

Do you need belief in God to be good?

This unit will help you to consider this important question that could be part of any exam board's GCSE Religious Studies specification. The activities will help you to think critically and creatively about whether belief in God is necessary to live a morally good life.

All GCSE Religious Studies courses involve study of Christianity, so the activities are based on comparing Christian perspectives with those of non-religious people. We strongly encourage you to think about how perspectives from the other world religion you are studying alongside Christianity (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism) fit in with these activities, as you go along.

Please see the final page of this document, where you can link to relevant pages of your exam board's website and check what's on the specification for your course. It may also be helpful to look at past papers to get an idea of what sorts of questions may come up.

Doubt and Faith



Image: *Doubt – Troubled Waters*, Sammy & Amara, Stratford Girl's Grammar School, Winner of NATRE Art in Heaven competition, 2018

What do you think this image is saying? Do you agree?

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You can read what the artists said about their artwork here:
<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-gallery/archive/2018/doubt-troubled-waters/>



Critical Thinking Activity: To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Thinking about these statements will help you to develop responses to discussion/evaluation questions. Consider each statement in turn and circle the number that best represents the extent to which you agree or disagree. If you can, discuss your answers online or over the telephone with some of your classmates. If this isn't possible, perhaps you could discuss these with someone else in your household. Has your opinion changed as a result of your discussions? Go back through the sheet and circle the numbers again, this time using a different colour.

	Agree ←————→ Disagree									
1. There are no good reasons for believing in God.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. God is a guiding power.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. 'God' is an out-of-date idea and a dying word.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. We have a sense for God deep inside our minds.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. Atheists are just as moral as believers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. Society is less moral than it used to be.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7. Believing in God gives people a stronger sense of right and wrong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. Human beings created God. We made up the whole idea ourselves.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. Ultimately, all morals come from God.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Deciding what's right and wrong:

How do people make moral decisions?

Holy books, the teachings of religious leaders, and often advice of people in their religious communities are some of the sources of help and advice that religious people use to make moral decisions. But, what about people who do not follow a religion? Watch this clip, *What makes something right or wrong?* from the Understanding Humanism website:

<https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/films/what-makes-something-right-or-wrong/>



Now add as many details to the Venn diagram below. The circle on the right is for world religion you are studying alongside Christianity.

Here are some words to start you off:

Bible

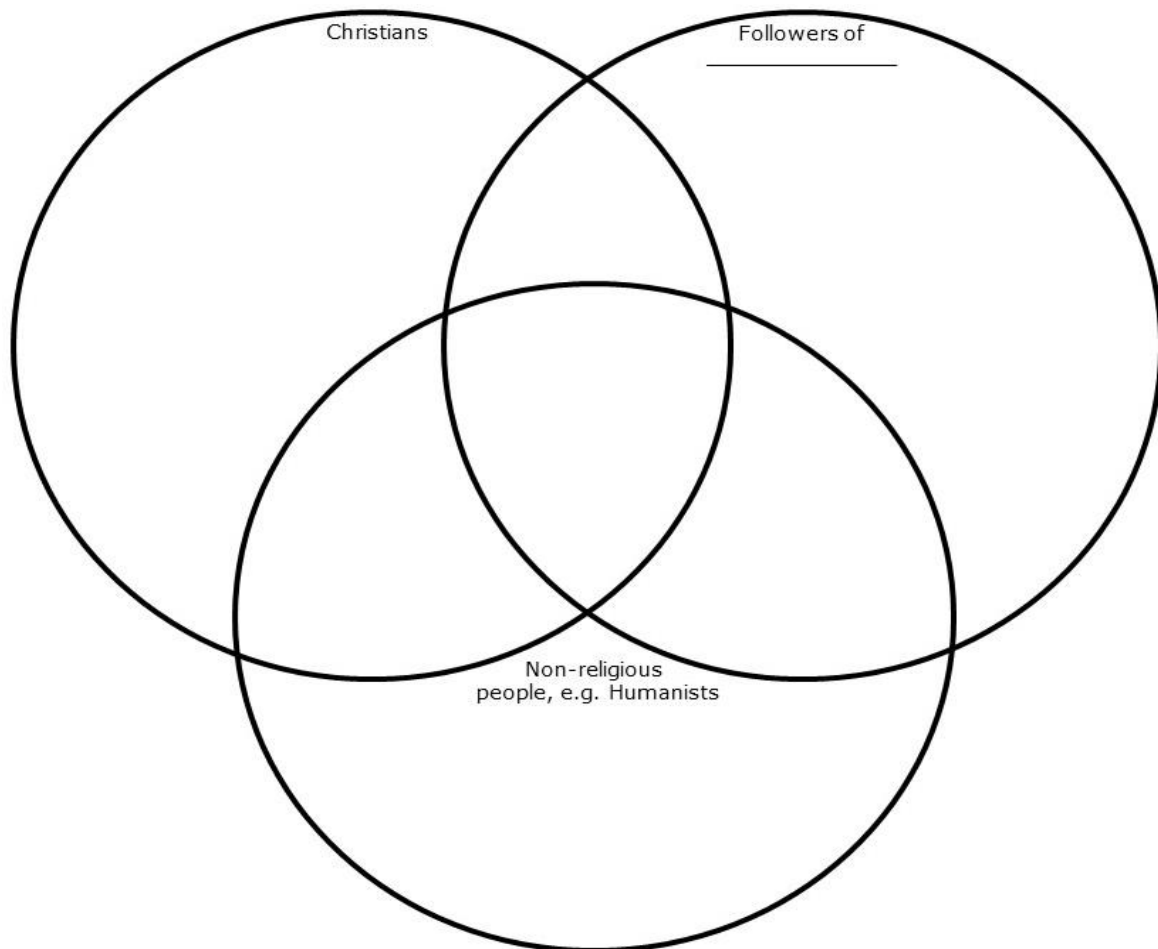
Law

Conscience

Priest

Situation

How do people make moral decision?



Thinking about God and morality

Write comments in the boxes to help you explore what the statement might mean.

'Without God, anything is allowable.'

1. What I think this means is...

2. If there's no God, human beings would be free from...

3. Some people agree with the quote because...

4. Some people disagree with the quote because...

5. If God is a law-giver, then he would...

6. If there's no 'heavenly policeman' then...

7. What I think about the quote is...

8. An argument that supports this view is...

9. Without any moral rules, humanity would...

I also want to say...

Complete the sheet in a group of four, passing it on after you have filled in each section.

Evaluation Practice

Complete the activity on the previous page before trying this evaluation question. Think about what your main arguments are going to be and what evidence or sources of wisdom you will use to back them up. Remember to say in your answer how strong or weak you think arguments are, giving reasons for this.

'Without God, anything is allowable.'

Discuss/evaluate.

(For the exact wording your exam board uses to ask you evaluation questions, please see the following page).

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Evaluation question types for the different exam boards

Different exam boards have different ways of asking evaluation questions. When you see the 'evaluation practice' activities in the home learning materials, we will give you a statement to evaluate, and follow it with 'Discuss/evaluate'. Look up your exam board on the grid below to remind yourself of the exact wording you will see on the exam paper for an evaluation question, and how many marks you can earn from them.

AQA – 12 marks Evaluate this statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• refer to the teaching of the religion in question• give reasoned arguments to support the statement• give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view• reach a justified conclusion.	Eduqas and WJEC – 15 marks Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. Refer to religion and belief.
OCR – 15 marks Discuss this statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within the religion in question• Refer to sources of wisdom and authority.	Pearson Edexcel – 15 marks Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• refer to teachings of the religions in question• refer to different religious points of view• reach a justified conclusion.

BBC Bitesize GCSE Religious Studies Resources

The BBC Bitesize website has GCSE Religious Studies resources for each of the exam boards. You will find basic information relating to the topics that you need to learn about as well as useful videos and quizzes to test your knowledge and understanding. You can find these by following the link or QR code below:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zb48q6f>



GCSE Religious Studies web pages for Exam Boards

The GCSE lessons to take away from RE Today have been designed to help with all the GCSE specifications available, whatever exam board you use at your school.

It is very important, especially when working at home, that you know which exam board and specification you are following. If you're not sure, have a look at your school's website or contact your teacher online, e.g. by email.

The exam boards' websites have detailed information about the course you are studying. They also have past exam papers and mark schemes. Some of them have free learning resources for you to download and use as well. Here are the links and QR codes that will take you directly to the GCSE Religious Studies pages for each of the exam boards.

AQA		https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062
Eduqas		https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies/gcse/
OCR		https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/religious-studies-j625-j125-from-2016/
Pearson Edexcel	 	Specification A (Faith in Practice in the 21 st Century): https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/religious-studies-a-2016.html Specification B (Beliefs in Action) https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/religious-studies-b-2016.html
WJEC (Wales)		https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies/r-religious-studies-gcse-2017/