

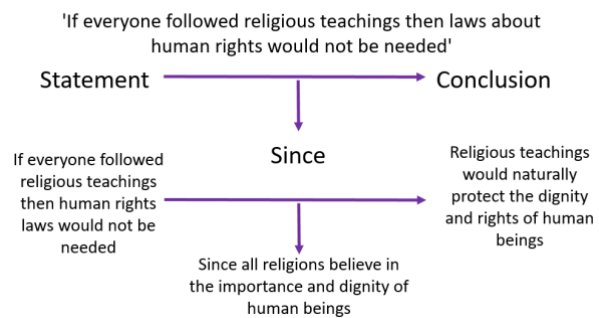
One of the main reasons I joined this group was because I felt frustrated with not knowing how to coach my students to improve their answers to the 12 mark questions in exam papers. I needed to find ways to provide them with a bank of strategies they could use to develop strong argumentation in their essays and with the focus of this group being just that, leapt at the chance to join.

When reading Toulmin’s ‘The Uses of Argument’, the aspect that jumped out at me the most was in his writing on the layout of arguments. This chapter explains the process of supporting statements with warrants, backing the warrants and using anomalies to work as a qualifier for the conclusion. The chapter also provides visual diagrams on how to structure such arguments and I knew these would support my students when planning their answers.

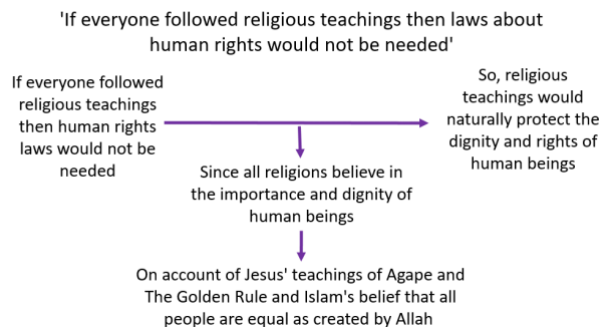
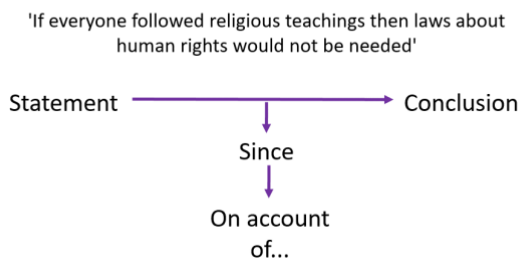
I took Toulmin’s diagrams of arguments and used these in my classroom by applying the process to specific exam questions. We have completed these together as a class on the board and they have completed them in pairs. Example 1, modelling on the board as a class:

**Logical chains of reasoning...**

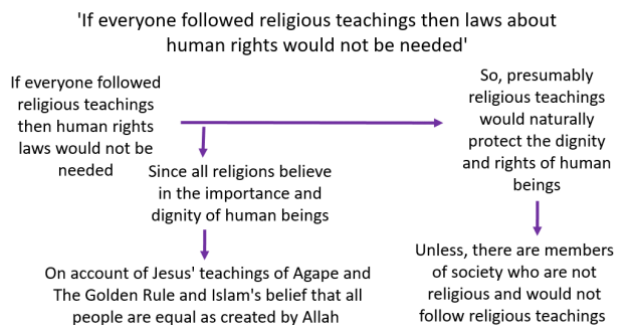
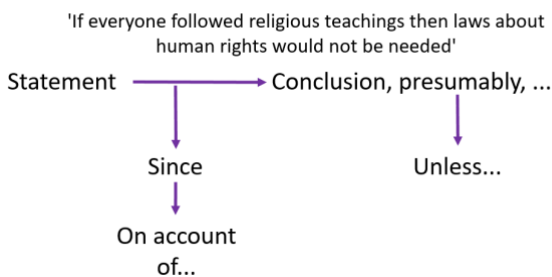
**Step 1 – finding relevant warrants**

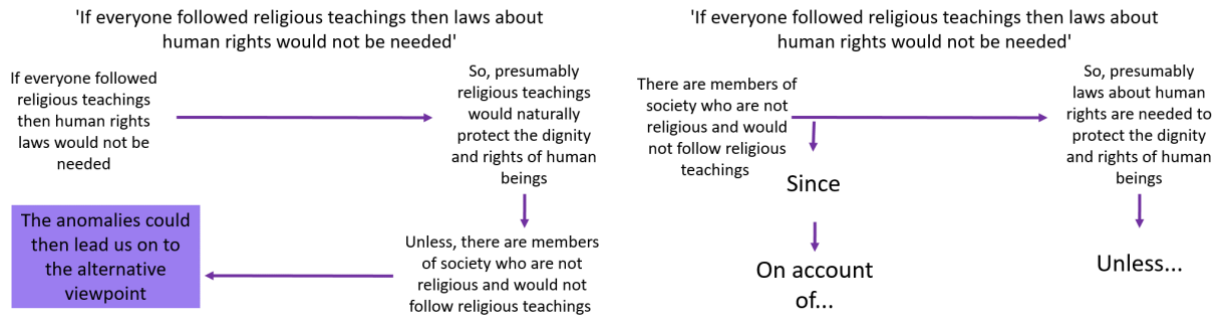


**Step 2 – backing the warrants**

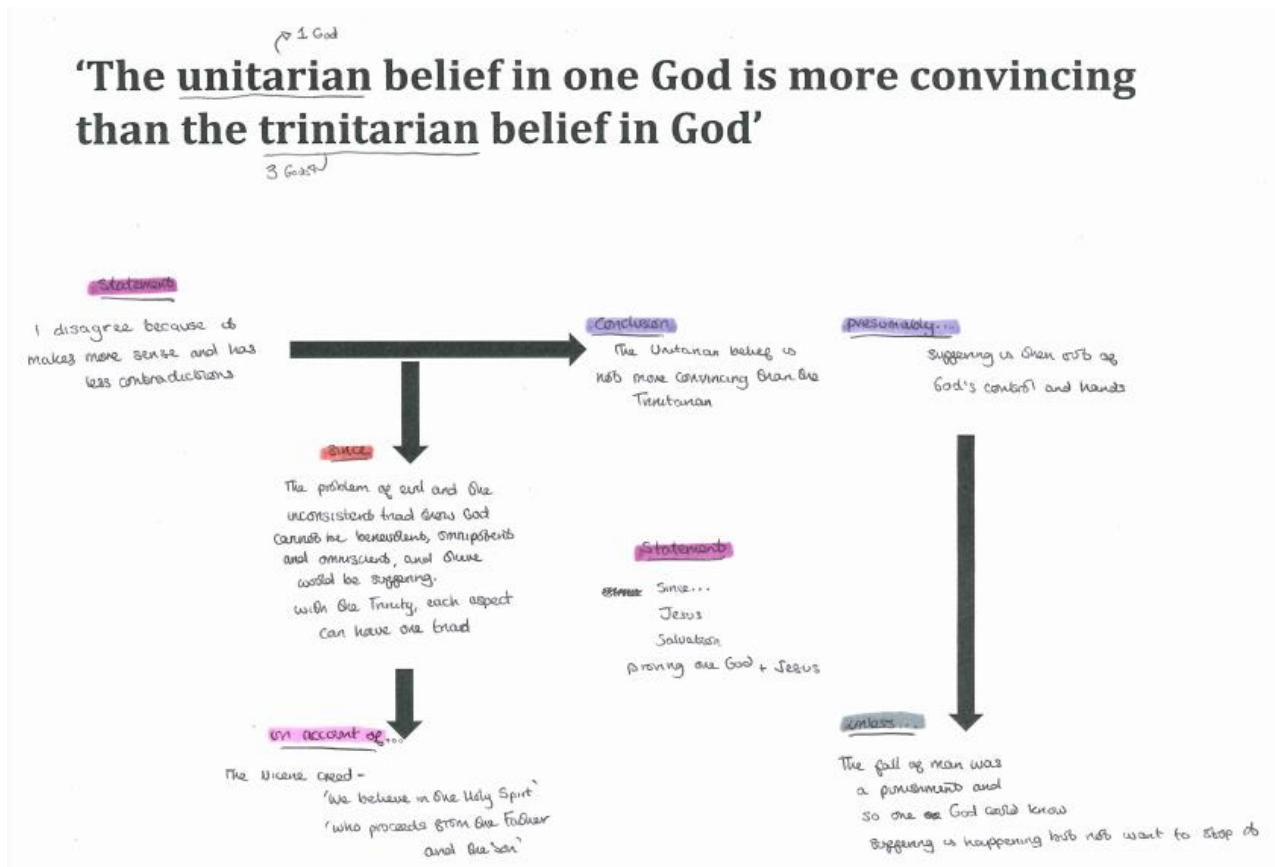


**Step 3 – considering anomalies**

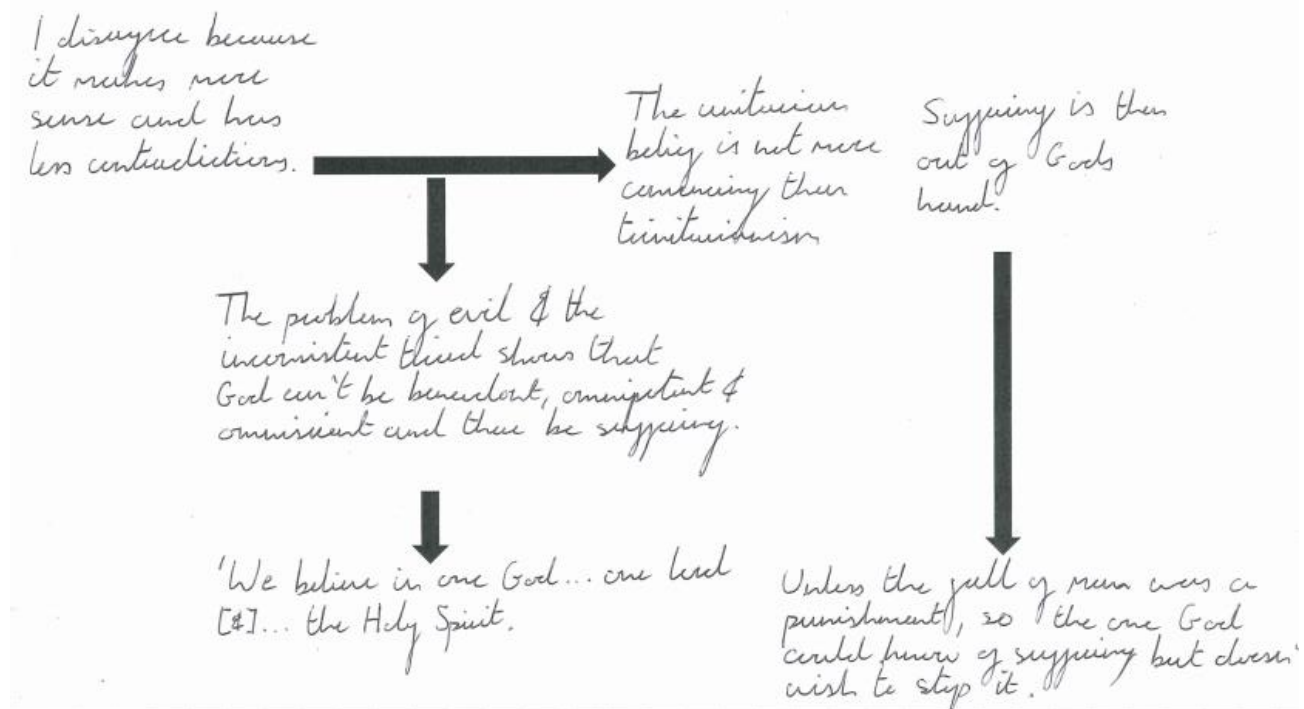




Example 2, pair work:



# 'The unitarian belief in one God is more convincing than the trinitarian belief in God'



By laying the argument out like this, students can see if their statements are backed by logical warrants and if it follows the chain of reasoning they imagined. If it doesn't they can complete another sheet until they get it right.

My trainee teacher also created some activities using Toulmin's layout of argument. One of these were card sorts where students had to identify aspects of the argument:

Claim. Grounds. Warrant. Backing. Qualifier. Rebuttal.	Claim. Grounds. Warrant. Backing. Qualifier. Rebuttal.
<p><b>Weapons of mass destruction should only be used in retaliation, where the act is proportionate to the initial aggression</b></p> <p>Presumably the opponent showed aggression first</p> <p>However, some Christians believe the suffering caused by weapons of mass destruction mean they should never be used</p> <p>Weapons of mass destruction may be allowed if they prevent long term oppression and suffering of a people</p>	<p><b>Origins</b></p> <p>Christians believe the most important thing is that they are made in the image of God and exactly how this happened is not as important as believing they are made by God.</p> <p>The creation account in Genesis should be read metaphorically rather than literally</p> <p>It is possible for religious believers to believe in science and religious creation accounts</p> <p>This interpretation of the Bible is believed by some Christians</p> <p>'God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.'</p> <p>However, some Christians may believe that the Bible should be read literally in order for its words to hold meaning...</p>
<p><b>Weapons of mass destruction</b></p> <p>A Christian may justify the use of weapons of mass destruction</p> <p>'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a wound for a wound, a bruise for a bruise, a life for a life.'</p>	

Students have said that the structure helps them to "see what I need to do" and that it "shows me when I'm missing something so I know what I have to put in".