

Teacher Resource Bank

GCSE Religious Studies (Specification A)

Additional Specimen Questions:

Unit 7 *Philosophy of Religion*

- The Characteristics of God



PART B

There are 24 marks for each question.

B The Characteristics of God

- (a) Explain why some people find it helpful to use words such as 'Father' and 'King' about God. *(6 marks)*

- (b) 'It is not right to use words about God that suggest sex or gender.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious arguments in your answer.

(6 marks)

- (c) Explain what it means to say that God is:

- (i) all-merciful, and
(ii) all-knowing.

(6 marks)

- (d) 'It is impossible to have a personal relationship with God.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious arguments in your answer.

(6 marks)



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Religious Studies
Full or Short Course
Specification A

Unit 7 *Philosophy of Religion*

Additional SPECIMEN Mark Scheme
The Characteristics of God

June series

PART B

B The Characteristics of God

- (a) Explain why some people find it helpful to use words such as ‘Father’ and ‘King’ about God.

Target: Knowledge and understanding of the use of words when applied to God

Levels	Criteria	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.	0 marks
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit.	1 mark
Level 2	Elementary knowledge and understanding, e.g. two simple points.	2 marks
Level 3	Sound knowledge and understanding.	3 marks
Level 4	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	4 marks
Level 5	A detailed answer with some analysis, as appropriate.	5 marks
Level 6	A full and coherent answer showing good analysis, as appropriate.	6 marks

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Simple images / they help people to relate to the world that they know so God is not seen as something remote / abstract words do not mean much to most people but words that are based on relationships mean a lot / these types of words, especially when used in combinations, help people to build up a picture of the many aspects of God without them being limiting / words of strength and power but with a loving, supportive, protective element can give some clear idea of how many believers relate to God / Jesus used the word “Father” / God depicted as father-figure in Christian parables / some candidates might refer to Aquinas and the use of analogical language but do not expect or require it.

Allow valid negative comments that show the candidate understands the topic.

(6 marks) AO1

(b) 'It is not right to use words about God that suggest sex or gender.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious arguments in your answer.

Target: Evaluation of the use of gender-oriented words when used about God

Level	Criteria	Marks	Quality of Written Communication
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.	0 marks	The candidate's presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar seriously obstruct understanding.
Level 1	Opinion supported by simple reason.	1 mark	The candidate presents some relevant information in a simple form. The text produced is usually legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar allow meaning to be derived, although errors are sometimes obstructive.
Level 2	Opinion supported by one developed reason or two simple reasons.	2 marks	
Level 3	Opinion supported by one well developed reason or several simple reasons. N.B. Candidates who make no religious comment should not achieve more than Level 3.	3 marks	The candidate presents relevant information in a way which assists with the communication of meaning. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate not to obscure meaning.
Level 4	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	4 marks	
Level 5	Evidence of reasoned consideration of two different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	5 marks	The candidate presents relevant information coherently, employing structure and style to render meaning clear. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate to render meaning clear.
Level 6	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of two different points of view showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	6 marks	

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Agree

God is without limitations / any word that implies sex or gender would suggest a limitation so it would be wrong to use it / many people are turned off the idea of God because they associate God with the misuse of power which is often linked with masculine words or a remoteness from the needs of women / also many people misunderstand what is implied by these words so it is better not to use them / writers of holy scriptures were predominantly male and they used male terms but people have different attitudes to sexist issues now, etc.

Other views

God has no limits so no words can make sense of him / all words are limited as they come from the human mind / the masculine form of words have been used about God historically not because they are implying that God is a male but because the masculine is in some ways the “default setting” for words in English and many languages / to use words which are strictly feminine would make not much difference to most people but to others they would suggest much more that God was feminine than the masculine words imply that God is male / religious founders tended to use the masculine words about God, so believers should follow their example, e.g. Jesus referred to God as Father, etc.

(6 marks) AO2

(c) Explain what it means to say that God is:

- (i) all-merciful, and
- (ii) all-knowing.

Target: Knowledge and understanding of two characteristics of God

Levels	Criteria	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.	0 marks
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit.	1 mark
Level 2	Elementary knowledge and understanding, e.g. two simple points.	2 marks
Level 3	Sound knowledge and understanding.	3 marks
Level 4	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	4 marks
Level 5	A detailed answer with some analysis, as appropriate.	5 marks
Level 6	A full and coherent answer showing good analysis, as appropriate.	6 marks

Candidates may include some of the following points:

All-merciful

God wants to forgive and is open to those who repent / God is loving and is willing to let go of the past when people change their attitude and come back to him / God is a God of relationships, especially with the weak / God is understanding and compassionate, etc.

All-knowing

Everything is open to God, even the deepest thoughts of people / God is aware of the future and of the past / people cannot hide their real motives from God when it comes to judgement / equally, God understands what makes people work better than they know themselves, etc.

Maximum Level 4 if only one correct explanation.

(6 marks) AO1

(d) 'It is impossible to have a personal relationship with God.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious arguments in your answer.

Target: Evaluation of the idea of a personal God

Level	Criteria	Marks	Quality of Written Communication
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.	0 marks	The candidate's presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar seriously obstruct understanding.
Level 1	Opinion supported by simple reason.	1 mark	The candidate presents some relevant information in a simple form. The text produced is usually legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar allow meaning to be derived, although errors are sometimes obstructive.
Level 2	Opinion supported by one developed reason or two simple reasons.	2 marks	
Level 3	Opinion supported by one well developed reason or several simple reasons. N.B. Candidates who make no religious comment should not achieve more than Level 3.	3 marks	The candidate presents relevant information in a way which assists with the communication of meaning. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate not to obscure meaning.
Level 4	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	4 marks	
Level 5	Evidence of reasoned consideration of two different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	5 marks	The candidate presents relevant information coherently, employing structure and style to render meaning clear. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate to render meaning clear.
Level 6	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of two different points of view showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	6 marks	

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Agree

God is unlimited and so far removed from limited human beings that we cannot even think of having a relationship with God / God cannot be pictured in any way so God means nothing to people so how can people call him personal, which implies a two-way relationship? / if God is transcendent then God cannot be personal, etc.

Other views

All religious leaders have stressed the closeness of God / greatness does not necessarily mean remoteness / God can be thought of as closer to believers than the air they breathe / many people believe that God loves the individual into being as God is the ground of all being so how can God be thought of as not-personal? / Jesus called God "Father" and this implies a close personal relationship, etc.

(6 marks) AO2