

Teacher Resource Bank

GCSE Religious Studies Specification A

Unit 7 *Philosophy of Religion*

Exemplar Scripts and Commentaries



Script 1

PART A

A1 The Compatibility of Science and Religion

- (a) What is evolution? (2 marks)

Evolution is a theory created by Charles Darwin. It is the idea that over millions of years we have adapted to have a better chance of life. It is also called 'survival of the fittest'.

Commentary

The answer actually contains three creditable points: Darwin, survival of the fittest and adapted. Maximum marks.

(2 marks)

- (b) Describe **one** story that deals with the creation of the world. (4 marks)

In the Genesis story it describes how God made the world in 6 days and then rested on the 7th. On the 1st day light and dark was made. The 2nd was sky and sea. The 3rd was animals. 4th was sun, moon and stars. 5th was birds and fish and finally humans. Everything was made for the coming of humans in to creation.

Commentary

While there are some inaccuracies in the order of creation, the story is clear and includes references to the day of rest and everything made for man which enables the top level to be awarded.

(4 marks)

- (c) 'God could not have made the world as science proves that everything was made by the Big Bang.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some may agree with the view that that Big Bang is the only valid view. There is empirical evidence and proof where as there is nothing for God. They believe that science is much more likely as they weigh up facts to create a strong conclusion. Others disagree because they have faith and belief. For these believers they do not need proof and believe everything in the Bible is 100% true. This is a more fundamentalist approach. Also science is based on reality but God made reality so science is based on God. I am unsure because although I believe in God it is still too uncertain.

Commentary

The response shows different points of view but there is a clumsiness in expression and a certain incoherence which prevents it reaching Level 6. This is a typical Level 5 answer.

(5 marks)

A2 The Characteristics of God

- (a) Explain briefly how the child in the drawing shows belief in a personal God. (3 marks)

A personal God is involved in everyone's life. If there was no personal God then God would not hear the child's cry. This shows the child believes. Also, only a personal God would care to help an individual instead of everyone. A personal God is also seen as a loving God which the child says.

Commentary

This answer has sound knowledge with points developed and linked together.

(3 marks)

- (b) 'God does not care about people who suffer.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

I think God does care about those who suffer. This is because we would suffer without free will or choice which God has given to us. Also we were sent God's son to save us from our sins and suffering despite the pain Jesus went through.

Commentary

This answer is marred by poor expression, especially in the second sentence, that prevents the candidate's thoughts coming over clearly. Level 2 was awarded as there is a developed reason given in the last sentence.

(2 marks)

- (c) Explain how the idea that God is in many forms might help believers. (4 marks)

Each form can be seen as a different characteristic of God showing us more about God's nature. It may be easier to understand in many forms because it could be harder to separate the different characteristics from one form. Also believers may wish to understand, focus on and pray to just a few parts of God.

Commentary

There are a number of different points in this answer that show clear knowledge and understanding, so Level 4 is awarded.

(4 marks)

- (d) 'It is wrong to use the 'he' word about God.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

Yes because it is very sexist against women, because we do not know what gender God is if God is any. Also God made humanity in God's image so this does not necessarily mean God is male.

Commentary

This is a Level 3 answer as there are two points, both of which show some development.

(3 marks)

A3 The Afterlife

- (a) What is reincarnation? (2 marks)

Reincarnation is when your soul comes back in to a different body after you die. It is linked to the idea of Karma. If you are good then you will be reincarnated as a more successful person. If not you will be lower.

Commentary

The candidate gives a clear idea of what reincarnation is and correctly links it to the idea of karma, so full marks are awarded.

(2 marks)

- (b) Explain **two** arguments that could be used against the idea of eternal life. (4 marks)

1. There is no empirical evidence to say there is eternal life. It can not be scientifically explained.

2. Nothing can last forever in life so there is no reason to believe that everything carries on forever in the afterlife.

Commentary

Two developed points are given so full marks are gained.

(4 marks)

- (c) 'People are only good in this life because they fear the afterlife.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some people agree because they believe that the fear of hell is so much people feel compelled to do good things. They believe that if you are good in this life you may go to heaven and as it is for eternity it is important to go to heaven rather than hell. Others disagree because they believe that they are good because they want to be. They do good needs because they love helping other people not for a reward in the afterlife. Also some people do not believe in the afterlife so believe it makes no difference.

I believe that some people do it to go to heaven but a lot of people just want to be good.

Commentary

Although the concluding sentence is weak, this answer is well argued and coherent, particularly in the second viewpoint. It fulfils the criterion for Level 6.

(6 marks)

A4 Revelation and Enlightenment

- (a) How does worship help believers to make contact with God? (2 marks)

There are many forms of worship, one of which is prayers. In prayers believers feel that they are talking to God and that God can hear their worries and needs. This is also the idea of an imminent God, involved in the believer's life.

Commentary

This is a developed response, with a nice cross-over to material from the characteristics of God being made by the candidate. Full marks.

(2 marks)

- (b) Explain briefly why some believers say that God speaks through nature. (3 marks)

God created nature. As an artist may reflect part of their nature through their work so does God with nature. Characteristics such as God's attention to detail and compassion for beauty and life may be seen through nature although different believers may see different things through flowers, trees, animals etc.

Commentary

This answer is well expressed, showing a good understanding of the issue.

(3 marks)

- (c) 'There is no such thing as a religious revelation.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some people may agree because they do not believe. These people prefer hard evidence to faith and so because there is no evidence it is not true. You can not have a sudden life changing experience from something that does not exist. Others disagree because they are believers. They may have had their own religious revelation but feel that they can not explain. These people do not need proof but instead have a very deep belief in their religion. I am unsure because having not had a religious revelation I feel I can not judge.

Commentary

This answer does contain two points of view with reasoned consideration, but it lacks the depth and coherence that would be expected from a level 6 response.

(5 marks)

PART B

B6 The Problem of Evil

- (a) Explain some ideas about the origins of evil. (6 marks)

One idea about the origins of evil is the story of Adam and Eve from the Bible. God put Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and said that the only thing they could not do was eat the fruit from the tree in the centre. Later the snake tempted and convinced Eve to take the apple. She did and then it passed to Adam and the two gained knowledge and realising they were naked made clothes for themselves. So the origin of evil is temptation. This story also explains free will but for free will to exist we need evil. God realises what they have done and Adam is forced to work for food and Eve will be in pain at child birth. The snake must stay on its stomach for the rest of its life.

Commentary

This answer not only gives the central points of the Fall story but it also explains the meaning as well. Level 6.

(6 marks)

- (b) Explain **two** arguments that try to justify why evil still exists. (6 marks)

Evil still exists because:

1. It is needed for us to have free will such as in the story of Adam and Eve. We need to be able to make our own independent choices and for this there needs to be an opposite to good. We need contrast so not everything is the same. Without free will humans would not be special.

2. Evil leads to suffering but suffering in the right amounts may be seen as good. This is because through suffering we can gain experiences. This can help us to grow and develop into better and wiser people. We understand more and can show knowledge and compassion to others who are suffering.

Commentary

There are two valid points made and developed but neither is so fully expressed that it could be awarded full marks. The overall criterion reached is "detailed answer with some development" i.e. level 5.

(5 marks)

- (c) 'God cannot be loving since he allows so many evil things to happen.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some people may agree with the view that we shouldn't have to put up with evil. If God was all-loving then God should get rid of all evil and allow us to live good, long and happy lives. Evil can lead to events such as murder and if God really loved his people he would stop them from dying. Also God allows natural disasters to happen showing he isn't loving allowing them to destroy God's creation.

Others disagree because of free will. God gave us the great gift of free will, the ability to choose and have our own independent decisions. For this to happen though we need evil for contrast and choice. It is because God loves us that we have evil. Also suffering can help us gain experiences and grow into better people.

I believe that God does love us even though there is evil because we need it for free will and to grow emotionally.

Commentary

This response is well argued from two different viewpoints. The candidate knows the relevant material and expresses it well. Level 6.

(6 marks)

- (d) 'Suffering brings out the best in people.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious teachings in your answer. (6 marks)

Some people will agree because it brings us together in times of need. Suffering lets us gain more experiences and grow into better people morally. Emotions such as compassion can be drawn out and we can relate to others who are suffering making us better people. Others disagree because they believe we shouldn't have to suffer whether it makes us a better or worse person. They believe the only emotions it brings out are pain, sadness and fear. It can not possibly be doing anything good for us. Suffering if anything can only make us worse people.

I am unsure because it a lot of ways it draws us together but it can also lead people to do very bad things.

Commentary

While this answer contains two different viewpoints and it is well developed, there is no religious content so it cannot achieve above Level 3.

(3 marks)

Script 2

PART A

A1 The Compatibility of Science and Religion

- (a) What is evolution? (2 marks)

*Evolution is something that has evolved through something in a period of time.
Something that has been formed maybe through something else.*

Commentary

The candidate does not explain what evolution is, simply repeats the word “evolved”.
The second sentence is too vague to be credited.

(0 marks)

- (b) Describe **one** story that deals with the creation of the world. (4 marks)

One story is the William Paley story. People believe that if it took someone with a great mind to create a small magnificent watch then someone greater than ours had to be the creator of earth. This person must be God.

Commentary

It is questionable if anything should have been awarded to this response, though the candidate does make the link to creation which just about allows it to fit into the question.

(1 mark)

- (c) ‘God could not have made the world as science proves that everything was made by the Big Bang.’

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some people believe that the world was created by the Big Bang. Therefore they must believe that when the big bang happened all the particles must have come together and formed the world.

Others believe that this is not true and that it took somebody with a great detailed mind to design and create this world.

I believe that God did create the world and it didn't evolve through one big bang because the world is so detailed and this could not have formed just from an explosion.

Commentary

There are several simple reasons given in this answer, but none of them have any depth so it cannot be awarded above Level 3.

(3 marks)

A2 The Characteristics of God

- (a) Explain briefly how the child in the drawing shows belief in a personal God. (3 marks)

The child in the drawing shows belief in a personal God as he is crying for his God to help him. This child believes that when in trouble or pain because God loves him God will then help him.

Commentary

This answer shows sound knowledge even though the expression is a little simple. There is enough here for Level 3.

(3 marks)

- (b) 'God does not care about people who suffer.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

I believe that this statement is true because if God did care about people suffering then he wouldn't let them suffer in the first place. This then questions God as is he all loving.

Commentary

There are two simple points made in this answer, fulfilling the Level 2 criterion.

(2 marks)

- (c) Explain how the idea that God is in many forms might help believers. (4 marks)

This idea may help believers as these believers haven't got a perfect image of how God looks. Many believers may have different opinions and different ideas of how there God is and looks. So God in many forms is helpful to accept different opinions of people. To show different characteristics.

Commentary

There is a lot of ambiguity and confusion in this answer but there is enough valid material to fit into the criterion "something relevant or worthy of credit".

(1 mark)

- (d) 'It is wrong to use the 'he' word about God.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

I believe that the word 'he' is wrong to refer to God as. This is because calling God 'he' puts a masculine way on God. As it can not be proven the sex of God.

Commentary

Again, two simple points are made to gain level 2.

(2 marks)

A3 The Afterlife

- (a) What is reincarnation? (2 marks)

Reincarnation is when you die you come back in a different body no perfect you life from the past. To out do it. You can get reincarnated as many times as you need to, to perfect it.

Commentary

This answer gives a developed idea of reincarnation. Whether it is read as two simple points or one developed point, the response gains Level 2.

(2 marks)

- (b) Explain **two** arguments that could be used against the idea of eternal life. (4 marks)

1. One argument may be that if we had eternal life then we would no longer be limited as we are. God is the only unlimited person.

2. Another argument may be that if we had eternal life there would be no need in reincarnation and resurrection as we would not die. No evidence.

Commentary

The second point made is invalid for the question. The first point is superficial rather than developed but the candidate does include the point that there is no evidence so this enables the candidate to gain 2 marks.

(2 marks)

- (c) 'People are only good in this life because they fear the afterlife.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some people may only be good because they fear the afterlife as they do not want to go to hell. Also that no-one knows what happens in afterlife and what is going to happen to them.

However some people might just want to be good to follow the example of Jesus as he would have wanted them to.

I agree that people are only good because they fear afterlife because no-one wants to go to hell and also some people use afterlife as a security blanket.

Commentary

This answer contains clear reference to religion and has two developed reasons so it gains Level 4.

(4 marks)

A4 Revelation and Enlightenment

- (a) How does worship help believers to make contact with God? (2 marks)

By worship people believe they are giving everything back to there God and they are taking respect of him or her.

Worship also helps them as they believe God will have a better image of them.

Commentary

While there is a clumsiness of expression in this response, there is sufficient material to reach level 2.

(2 marks)

- (b) Explain briefly why some believers say that God speaks through nature. (3 marks)

Some believers say God speaks through his nature by the way things are created. It's like when artists express there feelings through their art. This helps them get a better image of God and try to grasp on what he has done and how he has created great things.

Commentary

Again the expression is not refined, but the ideas expressed show sound knowledge so the answer gains Level 3.

(3 marks)

- (c) 'There is no such thing as a religious revelation.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some people believe that there is no such thing as religious revelation. This maybe because they haven't experienced a religious revelation or they just don't believe religious revelations.

Others may say that you can't believe or thing there is a religious revelation if you have not experienced it. Some people need evidence to believe things that others say.

I believe that there is such things as religious revelation however I would have to have the experience of one to powerfully believe.

Commentary

There is a lack of depth in the points made so this response only meets the criterion "two simple points". Level 2.

(2 marks)

PART B

B6 The Problem of Evil

- (a) Explain some ideas about the origins of evil. (6 marks)

Some ideas about the origins of evil could be the Adam and Eve story. In this story Adam and Eve have been told not to do something. However evil tries to tempt them into doing this because he wants them to suffer. In the end the evil did tempt them and Adam and Eve had to suffer the consequences of listening to evil. In both the origin of evil stories both of them end up listening to the evil and having to suffer. Therefore you should think about the consequences that will happen after it before you do it.

Commentary

This was far too vague for 'clear knowledge and understanding' as there are few details from the story given. This answer is certainly better than level 2 so falls into the criterion "sound knowledge".

(3 marks)

- (b) Explain **two** arguments that try to justify why evil still exists. (6 marks)

One argument they tries to justify why evil still exists could be that with everything you do there is always consequences. Before doing something you should always think about what can happen after it and what consequences are you going to have to deal with and suffer from. Some choices may not have consequences however most of them have because they want you to suffer which is evil. This is evil because suffering is evil whether it is physically or mentally.

Another argument they tries to justify why evil still exists is that by evil you are meant to learn from your mistakes. Sometimes evil can be helpful as you then learn and know what not to do and what you can do again. Also when someone tells you not to do something you automatically want to do it. Which then gets you in to trouble or may get you hurt.

Evil is just to help you and there for you to learn from your mistakes.

Commentary

There is some clear knowledge and understanding in each of the arguments presented, though there is room for a lot more development of both ideas. There is enough to merit Level 4.

(4 marks)

- (c) 'God cannot be loving since he allows so many evil things to happen.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some say that God cannot be all-loving if he lets so much suffering and evil happen in the world. This is because if God cared for us he wouldn't let us suffer in pain or be in pain for a certain time period. Also he wouldn't let us suffer by people dying are close loved ones.

However if God didn't let us suffer then we would not then be limited and things would not be the same. It's the way of life that he has to let us suffer and can't interfere in what is happening. God loves us all equally and would help us not suffer if we didn't

need to be limited.

I believe that God is all-loving even though he doesn't stop all the evil and suffering in the world. I think that if we was no longer limited God would help us as he does love us but God cannot interfere with the way of life.

Commentary

There is religious content in the response and there is development in the points made but there is a lack of real insight to enable the answer to be awarded level 5. Level 4 response.

(4 marks)

- (d) 'Suffering brings out the best in people.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious teachings in your answer. (6 marks)

Some people may think and believe that suffering brings out the best in people. This might be because when people suffer or are upset people automatically comfort them and show a different caring side of them. This may show that if one person acts really mean towards people they will then stop this and show an emotional side towards the person suffering.

However when people are suffering or are dealing with suffering some people show no change in what type of person they are. Some people go nasty and say they don't believe the person or that maybe they think they just want sympathy.

I believe that some suffering does show the best in people as some people show there emotional side to other people that you don't expect. Its always nice to know that some people are different when you need them.

Commentary

There are two responses shown here but there is no religious content. This means that the candidate cannot achieve beyond level 3.

(3 marks)