and are referred to in the study design as set texts.

The editions listed below will be used by the examination panel in setting the 2025 VCE Philosophy examination. Teachers need to ensure that students are familiar with these editions.

The prescribed texts can be sourced from major booksellers, including online and academic new and second-hand booksellers, or directly from the publisher.

Unit 3 – The good life

Allen, Danielle 2004, *Talking to strangers: anxieties of citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN : 9786612239359.

Extracts:

pp. 121-123 ‘What exactly is justice and what does it achieve? … but these are not the only outcomes of such practices.’

pp. 133-139 ‘What exactly is equitable self-interest? … the rivalrous realm of politics?’

Aristotle 2009, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross, ed. Lesley Brow, Oxford World’s Classics: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-921361-0.

Extracts:

Book I Chapters 1–5

Book 1 Chapter 7 extract ends ‘a man blessed and happy.’

Book II, Chapter 2

Book IX, Chapter 9 extract ends ‘therefore the happy man needs friends.’

de Beauvoir, Simone 2018, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, trans. Bernard Frechtman, New York: Open Road Integrated Media. ISBN: 9781504054225.

Extracts:

pp. 37-39 'Man's unhappiness … his acts engage nothing, not even himself.'

pp. 41-43 'The fact that it is very rare … he did not know its exigencies.'

pp. 44-48 'It is in this moment of justification … has not known how to justify itself.'

pp. 50-53 'Often the young man … not for individuals, but against them.'

pp. 62-65 'It is possible that … a genuinely free man.'

pp. 75-77 'There is no way … He created him free.'

Cicero 1971, *On the Good Life*, trans. Michael Grant, Penguin Classics: Penguin Books. ISBN: 978-0140442441.

Extracts:

pp. 184-192 extract ends ‘as a shining light of goodness and excellence.’

pp. 194-199 ‘In that case my dear friends … severe for the followers as the leaders.’

pp. 217-222 ‘Perversely … from the authentic.’

Mill, John Stuart 1982, *On Liberty,* Penguin Classics: Penguin Books, ISBN: 9780140432077.

Extract:

pp. 68-72 ‘The object of this essay … seems good to the rest.’

Nietzsche, Friedrich 2003, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. RJ Hollingdale, Penguin Classics: Penguin Books. ISBN:  978-0-140-44923-5.

Extracts:

Sections 199, 201, 203, 225, 260 and 284.

Plato 2008, *Gorgias*, trans. Robin Waterfield, Oxford World’s Classics: Oxford University Press, ISBN: 978-0-19-954032-7.

Extracts:

Sections 481B-484C ‘In exasperation … a man who is better and superior.’

Sections 491D-495A ‘Socrates raises the question … pleasure which isn’t good?’

Singer, Peter 1972, ‘Famine, Affluence and Morality,’ *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1(3), pp. 229-243. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2265052>.

Extract:

pp. 229-235 extract ends ‘wrong not do so.’

Weil, Simone 2002, *The Need for Roots*, 2nd edition, trans. Arthur Willis, Routledge Classics: Routledge. ISBN: 9780415271028

Extract:

pp. 3-7 extract ends ‘analogous to hunger.’

Wolf, Susan 1982, ‘Moral Saints,’ *The Journal of Philosophy*, 79(8), pp. 419-439. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2026228>.

Extracts:

pp. 419-427 extract ends ‘good not to be a moral saint.’

pp. 435-439 extract begins ‘In pointing out the regrettable features’

Unit 4 – On believing

Clifford, William Kingdon 1877, ‘The Ethics of Belief,’ *Contemporary Review*. Access at: <https://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/Clifford_ethics.pdf>.

Fricker, Elizabeth 2006, ‘Testimony and Epistemic Autonomy,’ *The Epistemology of Testimony,* eds. Jennifer Lackey and Ernest Sosa, Oxford Academic: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780191706110.

Extracts:

pp. 231-233 ‘With these points about the need for sharing made … epistemically placed than H to determine whether P.’

pp. 239-243 ‘We have seen, as encapsulated in TDAP2 … maintain responsibility for our own beliefs.’

Fricker, Miranda 2009, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, ISBN: 978-0199570522.

Extracts:

pp. 17-29 ‘Broadly speaking, prejudicial dysfunction in testimonial practice … stereotypes in hearers’ judgements of speakers’ credibility.’

pp. 86-90 ‘We have so far developed a picture … Tom is telling the truth.’

pp. 98-108 ‘The picture of the virtue of testimonial injustice … that is present in any human society.’

Mill, John Stuart 1982, *On Liberty*, Penguin Classics: Penguin Books, ISBN: 9780140432077.

Extract:

pp. 97-102 ‘We have now recognised the necessity … conscientiously strive towards it.”

Nguyen, C. Thi ‘Escape the echo chamber’, *Aeon*, 9 April 2018, Aeon Media Group. Access at: <https://aeon.co/essays/why-its-as-hard-to-escape-an-echo-chamber-as-it-is-to-flee-a-cult>

Peirce, Charles Sanders 1877, ‘The Fixation of Belief,’ *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. XII-1.

Extract:

Part V (pp. 7-15)