4.5 Core Ideas and Principles of Anarchism: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Write full sentences for questions worth 4 marks or more.

1 Analyse two anarchist objections to the state, using the shared core principles of anarchism rather than strand-specific claims.

(Total for Question 1 is 10 marks)

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2 Evaluate the extent to which anarchists agree that the state is unnecessary, using shared core principles of anarchism and avoiding strand-specific detailed theorists.

(Total for Question 2 is 24 marks)

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Mark scheme · 4.5 Core Ideas and Principles of Anarchism: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 1 Basic identification of one or two objections with limited development and little analysis, relying on general assertion rather than explanation. **1-3**

Level 2 Clear identification and explanation of two relevant objections, with some analysis of how each objection follows from anarchist principles, though development may be uneven. **4-7**

Level 3 Detailed analysis of two distinct anarchist objections, showing how each objection derives logically from anarchist core principles and offering linked reasoning or example to develop the analysis fully. **8-10**

Indicative content:

- Objection 1, coercive monopoly of force: the state centralises the legitimate use of force, enabling repression and undermining individual autonomy; analyse how this follows from anarchism's rejection of authority and optimistic view of cooperative human nature, showing that coercion is unnecessary and harmful.
- Development 1: show that concentration of force creates asymmetries that corrupt institutions and enable elite domination, and give a generic example such as policing or conscription to illustrate potential abuse without naming specific thinkers.
- Objection 2, institutionalised hierarchy and inequality: the state perpetuates social hierarchies and protects privilege, preventing horizontal self-organisation; link to anarchist emphasis on organisation without authority and the belief that order can emerge from below.
- Development 2: analyse how state bureaucracy and legal structures can entrench class or status differences, blocking voluntary cooperative forms, and explain why anarchists see decentralised organisation as both more just and more effective.
- Synthesis: compare the two objections to show they are complementary rather than identical, one emphasising coercion and the other emphasising structural inequality, and explain how both support the anarchist case against the state.

Question 2

Level 0 No relevant content. **0**

Level 1 Basic, limited knowledge of anarchist core principles with simple or undeveloped assertions about the state's necessity. Little evaluation or reasoning. **1-6**

Level 2 Clear, accurate knowledge of anarchist core principles and coherent argumentation. Some analysis and evaluation of the claim that the state is unnecessary, but the response may be one-sided or lack detailed consideration of challenges. **7-12**

Level 3 Detailed, accurate knowledge deployed with sustained analysis and evaluation. The argument engages with strengths and weaknesses of the anarchist position, uses well-chosen examples, and reaches a reasoned judgement. **13-18**

Level 4 Sophisticated, wide-ranging knowledge and evaluation linking anarchist core principles to nuanced analysis. The response weighs agreement and disagreement among anarchists, considers practical and theoretical challenges, and reaches a well-substantiated, balanced judgement on the extent of agreement that the state is unnecessary. **19-24**

Indicative content:

- Shared anarchist claim that the state is unnecessary: the state is a coercive institution that concentrates power, undermines freedom and social equality, and therefore can and should be replaced by voluntary, decentralised forms of organisation.
- Support from core principles: rejection of authority implies the state is illegitimate; optimistic view of human nature implies people can cooperate voluntarily; belief in spontaneous order suggests complex coordination can emerge from below without central command; distinction of authority versus organisation supports acceptance of non-hierarchical institutions rather than the state.
- Evidence and analysis in favour: examples of mutual aid, cooperative economic arrangements and local assemblies show non-state coordination in practice; decentralised networks can be resilient and empower participants rather than subjecting them to top-down rule.
- Limits and counterarguments: practical concerns about scaling voluntary institutions to manage large infrastructures, health systems and national defence; risk that informal hierarchies or private concentrations of power could replace the state; coordination problems in plural, large-scale societies where unanimous voluntary agreement is difficult.
- Internal disagreements and qualifications among anarchists: while the pack avoids strand detail, note that some anarchists emphasise near-total abolition of state structures whereas others accept transitional federations or minimal coordinating bodies, so 'unnecessary' can be interpreted differently across the tradition.
- Evaluation of the claim's plausibility: weigh normative appeal and theoretical coherence against empirical feasibility concerns. Consider whether the state causes the problems anarchists target or whether it sometimes mitigates them, for example by providing universal public goods that voluntary institutions struggle to deliver reliably.
- Possible conclusion lines: a balanced judgement might be that anarchists coherently argue the state is unnecessary in principle and that many functions could be organised voluntarily, but significant practical barriers and risks of new forms of domination mean the claim is persuasive as a critique and aspiration rather than an immediately practical blueprint for large, complex societies.
- Responses that reach either a strong endorsement or a cautious rejection of the claim can be credited if they demonstrate deep knowledge of core principles, clear analysis and a concluding judgement supported by evidence and reasoning.

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