

A cartoon illustration of a young girl with long brown hair, wearing a black school uniform with a white shirt and blue tie. She is smiling and gesturing with her right hand towards the text.

GCSE

Religious Education

How to help your child prepare for examinations



AQA Religious Studies Spec A

- What AQA says about the qualification:



Our GCSE covers a range of the major world religions, six contemporary ethical themes and two textual studies, ensuring you and your students have a diverse choice of intriguing subjects to explore.

Students will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards religious issues.

Students will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. They will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills. All these skills will help prepare them for further study.

GCSE Specification

Component 1

The Study of religions; beliefs, teachings and practices

What's assessed:

Beliefs, teachings and practices of **two** from:

- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Judaism

Assessment:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 5 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))
- 50% of GCSE

Component 2

Thematic Studies

What's assessed:

Four religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes

- Theme A: Relationships and families.
- Theme B: Religion and life.
- Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict.
- Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment.

Assessment:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 5 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))
- 50% of GCSE

What do students need to know

The second religion in Component 1 is dependent upon teacher choice.

This year Mrs Jones has chosen Buddhism and Mr Smith has chosen Judaism. For each religion all students need to know:

- Key Beliefs
- Key Teachings
- Key practices

Religious Teachings



- In order to achieve a grade 5 or above in RE students must be able to use and explain religious teachings / quotes, beliefs or stories.
- Throughout the course students have been learning religious teachings.
- On the following slides there are some examples of the type of teachings and beliefs your child has been studying. There are similar sets for each of the themes and in some cases the same teaching will apply to more than one topic.

Some suggestions for Theme B Life questions:

Christianity

Teachings /Quotes

- “A good man cares for his animals”
- “Are not 5 sparrows sold for 2 pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God”
- “Rule over the fish of the sea the birds of the air”
- “I give you every seed bearing plant on the face of the whole earth. They shall be yours for food”
- “Everything which moves along the ground is yours to eat”

Beliefs

- “Scientists must abandon laboratories and factories of death” Pope
- Stewardship and Dominion

Buddhism

Teachings /Quotes

- “I undertake not to harm any living being”
- “All living things fear being put to death”
- “Let no one kill nor cause another to kill”

Beliefs

- Metta and Ahimsa
- Karma and Rebirth
- Right Livelihood

Some suggestions for Theme B Life

Christianity

Teachings

- “See that you don’t despise any of the little ones”
- “Do not kill”
- “I knew you before you were born”
- “Children are a gift from the Lord”

Beliefs

- The Sanctity of life
- God gives life and only God can take it away.
- Life begins at conception

Buddhism

Teachings

“I undertake not to harm any living being”

Beliefs

- Life begins before conception
- Karma and rebirth “Again becoming”
- Only humans can reach Enlightenment
- The Dali Lama “Always think compassion”

Stories

- Turtle story to show importance of life

Some suggestions for Theme B Life

Christianity

Teachings

- “Love your neighbour”
- “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, man nor woman, slave nor free man. You are all one in Christ”
- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”
- “When a foreigner resides among you do not mistreat him”

Beliefs

- Equality

Stories

- The moral of the Good Samaritan

Buddhism

Teachings

- “I undertake not to harm any living being”

Beliefs

- The Dalai Lama “Always think compassion”
- Metta and ahimsa
- Karma and rebirth
- Equality

Some suggestions for Theme D War questions

Christianity

Teachings

- “Do not kill”
- “Blessed are the peacemakers”
- “Love thy enemy”
- Rouse the soldiers prepare for battle”

Beliefs

- The sanctity of life
- The Just war rules
- The Holy war rules

Buddhism

Teachings

- “I undertake not to harm any living being”

Beliefs

- Metta and Ahimsa
- Ideas about karma and rebirth

Stories

The turtle story to show importance of life

How should teachings be used?

- Ideally students should be able to quote the teachings directly.

‘Christians believe this because in the Bible it says “.....”’

- They can use part quotes

Students can also paraphrase those ones which they cannot recall completely.

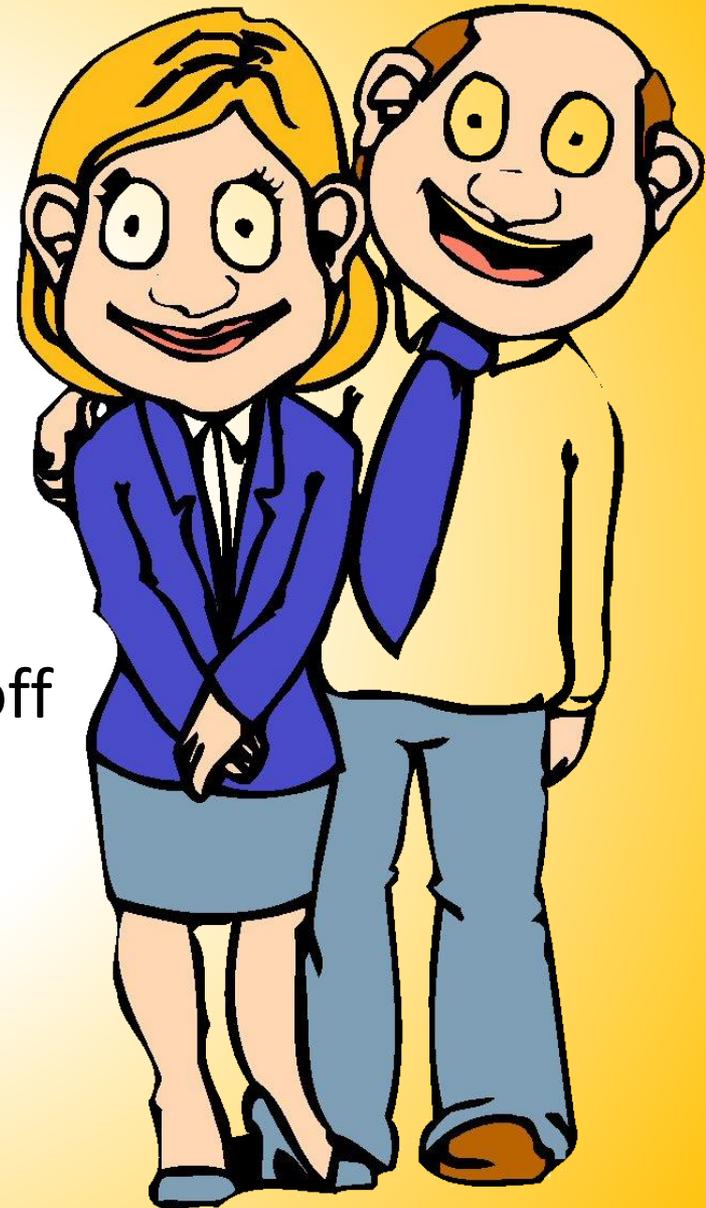
- There is no negative marking so best to have a go
- Whichever way they choose to use this evidence it is vitally important that they EXPLAIN the meaning.

‘This quote shows that....’



How can parents help?

- Be aware that your child needs to learn religious teachings
- Test your child on the teachings
- Encourage your child to write out the teachings on memo pads etc.
- Help your child to learn the teaching off by heart then discuss what it means.
- Discuss the implications of the teachings for modern day believers.



Ways to revise: Months before



- Begin to create a set of notes/pictures for each topic on your checklist.
- Use these notes to revise one key topic per night.
 - Attend any after school/ revision sessions.
 - Start to complete practice exam questions-these can be marked by your teacher and you can receive comments about how to improve.

Ways to revise: Weeks before



- Continue to attend lessons in school.
- Ensure you have exercise books from all completed units to assist with your revision.
- Attend after school revision sessions.
- Ensure you have all revision guides and exam practice booklets.
- Each time you revise a topic and try to complete an example question.

Ways to revise: *Days* before



- Continue to attend lessons in school.
- Complete a checklist of topics to identify any areas where you feel less confident-focus on these.
- See staff to discuss any areas where you have queries or feel unsure.

Ways to revise: On the day

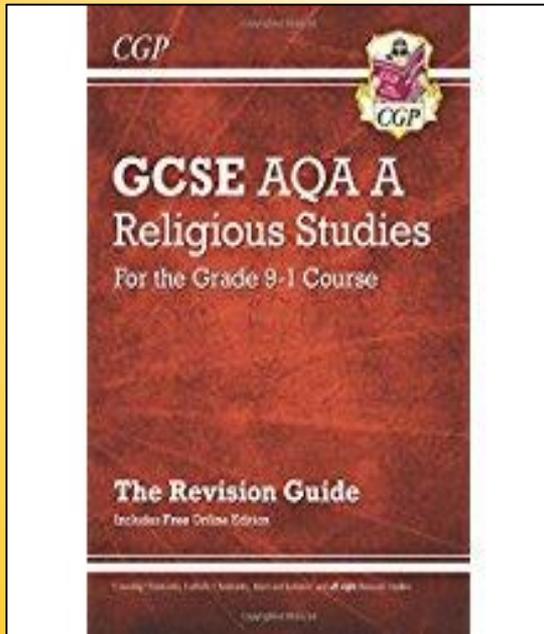


- Make sure you get a good night's sleep the night before.
- Ensure you have a healthy breakfast/lunch before the exam.
 - Attend 'the warm up session.'
 - Read through notes.
- Make sure you are clear about which questions to answer in the exam.
 - Try not to panic-you will have done the preparation, you just need to remain as calm as possible so you can focus completely on what the questions are asking you to do.

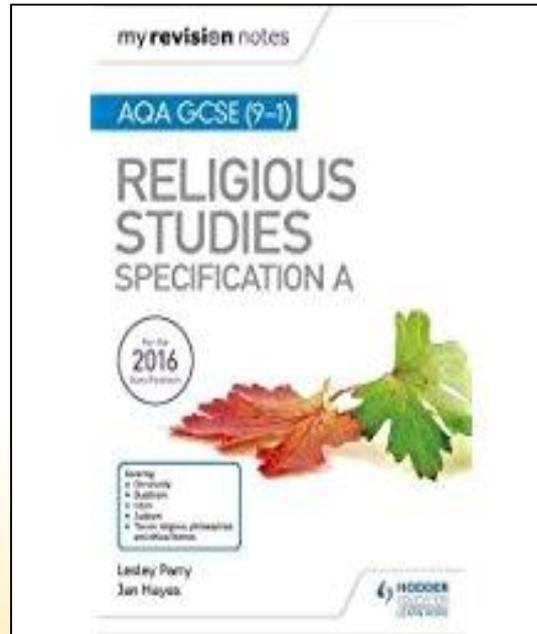
Resources

More information and specimen papers are available at:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062/assessment-resources>

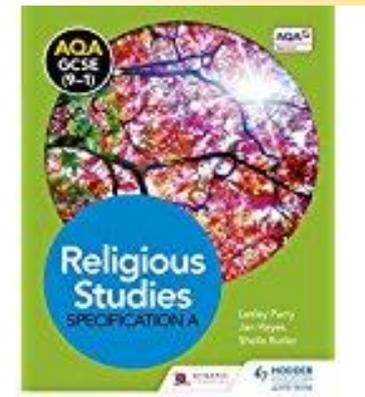


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Textbook