

Candidate Style Answers

GCSE Religious Studies A

OCR GCSE in Religious Studies: J620

Unit: B572 (Christianity)

These candidate style answers are designed to accompany the OCR GCSE Religious Studies A specification for teaching from September 2009.

GCSE Religious Studies A

J620 B572 Christianity 2 (Worship, Community and Family, Sacred Writings)

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCSE specifications and to bridge the gap between new specification release and availability of exemplar candidate work.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, with the support of the Qualifications Manager, to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. The candidate style answers are not written in a way that is intended to replicate student work but to demonstrate what a “good” or “excellent” response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

As these responses have not been through full moderation and do not replicate student work, they have not been graded and are instead, banded “medium” or “high” to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

| 1e) ‘Reading the Bible is the most important part of a Christian’s religious life.’ Discuss this statement. You must refer to different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12) | |
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| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiners commentary</i> |
| <p><i>Deciding whether or not Bible reading is the most important part of a Christian’s religious life is important for deciding how Christians worship. Do they read the Bible every day or may they prefer other devotions, such as rosary or meditation. There is also the question of whether or not religious services should consist mainly of Bible readings and preaching, as some Protestant services are, or whether Bible readings should be a component of a larger service, like the Catholic mass.</i></p> <p><i>Supporters of the view that Bible reading is the most important Christian religious act might argue that Christianity is founded on the Bible,</i></p> | <p>High Level Response</p> <p>The candidate has brought out the significance of the issue for religious life. He/she has drawn out its importance for private and shared devotion and linked the issue to existing differences of opinion and practice in Christianity between Catholic and Protestant traditions about the ways to worship. Mention of rosary and meditation introduces some appropriate religious vocabulary that can be shown to be relevant to this discussion. The candidate has quickly made reference to Christianity. This meets one of the examiners’ requirements.</p> |

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| <p><i>particularly the New Testament, which contains the apostolic testimony to Jesus' life and significance. This is the basis of Christian faith. It is like the root of the tree, without which the tree falls and dies. Reading it is better than listening, they argue, because in reading you can pause and reflect and even meditate. Hence, they believe that of the many parts of a Christian life, reading the Bible is the most important.</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, the Bible is the source from which all Christian doctrines arise. How can we understand these doctrines unless we go back to the source from which they come and carefully read the story? Again, it is going back to the roots of the faith. So Bible reading is the foundation of Christian life.</i></p> <p><i>However, some might argue that many Christians are or have been unable to read. Are these people to be disadvantaged by God because of a defective education? In Jewish and Greek society of Jesus' time women were not educated, so most of his female followers in the early church could not have read his story. Does this mean that they were second class Christians? Surely not! Their inability to read did not mean that they could not listen to the story and respond with faith and love, so Bible reading is not the most important religious act.</i></p> <p><i>Some Christians today have no access to a Bible, as they live in societies that prevent them from getting one. Jesus taught that love was the most important thing. Surely, this means that Bible reading is not necessary for everyone or the most important Christian religious act. This, I think, shows the limitations and weaknesses of the statement that Bible reading is the most important Christian act.</i></p> <p><i>I believe that we need not be too rigid about these matters. Knowing the Bible story and thinking about it is at the</i></p> | <p>The second paragraph addresses the point with clear references to Christianity. Note that the candidate keeps the issue in mind responding to it. The point is backed up by arguments and an effective use of a piece of imagery, the idea of the roots of the tree. Note apostolic testimony is an item of religious vocabulary.</p> <p>The argument in favour of the view continues and is developed into a discussion of the relationship between Christian doctrines and the Bible. Note that the candidate has shown knowledge of specialist vocabulary, the term doctrine. Again, the candidate keeps the focus of the response on the issue.</p> <p>Another viewpoint is offered in paragraph four and the candidate hits a key point here. By making reference to the viewpoint that it is love that matters more than anything in the Christian life, and that making reading the most important element in Christianity excludes many good, but disadvantaged people.</p> <p>The argument is further developed applied to modern times referring to the inaccessibility of the Bible to some Christians. This constitutes good development of a point. The last line links up to the final paragraph, showing that the weight of the case is against the question. It is the beginning of a personal view.</p> <p>The candidate concludes with a personal viewpoint. It is a measured response showing awareness that there are individual differences within Christianity. The candidate has followed clear path throughout the response, selecting relevant material and developing it. His/her final response is thoughtful and shows awareness of the complexity of the issue. Note that he/she finishes with a clear statement of the conclusion of the argument.</p> <p>The response is well-structured throughout and ideas are in logical order.</p> <p>Written communication is good</p> |
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heart of Christian living but this can be done as much by listening as by reading. Individuals differ in the way that they approach God. For some Bible reading may be most important, but others may prefer to meditate, say the rosary, etc. Rosary is a reflection on the Bible story, and much Christian meditation is focussed on New Testament material. Thus, while I agree that the Bible is essential for Christianity, I do not agree that reading it is the most important part of a Christian life.

| 1e) 'Reading the Bible is the most important part of a Christian's religious life.' Discuss this statement. You must refer to different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12) | |
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| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiners commentary</i> |
| <p><i>The Bible is very important to Christians because they believe that it is the word of God. When they read it they believe that God is speaking to them through the Bible writer. This means that they read it carefully and try to find it's true meaning.</i></p> <p><i>They beleive that Christian teachings come from the Bible, so they want to read it to deepen their knowledge of these teachings. For example, the Eucharistic ceremony is founded on the events of the last supper, which are recorded in the Bible, so the Bible must be very important to Christians.</i></p> <p><i>When Christians gather together at church to read the Bible they are listening to God's word and using it as a stimulus for their prayer. Many services are made up of Bible readings, a sermon based on the Bible and pslams which come from the Bible. Monks use all the pslams form the Bible every week in their liturgy, so it is very important to them.</i></p> <p><i>Christians can read the Bible as part of their private devotions. This makes it very important to them. They can turn to it in time of need. Reading it is a great stimulus for prayer. For example, reading about Christ's passion inspires us to praise and thank him</i></p> <p><i>However, some people might think that working for charity is more important than Bible reading. They say that the Good Samaritan did not read the Bible to the injured man on the roadside, but helped him as much as he could. So charity is far more important than Bible reading.</i></p> <p><i>My own view is that the Bible is very</i></p> | <p>Medium Level Response</p> <p>The candidate has selected a significant amount of entirely relevant material and made an attempt to develop it. This is a medium level response towards the upper end of the band.</p> <p>In the first paragraph the candidate quickly makes reference to Christianity. This satisfies one of the examiners' requirements.</p> <p>The second paragraph makes a justified point about Christian teachings, but it does not develop it which limits the argument. The information about the Eucharistic ceremony is correct, but it does not justify the point that is under discussion, that reading the Bible is the most important part of a Christian's religious life.</p> <p>The third paragraph makes a worthwhile point that the Bible is the basis of many religious services, so it is clearly at the heart of the shared worship which is essential to Christian life. However, only his importance of the Bible is being stated, not that it is the most important part of religious life. The candidate's technique is to amass several reasons for the Bible being important, but he/she does not make a totally convincing case in response to the issue in the stimulus.</p> <p>The fourth paragraph emphasises that the Bible has a widespread role in Christian life, showing that it is important for private as well as public prayer, but nothing is a said about whether it is the most important part of the Christians religions life.</p> <p>Is the view that Charitable acts are more important is a credible alternative point of view and it is given solid backing from the bible itself.</p> <p>The candidate now offers a clearly identified personal response. He/she supports their view with a credible and reasonably well justified argument which demonstrates the importance of the Bible to Christians. He/she ensures that</p> |

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| <p><i>important to Christians and that reading it is the most important thing that Christians can do in their religious life. I believe this because it is the Bible that inspires us to do works of charity and forms the bases of so many religious services. Many of our prayers come from the Bible, eg, the Lord's prayer.</i></p> <p><i>How could we know the story of Jesus, if it were not for its being written in the Bible? As he is the founder of Christianity the Bible is therefore vitally important for Christian faith. Reading his story is at the heart of Christian life, so reading the Bible is the most important part of a Christian's religious life.</i></p> | <p>the argument addresses the question of why reading the Bible is most important. The candidate draws on a range of valid ideas to support their case.</p> <p>The response demonstrates a good structure of argument and the views are in a logical order. However there is little use of specialist vocabulary and the development of the arguments is not sufficient for the higher level. The reference to Christianity is sustained throughout which is to be commended.</p> <p>There are some elementary spelling errors, spelling errors to be found but overall the written communication is satisfactory</p> |
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