(e) ‘There is no need to punish, God will do it’

Do you agree? Give reasons or evidence for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view

**(F)or argument** - For believers this statement will be more applicable as they are more fearful of displeasing God. They may take punishment in the form of a guilty conscience or fear of divine retribution after this life. The punishment is of their own making.

**(A)gainst argument** -Effective punishment is necessary because without it society would not be a safe place to live. Without punishment people could murder and steal without fear. God does not seem to dish out punishment when and where it is needed to people who have at the very least disobeyed the Ten Commandments. If we wait for the Judgement Day to come for retribution the World will be a terrible place to live in the meantime. Punishment needs to be in this life and not the next.

**(R)eligious argument for** - Most Christians and Jews believe that at the end of life God will be the final judge and death is not the end. God’s punishment is far more powerful than anything humans can deliver. This life is a test of whether we go to heaven or hell and people will be punished for bad actions in this life for eternity. **Yom Kippur** is the most sacred day in the Jewish calender. It means Day of Atonement. During the ten days leading up to Yom Kippur, Jews have the chance to reflect and ask God’s forgiveness for their sins.

**(R)eligious argument against** - All religionstraditions agree punishment is necessary to protect society and uphold the Law but **forgiveness and reform** should be major principles.

**(R)eligious argument against** - Christian’s believe in free will and justice (punishment) must follow sin but Jesus taught the importance of forgiveness and not revenge. He also believed in reform trying to change people to do better.

**(R)eligious argument against** - Judaism prohibits revenge and justice (punishment) must be fair. Jews are taught to be forgiving but no one can forgive on someone else behalf.

**(M)y opinion** - I disagree with the statement. I believe that the law of the land must be followed or result in punishment otherwise society would collapse. I also believe that punishment should suit the severity of the crime but be fair. It should be based on allowing the possibility of reform so therefore could not include capital punishment. I believe that there is a need to carry out this punishment in this life and not leave it to God for the next to make this life as good as it can be.

**Remember this controversial statement has an opposite (reverse arguments)**

**and also could be used to answer a (c) question –**

(c)

‘There is no need to punish, God will do it’

Give two reasons why a religious believer might agree or disagree with this statement (4 marks)

* A Christian or Jew might agree because they would be fearful of displeasing God believing his punishment far more powerful than anything humans can deliver in the life after this. Their guilty conscience and fear of divine retribution in this life would be punishment e.g. Parable of Sheep and Goats
* A Christian might disagree because they believe punishment is necessary to protect society and uphold the law but they would need it to follow Jesus’ example and be carried out with forgiveness and not revenge and also include reform
* A Jew might disagree because although Judaism PROHIBITS revenge they believe in fair justice and punishment. Jews are taught to be forgiving but no one can forgive on someone else’s behalf.