These are definitions relevant to STATE topic AUTHORITY Power over others e.g. Law of land or sacred texts DUTY Something somebody is expected to do maybe because of their job or religious beliefs or conscience JUSTICE Where everyone has equal opportunities and human rights

**4. RELIGION and STATE - AUTHORITY**

Why should we obey authority? Why fight for human rights? Why do we punish people? Why do we kill people who kill people to show killing people is wrong? What happens when the Law and sacred texts disagree?

Example of an (a) type question - **DEFINITION**  Explain what religious believers mean by ……… Authority Duty Justice Human rights PunishmentPersonal conviction

Have a go to know you can define them without peeking

These are definitions relevant to STATE topic HUMAN RIGHTS Something a person is entitled to because they are human e.g. freedom or to choose their religion PERSONAL CONVICTION Your own strong beliefs and views PUNISHMENT To make someone suffer pain or loss for doing wrong e.g. jail is loss of freedom

EXAMINERS WANT TO SEE THESE IN YOUR ANSWERS

**(b)** Explain how religious believers might support others

* They might refer to religious teachings as guidance to live their lives e.g. The Golden Rule to treat others as you would wish to be treated and offer practical help such as charity work or community support for poor and homeless because it is their duty (applies all religions because Golden Rule is universal)
* Christian’s might follow Jesus’ example who taught ‘Love Thy Neighbour’ and be inspired by parables such as ‘The Good Samaritan’
* They might organise meetings and events between religious different groups i.e. **interfaith dialogue** to help build better relationships within communities and help support others in this way
* They might offer spiritual support rather than practical because all religions believe in the **power of prayer** so they might organise prayer groups to pray for God’s help

Look at how you can mix sections because interfaith dialogue is in the conflict section but also fits in here – mix it all up as long as it is relevant

**RELIGIOUS DUTIES which are important to believers** **(these are the \* three main duties of religious believers \*)**

* Duty to **LOVE GOD**
* Duty to **LOVE THE REST OF HUMANITY** i.e. your neighbour
* **DUTY TO THEMSELVES** because they are a part of creation and special and unique and God is in all of us

**JUDAISM** They must keep the 613 commandments in the Torah (the Ten Commandments are the first ten of these also) They must perform charitable acts and donate to charity **(TZEDEKAH)**

**CHRISTIANITY (you know this stuff it is basic) FIRST COMMANDMENT – LOVE THY GOD –** **how?** Worship him and follow the 10 commandments and sacred texts to live your life **SECOND COMMANDMENT – LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR (as yourself) – (is GOLDEN RULE** for Christianity) **- how?** Charity, campaigning for justice and good acts e.g. ‘Good Samaritan’ and wise use of talents

**ALL** QUESTIONS WANT FACTS especially **(d)**  **PUNISHMENT** – one in detail and one less so – you know why

**(e)** ‘The only duty I have is to look after myself’. Do you agree? Give reasons, showing more than one point of view and including religious beliefs. **F**or view general – if everybody took responsibility for themselves there would be no need to have to support others + we could work for the best lives for us + our family **A**gainst view general – selfishness is a problem of modern society. Making the world a better pace for everybody also makes it a better place for yourself + your children Religious fact – all religions have a Golden Rule to treat others as you would wish to be treated. **Your fundamental duty is to God, the rest of humanity and yourself.** Giving to the poor is an obligation in Judaism **‘tzedekah’**. Christians follow Jesus’ teachings e.g. Parable of Good Samaritan which shows love of one’s neighbour. Religious fact – a believer might partially agree because looking after themselves and their families is a duty. The Bible and Torah teach that we are created in God’s image and this makes us special. **We have been given free will to enjoy the World** and life cannot be treated badly – including our own. My opinion – what do you think?? Hard statement to totally agree with as it would make the World a very selfish place. Helping others enriches your own lives but people have to try and do the best they can to help themselves and not just sit back.

**JUDAISM**  Also believe in free will and that punishment must follow sin. **YOM KIPPUR** is the most sacred day in the Jewish calendar. During the 10 days beforehand, Jews have a chance to reflect and ask forgiveness for their sins. Also believe in Judgement Day at the end of life. Revenge is prohibited and justice must be fair

**CHRISTIANITY** Believe in free will which means you must take responsibility for your own actions and also believe that sin must be followed by punishment **AND** **Jesus taught that punishment must be accompanied with FORGIVENESS + THE CHANCE FOR REFORM (change for the better because offender sees error of ways)**. Believe in **DIVINE RETRIBUTION** i.e. that at the end of life God will be the final judge and his punishment will be the greatest. Jesus’ parable of sheep and goats’ – those who do good deeds go to heaven + those who do bad will go to hell.

**CAPITAL PUNISHMENT** It is when a person is put to death for committing a terrible crime like murder or rape and is sometimes called the death penalty. In the UK the death penalty was abolished in 1969 but it still happens in some countries including parts of the USA. Amnesty International is a non-religious charity that campaigns against it because it does not allow chance of reform. Arguments for it include that it is the ultimate deterrent and is a ‘life for a life’ and also it is less expensive than keeping people in prison their whole life. Arguments against include that there have been cases of the wrong person being convicted and therefore executed for a crime they did not commit, and the unfairness of death row where they may stay for years. Religions tend to have unclear views because of contradictions in sacred texts. Look at link: [CAPITAL PUNISHMENT NOTES – EVERY QUESTION TYPE (b) to (e)](http://mumshelpinghand.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CAPITAL-PUNISHMENT-NOTES-EVERY-QUESTION-TYPE-b-to-e.docx) (illustration of what is needed for different questions)

**JUDAISM**  Teaches taking a life kills more than one person as it also denies future generations but despite this modern Jews formally oppose death penalty as unjustified taking of life

**CHRISTIANITY** Old Testament states ‘an eye for an eye’ but Ten Commandments ‘You shall not kill’ and whereas Catholic Church has never officially condemned death penalty, the Quakers are a Christian organisation that actively campaigns against it Some Christians are against it because Jesus asked forgiveness for those who killed him on the cross but others might quote texts from the Bible that seem to support it ‘the murderer shall surely be put to death’

**SPECIAL CASE OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT Remember ‘sanctity of life’ is universal to all religions which goes against death penalty BUT ALSO IT LEAVES NO CHANCE FOR REFORM**

The aim of punishment is revenge

**(b)**Explain how having a religious belief might influence views on punishment (these **(b)‘s** are about **IMPACT OF FAITH** on life – must refer **mostly** to religious facts) **RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS** guide believers to love God by obeying his will e.g. Christians believe that punishment is justice for sin BUT Jesus taught it must be accompanied by forgiveness + chance to reform and may not therefore agree with the death penalty for this reason as there is no chance for reform

Most Christians and Jews believe in divine retribution i.e. that there will be a day of judgement at the end of life and God’s punishment will be greater than anything man can deliver if you have not carried out good duties

**(c)**

Give two reasons why a religious believer might agree or disagree with this statement (maybe 2 agree or 2 disagree or 1 of each)

* A religious believer might disagree because justice is not about ‘getting your own back’ but to protect society and act as a deterrent to others. Forgiveness is important to all religions
* A Christian might disagree because they favour reform as it follows Jesus example e.g. Quakers oppose death penalty for this reason as it does not give chance of reform
* A Jew might disagree as revenge is prohibited +justice must be fair + modern Jews oppose the death penalty as unjustified taking of life. Look at link: [PUNISHMENT NOTES – HIGHLIGHTING LINK BETWEEN (c) and (e) TYPE QUESTIONS](http://mumshelpinghand.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/PUNISHMENT-NOTES-%E2%80%93-HIGHLIGHTING-LINK-BETWEEN-c-and-e-TYPE-QUESTIONS.docx)

Sacred texts act as a guide

* On how to worship
* On how to live your life
* On special days of celebration and days of rest
* To important questions such as ‘what happens when we die?
* To medical issues, such as ‘should I have an abortion?’

They can be a source of hope and inspiration and offer comfort and support in difficult times

**SACRED TEXTS e.g. Bible and Torah** They are an important **source of authority** for many religious believers but how far should people follow authority of the written word? Some believers view every word as true and that the message is eternal and should be followed at all times without ever changing, whilst others interpret the texts themselves or follow others interpretations which they believe are relevant to more modern issues. Let us look at an example -

“I am a reform Jew and think the Torah was written by people who were inspired by God. I think it reflects the time it was written and so some of the teachings are not relevant to today and do not need to be followed” \*The Torah is sacred text of Judaism – it is considered the word of God and contains rules how Jews should lead their lives

“I am an Orthodox Jew and Believe that the Torah is the word of God as it was revealed by Moses. Yes, it was a long time ago but these laws are just as important now as they were then”

The Bible is my source of comfort and support. After my grandmother died I gained so much reading about Jesus’ suffering and the importance of faith



Let us talk a bit more about authority. Sometimes people abuse their authority over others. This can result in a **conflict between personal conviction and authority**. Personal conviction is a personal belief that is strongly held for example Martin Luther King Junior.

**(e)** ‘There’s no point following sacred texts – they were written so long ago’. Do you agree? Give reasons etc. **F**or view general – they relate to another time and some of the practices in them are impossible. They have to be interpreted and depends on individuals views and there are different holy books in different religions and they do not all say the same thing **A**gainst view general – some sacred texts are considered very important in everyone’s daily life and relevant e.g. swearing on the Bible in court and readings are made from them in most weddings and funerals Religious fact – many sacred texts are considered to be the word of God and eternal and guide the lives of believers as well as supporting them through difficult times Religious fact – they have had effects on modern religious believers like Martin Luther King who was inspired by the Bible to carry out his protests against inequality of black people in America My opinion – sacred texts were written a long time ago + people living today have to deal with issues and circumstances not mentioned in holy books and that people should ultimately rely on their own conscience to do right - though some teachings are timeless e.g. Ten Commandments obeyed today would make a better World?

MLK Junior was a Christian His personal conviction was that in the eyes of God all humans are equal. In America at the time black and white were segregated and treated unequally with different rights. He fought the authority of the American Government for his personal conviction that everyone should be treated equally. He went to jail because of his non-violent ‘freedom’ marches and ‘sit-ins’ even though no crime had been committed by him. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize

**(e)** ‘Authority should always be obeyed’. Do you agree? Give reasons etc. **F**or view general – if everyone lived by their own rules there would be chaos so a central authority is necessary to protect society **A**gainst view general – the laws may conflict with a person’s own moral or religious beliefs e.g. conscientious objectors or Sikhs wearing crash helmets Religious fact – many sacred texts are considered to be the word of God and eternal and therefore the ultimate authority and cannot be disobeyed and this would pose possible dilemmas Religious fact – some religions read their own interpretations into the same text e.g. The Bible - Protestants and Catholics are both branches of Christianity but have mostly opposite views on controversial topics such as euthanasia and IVF. Within Christianity also some support capital punishment whilst others are against it so **God’s authority seems open to translation.** My opinion – I think it depends on the individual situation and the person’s conscience. If the laws of the country are unfair then it is right to fight against them e.g. Martin Luther King but denying a blood transfusion to a Jehovah Witness child is forcing your religious beliefs on another and it is right for the Law to intervene?

**Why should we obey authority?** “I don’t want to be punished” “It is my duty” “It is against my conscience to disobey” “To ensure society runs smoothly and fairly” **What if the authority conflicts with personal conviction? For example …..** Conscientious objector – refuse to fight in a war because of their religious beliefs e.g. .Jehovah Witness believe it is wrong to take up weapons even under rules of Government (Government authority) Martin Luther King – see previous card Wearing the Hijab - France does not allow wearing of conspicuous religious symbols Abortion – in some countries it is legal but some people believe it wrong because of religious beliefs Following practices that are against the Law of the country – some Sikhs refuse to wear a crash helmet because they want to wear their turban because they believe this is their religious duty

**HUMAN RIGHTS (**You covered human rights in Religion and Life Issues) You know (c) and (e) questions – need religious facts + general moral views: Should everyone have same human rights? “Yes, because God created everyone to be treated with dignity + respect” “To be equal we have to have the same human rights” “It’s impossible to have same human rights - different countries - different cultures” How can human rights be maintained? “It is everyone’s responsibility to act e.g. campaigning through petitions and protests, lobbying parliament and joining charities that fight for human rights e.g. Amnesty International – it should be a matter of conscience” “Religions can join together to protest through interfaith dialogue” What makes people try to get justice for others? “Their conscience tells them” “They obey the teachings about duty from sacred texts and that it is important to act fairly to all of God’s creation “ “Each person should be treated as they would like to be treated” – Golden Rule

**ALL** QUESTIONS WANT FACTS especially **(d) -** so 1 in detail and 1 less so Examples of individuals or communities working for justice and human rights. (You may choose your own – must be religious believer who has worked for human rights)

Martin Luther King, Jr., when championing the rights of black people in the United States in the 1960s, declared, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

(See earlier card)

Mahatma Gandhi (Hindu) is honoured in India as the father of the nation; he practiced nonviolent civil disobedience campaigning against things like poverty and eliminating the injustices of the caste system. He was often imprisoned for his actions, sometimes for years. World civil rights leaders—from Martin Luther King, Jr., to Nelson Mandela—have credited Gandhi as a source of inspiration in their struggles to achieve equal rights for their people.

**(b)** Explain how having a religious belief might influence views on ‘sanctity of life (these **(b)‘s** are about **IMPACT OF FAITH** on life – must refer **mostly** to religious facts)

All religions believe in the sanctity of life – life is sacred and holy and a gift from God and only He can take it away. It can cause religious dilemmas e.g. with euthanasia, abortion and capital punishment which deal with the unnatural ending of life. Some religions take it at its word e.g. Catholics who are against abortion and euthanasia and some are more liberal e.g. Protestants who would take mother’s wellbeing and quality of life into account. Regarding capital punishment, modern Judaism does not support the death penalty but many Christians in America where it is still practiced support it for convicted murderers. It is interesting that God chose the death penalty for his own son, Jesus, who was put to death for the sins of us all – is the death penalty the justice of God?

**(b)** Explain how having a religious belief might influence views on human rights (these **(b)‘s** are about **IMPACT OF FAITH** on life – must refer **mostly** to religious facts)

* **RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS** guide believers to love God by obeying his will e.g. GOLDEN RULE teaches that we should treat others as we would like to be treated and the 2nd Commandment is ‘Love Thy Neighbour’
* **Sanctity of life – life is special and unique and God given. There is part of God in all of us and we were all \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*BORN EQUAL AND DESERVE TO BE TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT (FUNDAMENTAL STUFF) \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***
* May follow example of religious leaders e.g. Martin Luther King who campaigned non-violently for equality of black people in America and was awarded The Nobel Peace Prize