



What is Knowledge?

Summer Preparation - Philosophy

The Study of Knowledge

- The study of knowledge is called:
Epistemology
 - Knowledge =
 - more than belief or suppositions
 - something absolute
 - cannot be logically disputed
 - There are different views on how we can gain knowledge:
- **Rationalism** –
 - Knowledge is gained through reason / logic alone
 - No reference to the empirical world is required
 - **Empiricism** –
 - 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

Q1

- All books from that store are new
- These books are from that store
- Therefore these books are new

For a reminder of what to do, click here:





Q2

- Some mugs are beautiful
- All mugs are useful
- All useful things are beautiful

For a reminder of what to do, click here:



- All coloured flowers are scented
- No scented flowers are grown indoors
- No flowers grown indoors are coloured

For a reminder of what to do, click here:





Q4

- Some cats have no tails
- All cats are mammals
- Mammals do not have tails

For a reminder of what to do, click here:



Q5

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

For a reminder of what to do, click here:



Q6

- No lazy people pass exams
- Some students pass exams
- Some students are not lazy

For a reminder of what to do, click here:





Q7

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

For a reminder of what to do, click here:



Q8

- All complex things are designed
- The universe is a complex thing
- The universe is designed

For a reminder of what to do, click here:



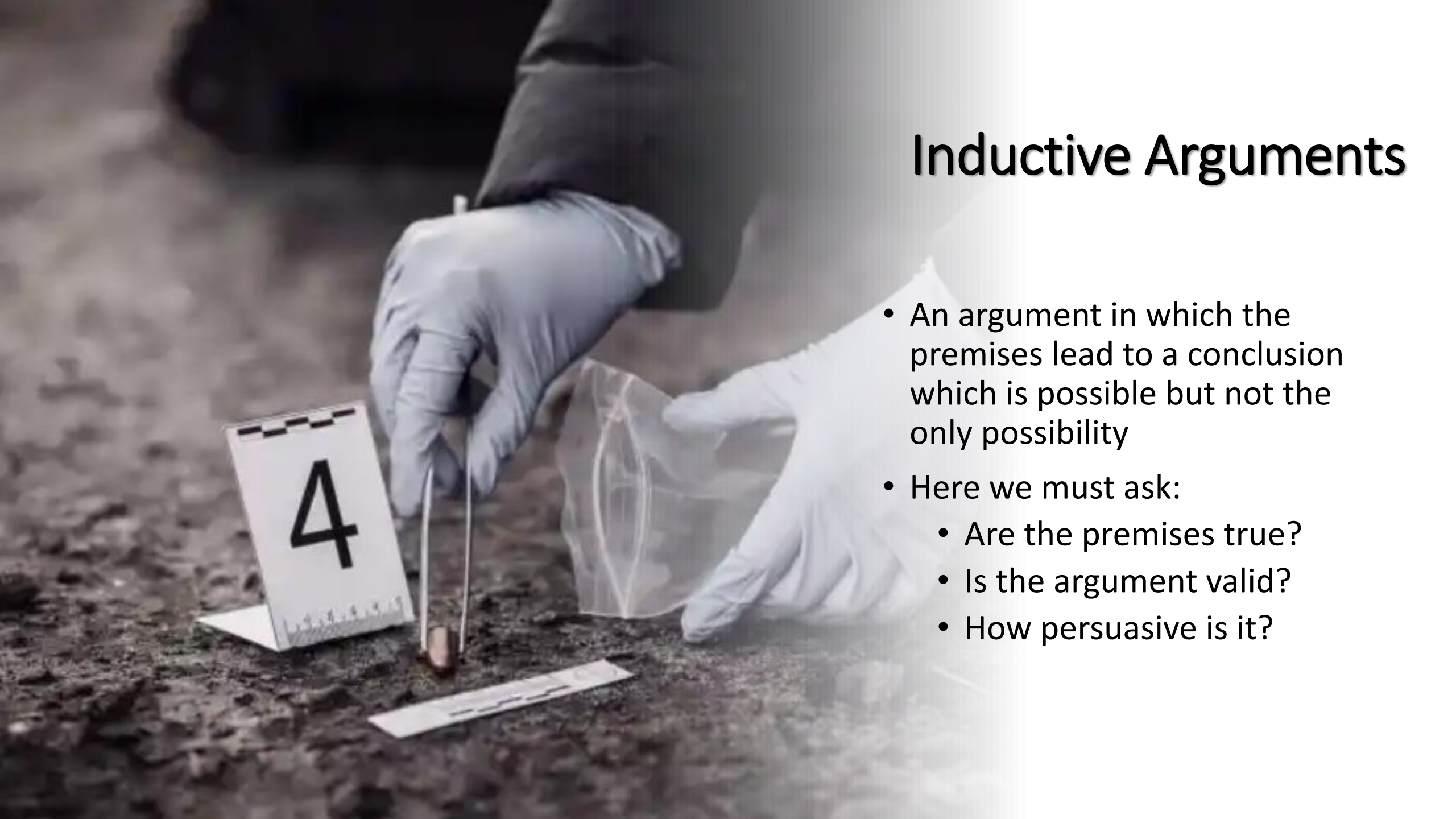
Deductive Arguments



- 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

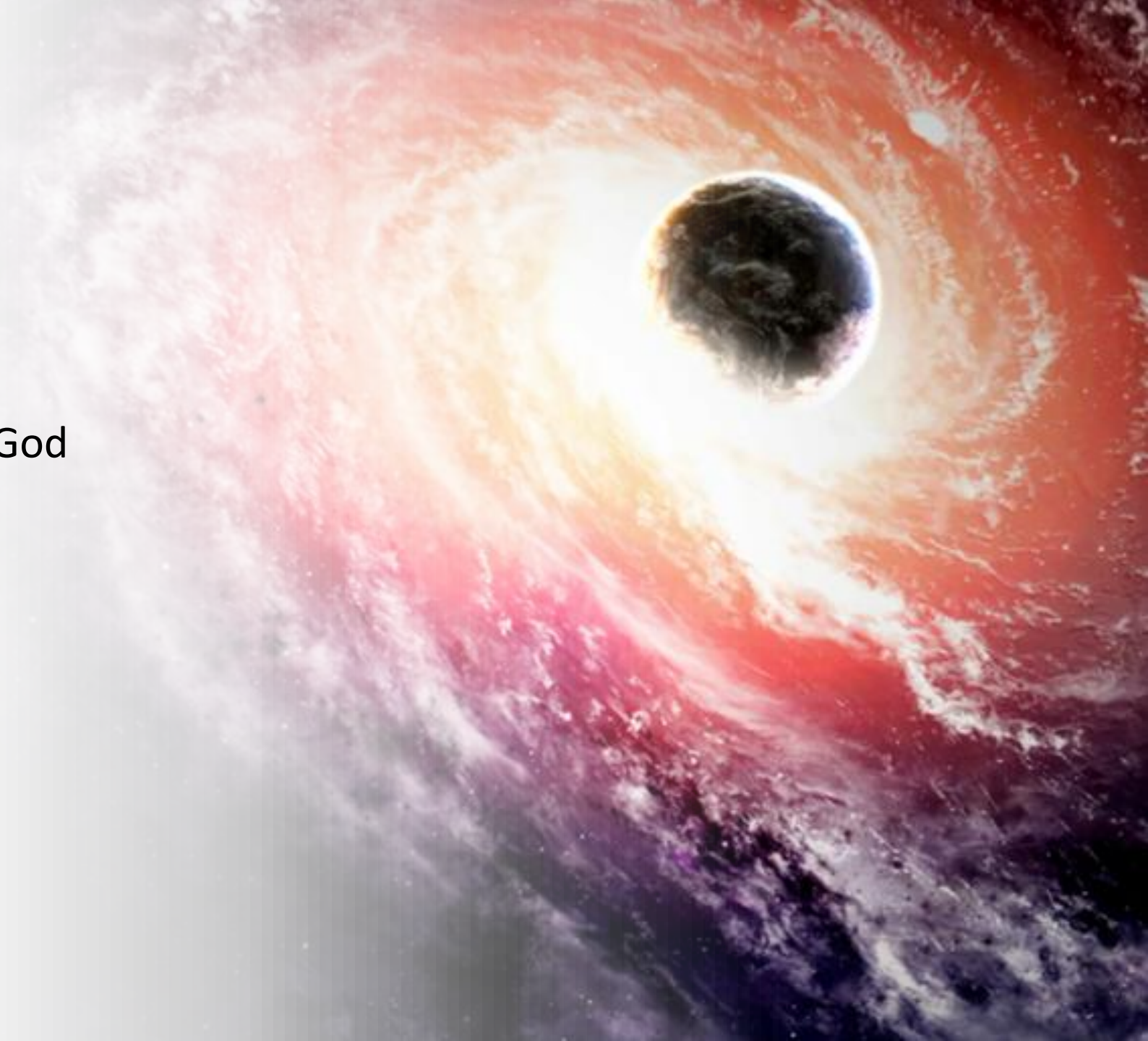
- An argument in which the premises lead to a conclusion which is possible but not the only possibility
- Here we must ask:
 - Are the premises true?
 - Is the argument valid?
 - How persuasive is it?





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 Priori Arguments

- Based on acquired knowledge without, independent of or prior to experience
- Rationalist
- Relies on logic and reasoning
- No empirical evidence
- The ontological argument



A Posteriori Arguments

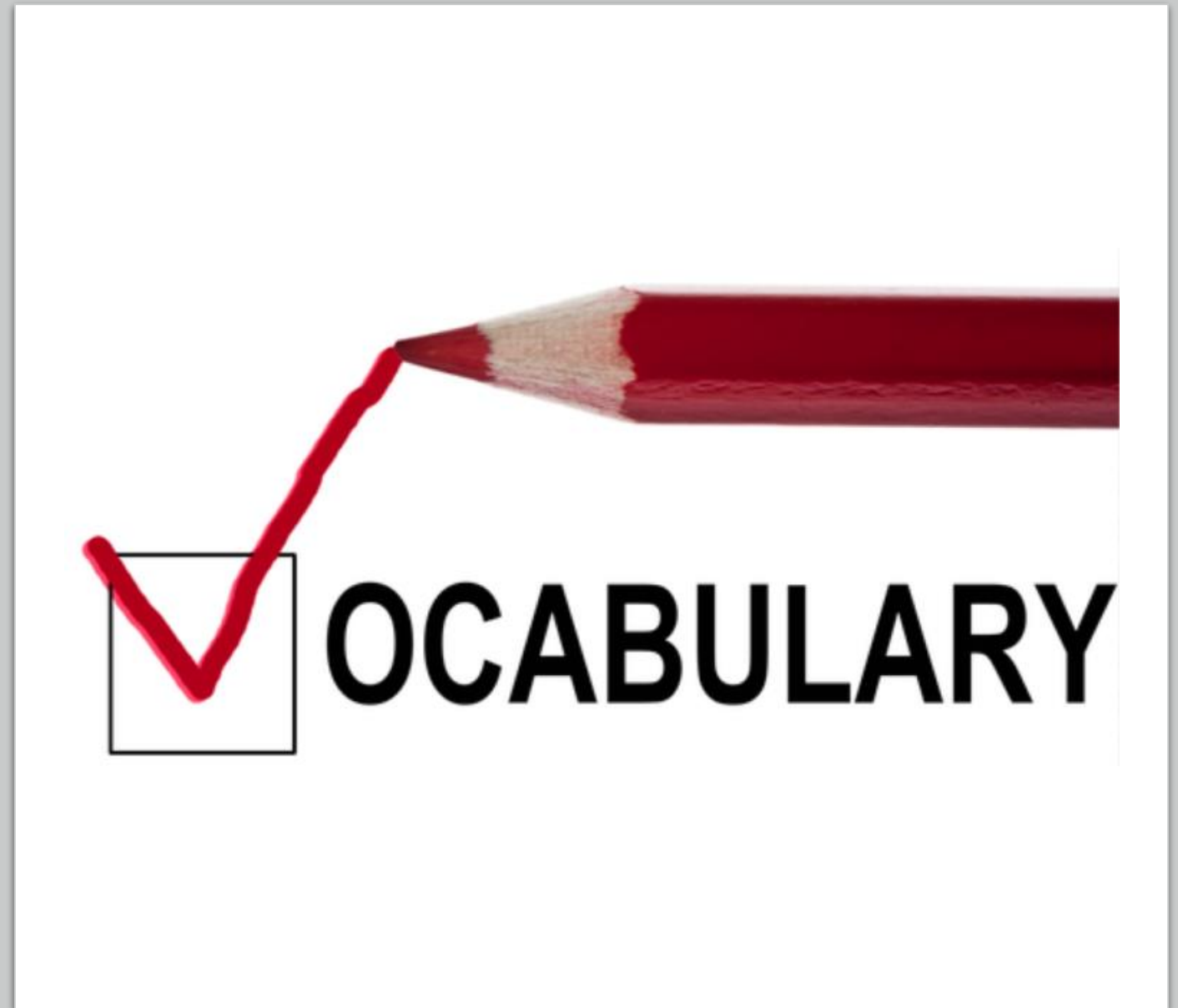
- Based on experience
- Uses reason based on human experience of the world
- Empiricist
- Relies on empirical evidence
- The cosmological argument
- The teleological argument



Vocabulary you need to know:

- **Epistemology** – The theory of / study of knowledge
- **Rationalism** – The view that the dominant foundation of knowledge is reason
- **Empiricism** – The view that the dominant foundation of knowledge is experience

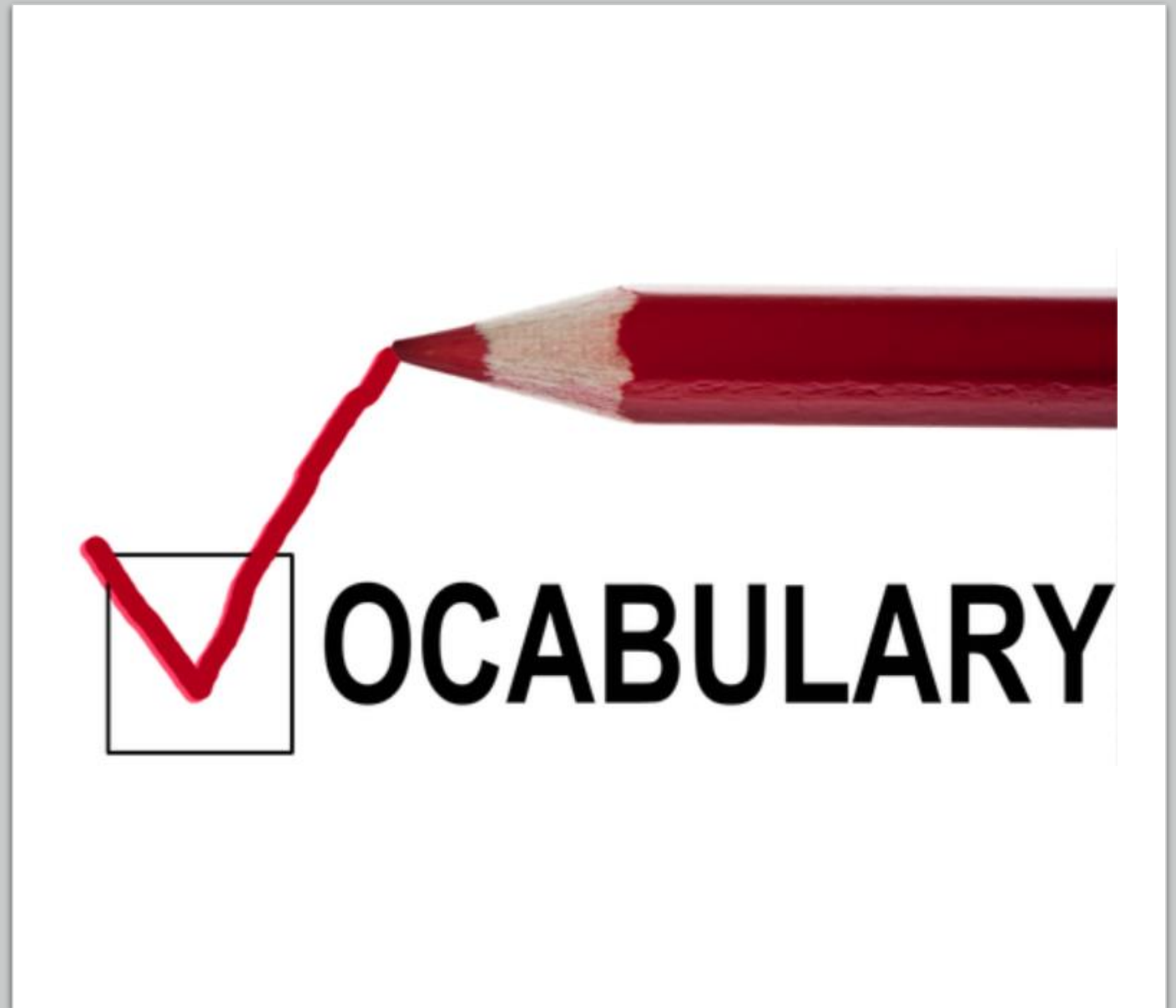
For more vocabulary you need to know, click here:



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

