7.12 Solutions to the Problem of Evil and Suffering: Test Pack

AQA 8062 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Which one of the following best defines the free will defence as a religious response to the problem of evil and suffering in Theme C?

- ☐ A. God directly causes all suffering to test believers
- ☐ B. Evil exists because God lacks power to remove it
- ☐ C. God allows human beings genuine freedom, and some evil results from human choices
- ☐ D. Suffering is an illusion and does not really exist
- ☐ E. God punishes people with suffering to prove their guilt

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Give two brief reasons, from religious teaching, why some believers accept the free will defence as a solution to the problem of evil and suffering in Theme C.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Give three reasons why the existence of evil and suffering is sometimes used as an argument against belief in God.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

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4 Explain two aspects of the soul-making theodicy as a religious response that tries to justify suffering in Theme C.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 Explain two common criticisms of the free will defence as a complete answer to the problem of evil and suffering, in the Theme C context.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 7.12 Solutions to the Problem of Evil and Suffering: Test Pack

Question 1

selecting option C, God allows human freedom so some evil results from human choices, cao **B1**

Answer: C

Question 2

God values genuine moral choice so must allow humans to choose good or evil, oe **B1**

without free will acts of love and moral goodness would be meaningless, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. God allows choice so moral responsibility is real; love and genuine goodness require freedom.

Question 3

it seems hard to reconcile an all-loving God with the amount of suffering that exists in the world, oe **B1**

some suffering, such as that experienced by very young children, seems to serve no clear purpose, which challenges the idea of a good reason behind it, oe **B1**

if God is both all-powerful and all-loving, it is argued God should be able and willing to prevent suffering, so its continued existence is used to question either God's power or God's goodness, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. the amount of suffering is hard to reconcile with an all-loving God; some suffering seems purposeless; an all-powerful, all-loving God should be able and willing to prevent it.

Question 4

point 1: suffering is seen as an opportunity for moral and spiritual growth, enabling virtues like courage and compassion, oe **B1**

development 1: experiencing and overcoming hardship helps form character and moral maturity, oe **B1**

point 2: soul-making claims some kinds of moral goodness can only arise through facing challenges, oe **B1**

development 2: without difficulties believers could not develop empathy, patience or self-sacrifice, which are valuable goods, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. suffering permits moral growth and virtue formation; some goods like compassion require experiencing hardship.

Question 5

criticism 1: it struggles to explain natural evil such as earthquakes which are not obviously the result of human choice, oe **B1**

development 1: many theists try to extend free will ideas to moral laws of nature but critics say this is unconvincing, oe **B1**

criticism 2: it may not justify horrendous evils that seem disproportionate to individual freedom, oe **B1**

development 2: examples of extreme suffering raise the question whether free will requires allowing such severe harm, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. cannot easily explain natural evil; seems inadequate for horrendous suffering that seems disproportionate.

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