8.8 Religion and Terrorism: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8062 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Explain two contrasting understandings, within Islam, of the word jihad. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer.

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

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2 This question is about religious and non-religious perspectives on terrorism. It is the AQA-style 24-mark, five-part question: parts (a) to (d) are worth 12 marks; part (e) is the 12-mark evaluation.

(a) State one just war criterion that terrorism always fails to meet. **(1)**

(b) Give two reasons why mainstream religious leaders speak out against terrorism. **(2)**

(c) Explain two reasons why terrorism is considered by mainstream religious teaching to be a misuse of religion. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer. **(4)**

(d) Explain two contrasting views, religious and/or non-religious, about why terrorism happens. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority or another source in your answer. **(5)**

(e) Evaluate this statement: 'Religion is the main cause of terrorism.' In your answer you should: refer to religious teaching, refer to different points of view, reach a justified conclusion. **(12)**

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(Total for Question 2 is 24 marks)

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Mark scheme · 8.8 Religion and Terrorism: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

understanding 1: for most Muslims, most of the time, jihad primarily means the inner, spiritual struggle to resist temptation and live according to Allah's will, oe **B1**

development: this is sometimes called the 'greater jihad', reflecting a well-known hadith in which a returning fighter is told the struggle he now faces, against his own faults, is greater than the struggle he has just left, oe **B1**

understanding 2: a much narrower sense of jihad refers to a strictly limited, defensive armed struggle, historically permitted only under legitimate authority and subject to strict conditions such as not harming civilians, oe **B1**

development: this narrower sense draws on verses such as Qur'an 22:39, which permits fighting only in response to being wronged, oe **B1**

reference to a source of wisdom and authority made accurately, oe **B1**

Answer: Contrast: the primary 'greater jihad' meaning of inner spiritual struggle vs the narrow, strictly-conditioned sense of defensive armed struggle (Qur'an 22:39).

Question 2

(a) discrimination between combatants and civilians, or legitimate authority, oe **B1**

(a) Answer: E.g. discrimination between combatants and civilians, or legitimate authority.

(b) they want to make clear that their faith's teachings do not support the deliberate killing of innocent people, oe **B1**

(b) they want to protect their religious community from being wrongly associated with the actions of a small number of extremists, oe **B1**

(b) Answer: E.g. to make clear their faith rejects killing innocents; to protect their community from being wrongly associated with extremism.

(c) point 1: terrorism deliberately targets non-combatants, which mainstream religious teaching treats as a serious wrong rather than a legitimate act of faith, oe **B1**

(c) development: many Christians point to Jesus's summary of the law, to 'love your neighbour as yourself' (Matthew 22:39), as incompatible with deliberately harming uninvolved people, oe **B1**

(c) point 2: terrorism is carried out by groups without legitimate authority, which mainstream religious teaching treats as a further, separate reason it cannot be religiously justified, oe **B1**

(c) development: Islamic scholarship has widely taught that only a properly recognised authority may declare and conduct armed struggle, ruling out unauthorised violence carried out in religion's name, oe **B1**

(c) Answer: E.g. deliberately harming non-combatants (Matthew 22:39); acting without legitimate authority.

(d) view 1: some argue that terrorism is primarily driven by religious extremism, where a small minority twist or misread scripture to claim justification for violence, oe **B1**

(d) development: mainstream scholars in every tradition reject these readings, arguing they misuse texts such as the sanctity-of-life teaching in Qur'an 5:32 by ignoring their true meaning and context, oe **B1**

(d) view 2: many non-religious analysts argue that terrorism is caused mainly by political grievance, social exclusion or personal circumstances, with religion sometimes used afterwards as a justifying label rather than a true cause, oe **B1**

(d) development: on this view, addressing the underlying political or social causes matters more than any single religious explanation, oe **B1**

(d) reference to a source of wisdom and authority or another appropriate source made accurately, oe **B1**

(d) Answer: Contrast: religious-extremism-as-cause (with mainstream scholars rejecting the misreading of texts such as Qur'an 5:32) vs the view that political/social grievance is the real cause and religion is a justifying label.

(e) **L4** A well-argued, balanced answer that considers more than one point of view in a developed way, using accurate and detailed references to religious teaching and/or scripture to support each point, and reaches a clear, justified conclusion. **10-12**

(e) **L3** A clear and reasoned answer that considers more than one point of view, supported by relevant references to religious teaching and/or scripture, though the justification of the conclusion may be less developed. **7-9**

(e) **L2** A reasoned answer that considers at least one point of view, with some relevant supporting evidence, but with limited or no consideration of an alternative view. **4-6**

(e) **L1** One or more relevant points are made, but with little or no supporting evidence and no reasoned conclusion. **1-3**

(e) **L0** No relevant content. **0**

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(e) Indicative content:

- Agree: some argue that when a group explicitly claims a religious motivation, quotes religious texts and recruits using religious language, religion is functioning as the direct cause of that violence.
- Agree: some point out that religious identity can be used to divide 'us' from 'them' in ways that make violence against an out-group feel justified to those carrying it out, even where mainstream teaching in their own tradition rejects this.
- Disagree: mainstream religious scholarship in every tradition, Christian, Muslim and others, explicitly rejects using religion to justify violence against civilians, using core texts such as 'You shall not murder' (Exodus 20:13) and 'whoever kills a soul... it is as if he had slain mankind entirely' (Qur'an 5:32); on this view religion is being misused as a label, not genuinely causing the violence.
- Disagree: many analysts argue that political grievance, social exclusion, poverty or personal circumstances are the deeper causes, and that religious language is adopted afterwards to give the violence a claim to legitimacy it does not really have.
- Disagree: terrorism also occurs for entirely non-religious political or ideological reasons, showing that religion cannot be the single or main explanation for terrorism as a whole.
- Disagree: many Humanists argue that any belief system, religious or secular, can in principle be twisted to justify violence by those determined to commit it, so the underlying cause lies in the individuals and circumstances, not in religion itself.
- A middle position: religion can be one contributing factor among several, such as politics, identity and personal grievance, without being the single main cause in most real cases.
- A balanced answer might conclude that while religious language is often present in terrorist propaganda, mainstream religious teaching's clear rejection of such violence suggests the deeper causes lie elsewhere, and that the statement conflates the misuse of religious language with religion itself as a cause.

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