

What is the actual question?

What, if anything, ultimately grounds Truth, Reason and Goodness?

Greater intelligence can expose a weak rule. Greater ability alone does not establish what is true or worth pursuing.

FIX THE MEANING

Ground • What makes a claim true or a reason binding.

Ultimate ground • Where the explanation ends, and why that stopping point is warranted.

Anchor • The proposed actual ground to which understanding remains answerable.

Shape • Requirements justified for identifying that ground.

Recognition asks how we know. Implementation asks how we act.

INVARIANT THROUGH CHANGE

An invariant is not what repeats. It is what remains answerable through change.

Recover the relation, its required conditions and supporting reasons.

Actual permission cannot be replaced by predicted agreement. This distinction alone does not establish an ultimate ground or goodness.

GO • ARE WE ANSWERING THE GROUNDING QUESTION?

SUPPORTED

Proceed to G1–G2.

REJECTED

State your different question. Keep its answer distinct.

UNRESOLVED

Clarify ground, recognition and implementation.

THE ROUTE

02	G1–G2 • Reasons and personal standing
03	G3–G4 • Compare grounds; justify requirements
04	Your Shape; G5 • The historical bridge
05	G6–G8 • Sources → events → identity
06	G9–G10 • Whole case → warrant → your finding

HOW TO USE EACH GATE

Judge the stated claim and give reasons.

Supported: carry the finding with its limits.

Rejected: remove claims that require it.

Unresolved: keep dependent conclusions conditional.

The route identifies dependencies. It does not certify that a gate has passed.

BEGIN HERE • NO PRIOR BOOK IS REQUIRED

Which premises can you defend?

G1 • REASONS FOR BELIEF

Claim: reasons can justify belief beyond an agent's preference.

An argument asks that its premises count in favor of its conclusion.

Does denying all such authority rely on that authority?

Specify any contradiction.

A standard's existence, objectivity and ultimate explanation are distinct claims.

SUPPORTED

Carry the warranted scope to G3.

REJECTED

Defend an alternative account of justification; revise dependent claims.

UNRESOLVED

Isolate the disputed premise or inference.

G2 • PERSONAL STANDING

Claim: persons have standing beyond usefulness or power.

Consider a case where protecting someone's actual good costs reward or advantage. What makes their claim binding?

Defend the moral premise. Intuition or agreement alone does not settle it.

Reasons for belief do not by themselves establish moral obligation.

SUPPORTED

Carry the defended moral premise to G3.

REJECTED

State the rival account of standing and its consequences.

UNRESOLVED

Identify the missing argument about obligation.

RECORD WHAT FOLLOWS

My supported premises are... because...

My rejected premises are... because...

My unresolved questions are...

G1 and G2 require distinct arguments.

A verdict at one does not automatically settle the other.

What could ground the whole?

G3 • TEST ULTIMATE ACCOUNTS

Compare fundamental truths or norms; natural, relational or procedural grounds; a necessary rational personal Ground; other defended accounts.

What explains existence, intelligibility, reasons and standing?

The personal proposal seeks one source for these. Show how it explains them. Test its necessity and goodness against objections, including suffering and hiddenness. An unexplained stopping point is not automatically a contradiction.

SUPPORTED

Carry the account to G4 with its premises and limits.

REJECTED

Remove the refuted account; compare remaining accounts.

UNRESOLVED

Identify an argument or evidence that could distinguish them.

G4 • JUSTIFY EACH REQUIRED FEATURE

For each feature: accepted premises → inference → required feature.

Does your argument warrant self-existence, personality or goodness?

Would accessibility or self-giving follow, aid recognition, or remain unjustified? Consider other features you can defend.

Distinguish necessary properties, preferred features and clues for recognition.

SUPPORTED

Include the feature with its argument in your Shape.

REJECTED

Remove that requirement; revise the affected comparisons.

UNRESOLVED

Keep it conditional. Do not exclude candidates solely on it.

THE REQUIREMENTS MUST EARN THEIR PLACE

Use comparable standards across accounts. Greater claimed reach needs support. Several supported features do not yet establish that one real ground has them all.

What Shape have you established?

YOUR FIRST DECLARATION

The Shape I can presently defend is... _____

Each required feature follows because... _____

The premises I reject or leave open are... _____

If no Shape is justified, state the exact obstacle. _____

G5 • CAN THIS GROUND BE IDENTIFIED IN A LIFE?

Claim: the ground I defended could be identified with a historical life.

A personal ground alone does not identify a historical person.

Distinguish possibility, reasons to expect disclosure and evidence it occurred.

A contingent disclosure can be investigated without proving it had to occur. Explain what your account permits.



SUPPORTED

Investigate possible candidates at G6.



REJECTED

Report the grounding finding at G9 without a historical identification.



UNRESOLVED

Explore candidates conditionally; keep G5 open.

SPECIFY THE ROLE BEFORE CHOOSING A NAME

Moral example	A life that acts in accordance with the good.
Representative	A life authorized to speak or act for the ground.
Disclosure	A life through which the ground becomes known.
Identity	Specify precisely who this life is claimed to be, and its relation to the Ground.

Which claims does your Shape permit? What evidence would distinguish them?

SEARCH BY THE REQUIREMENTS

Find plausible candidates and the strongest serious rivals.

Keep criteria consistent. State which lives and evidence you examine.

If you revise the Shape, record the new reasons and reconsider affected comparisons.

NEXT • 05 • TEST SOURCES, EVENTS AND IDENTITY

What does the evidence warrant?

Repeat these gates for each candidate.
Preserve the status of earlier premises.

G6

G6 • TEST THE SOURCE CLAIM

Read relevant records in context. Test date, authorship, purpose, transmission and dependence.
Separate what is reported from what its evidence establishes.

SUPPORTED

Carry only warranted findings to G7.

REJECTED

Drop the rejected assertion; preserve other findings.

UNRESOLVED

Inspect the disputed source or inference.

G7

G7 • TEST THE EVENT EXPLANATION

For an identity-bearing event, compare ordinary, extraordinary and combined explanations.
State background assumptions. A profile's fit is not independent historical testimony.

SUPPORTED

Carry the explanation and its limits to G8.

REJECTED

Remove that explanation; compare surviving alternatives.

UNRESOLVED

Seek evidence that distinguishes the accounts.

G8

G8 • TEST THE IDENTITY INFERENCE

State the exact proposed identity and relation to the Ground. Do supported findings warrant that claim?
Compare example, representative, disclosure and the precise identity claim.
What would a supported event vindicate, and why?

SUPPORTED

Take the supported identity claim to G9.

REJECTED

Reject that identity claim; retain warranted facts about the life.

UNRESOLVED

Name the missing bridge.
Keep the identity conditional.

CARRY EVIDENCE FORWARD WITH ITS DEPENDENCIES

Do not reset supported findings to zero or count dependent reports as independent witnesses.

NEXT • 06 • COMPARE THE WHOLE CASE AND DECLARE YOUR FINDING

What conclusion can you defend?

These diagrams organize an investigation whose accepted premises, Shape and candidate are supplied by the reader. No verdict is preselected.

G9 • DOES THE WHOLE CASE HOLD?

Test grounding, Shape, evidence and identity together. Compare the strongest rivals. Trace dependencies. Do not count shared evidence or structural fit twice.

SUPPORTED

Rank the supported accounts; proceed to G10.

REJECTED

Withdraw the failed inference; revise dependent claims.

UNRESOLVED

Locate the weakest bridge and investigate it.

G10 • DOES THE CONFIDENCE CLAIM HOLD?

A leading candidate can still be weakly supported.
State your threshold. "Beyond reasonable doubt" requires reasons for judging remaining doubts insufficient.

SUPPORTED

State the warranted confidence and its reasons.

REJECTED

Lower confidence; the comparative ranking may remain.

UNRESOLVED

Withhold the stronger claim; name what is missing.

YOUR HISTORICAL FINDING

Which life in all of human history best fits your Shape?

My strongest candidate is... because...

My confidence, scope and remaining doubts are...

If none qualifies, or G5 rules out identification with a life, state your finding and reasons.

REOPEN THE AFFECTED GATE

Premise or ground



G1–G3

Shape or historical bridge



G4–G5

Source, event or identity



G6–G8

Rival comparison or confidence



G9–G10

Reconsider dependent claims. Preserve findings that still hold.