

The problem of suffering: the Epicurean paradox

Cut out the sentences on the next page from the Epicurean paradox.

Check the students' understanding of all the key vocabulary.

Challenge the students to rearrange them so that it makes sense as an argument against the existence of an omnipotent, benevolent god.

Ask them what they think about the argument.

Answer

Is god willing to prevent evil, but not able?

Then he is not omnipotent.

Is god able to prevent evil, but not willing?

Then he is not benevolent.

Is god both able and willing to prevent evil?

Then where does evil come from?

Is god neither able nor willing to prevent evil?

Then why call him god?

The problem of suffering: the Epicurean paradox

Cut out the sentences below and rearrange them so that it makes sense as an argument against the existence of an all-powerful, good god.

Is god both able and willing to prevent evil?

Then why call him god?

Then he is not omnipotent.

Is god able to prevent evil, but not willing?

Then where does evil come from?

Then he is not benevolent.

Is god willing to prevent evil, but not able?

Is god neither able nor willing to prevent evil?