

What is Knowledge?

The Study of Knowledge

The study of knowledge is called:

[Redacted]

Knowledge =

more than belief or suppositions

something absolute

cannot be logically disputed

There are different views on how we can gain knowledge:

[Redacted] –

Knowledge is gained through reason / logic alone

No reference to the empirical world is required

[Redacted] –

Knowledge is gained through sensory experience of the world
E.g. scientific investigation

Philosophical Vocabulary Activity 1

Read the worksheet provided
Find out the meaning of the
following words and write a
glossary definition for each one:

Valid

Sound

Syllogism

Deductive

Inductive

A priori

A posteriori

Activity 2:

Read the following examples of syllogistic arguments and decide:

Which are not valid? Why?

Which are not sound? Why?

Write out your answers for each example

Go to
Q1

Go to
Q2

Go to
Q3

Go to
Q4

Go to
Q5

Go to
Q6

Go to
Q7

Go to
Q8

All books from that store are new



Q4

Some cats have no tails

All cats are mammals

Mammals do not have tails

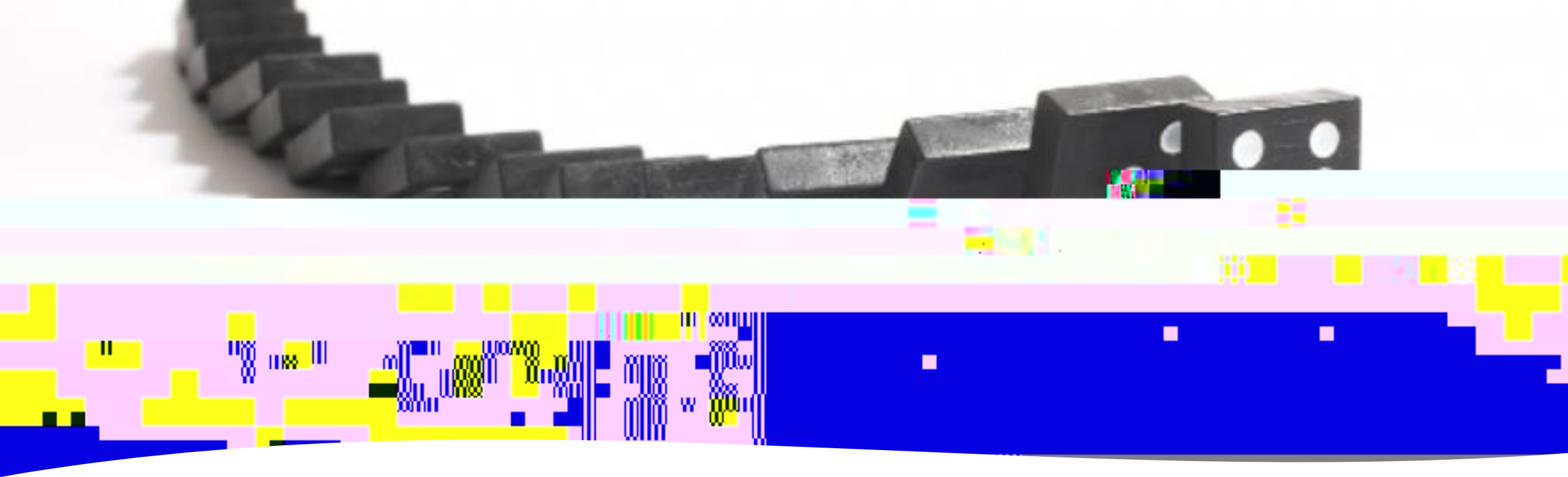
For a reminder of what to do, click here:





No healthy food is fattening
All cakes are fattening
No cakes are healthy





Everything has a cause
The world is a 'thing'
The world is caused

Deductive Arguments

An argument in which the premises lead indisputably to the conclusion

If the premises are true and the logic is valid, then the conclusion must be true

It is illogical to accept the premises but not the conclusion of a deductive argument

Inductive Arguments

An argument in which the premises lead to a conclusion which is possible but not the only possibility

Here we must ask:

Are the premises true?

Is the argument valid?

How persuasive is it?



Philosophical Proofs

Arguments for the existence of God that claim to be valid and sound

We will be considering:

- The cosmological argument
- The teleological argument
- The ontological argument



A Posteriori Arguments

Based on experience

Uses reason based on human experience of the world

Empiricist

Relies on empirical evidence

The cosmological argument

The teleological argument

Vocabulary you need to know:

Epistemology – The theory of / study of knowledge

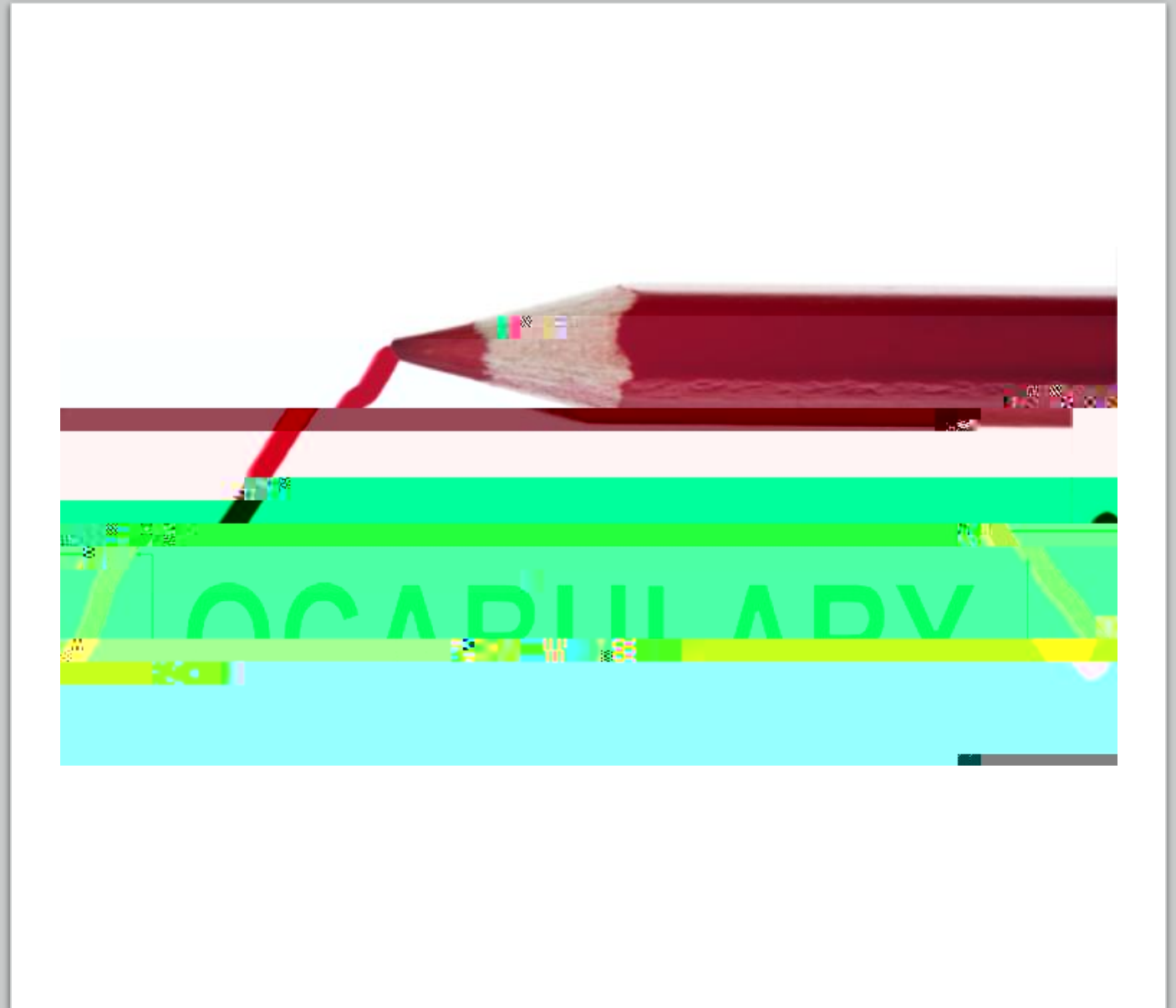
Rationalism – The view that the dominant foundation of knowledge is reason



Vocabulary you need to know:

- **Valid** – An argument where there are no mistakes in logic
- **Sound** – Where the logic is correct, and the premises are true
- **Syllogism** – a three-line argument in which a conclusion is derived from two premises

For more vocabulary you need to know, click here:



Vocabulary you need to know:

- **Deductive** – An argument in which, if the premises are true, then the conclusion must be true
- **Inductive** – An argument constructed on true premises reaching a logically possible and persuasive conclusion
- **A priori** – Without or prior to experience; used of an argument which is based on acquired knowledge independent of or prior to experience
- **A posteriori** – Based on experience; used of an argument which is based on experience or empirical evidence

