

Peace and Conflict

Civil War – an armed conflict between rival factions within one country

Conflict – Disagreement which escalates

Conscientious objector – a person who refuses to do something, here fight in a war, because of their conscience

Conventional warfare – using conventional weapons accepted by the Geneva Convention as licit in a war

Forgiveness – willingness not to blame a person any more for the wrongs they have done

Holy War – rules around fighting a war acceptable to Islam

Justice – making things fair again

Just War Theory – Theory based around Christian principles establishing when a war is legitimate

Just Cause – The idea that if you are going to war there must be a good reason for doing so

Proportionate action - The idea that when going to war, the action you take must be in proportion to the harm done to your country

Targeting innocent civilians – The idea that in a just war you should not target non-combatants

Proper Authority – The idea that, for a war to be just, it must be started by a legitimate authority such as a president or prime-minister

Peaceful Ending – the idea that for a war to be just it should lead to lasting peace

Good chance of Success – The idea that for a war to be just you must have a good chance of winning

Last Resort – The idea that for a war to be just you must have tried everything else beforehand to resolve the conflict.

Nuclear Weapons – Weapons using our knowledge of nuclear fission to caused enormous explosions

Pacifism – the belief that you should never resort to violence to solve an issue

Peace – the absence of conflict or war

Protest – voicing a disagreement with something

Reconciliation – making up between two groups after a disagreement

Retaliation – to pay back for a harmful action

Terrorism – Using violence and terror to further your political aim

Violence – causing harm to another

War – armed conflict between two or more sides

Weapons of mass destruction – weapons caused exceptional damage to life

Key Quotations:

‘He who lives by the sword shall die by the sword.’ **Jesus**

‘Love you enemies and pray for those who persecute you.’ **Jesus**

‘For peace, the basic thing to do is not to remove nuclear weapons but to remove the fear, anger and suspicion in us.’

Thich Nhat Han

‘If anyone strikes you on the right cheek turn the other to him also.’ **Jesus**

‘Not by hatred are any hatreds ended, but they are ended by non-hatred.’ **Dhammapada.**

Framework for Evaluation questions:

- a. State your opinion
- b. Explain two or more arguments counter to your own.
- c. Explain your view countering these arguments
- d. Include at least one reference to religious teaching
- e. Conclusion: brief summing up

Criteria for questions 3 and 4

2 marks for detailed explanation of each point

1 mark for reference to scripture (Q4 only)

You can be asked to explain two **similar** or two **contrasting** views. Two **contrasting** views might be *two different reasons for believing the same thing* e.g. A Christian might be against capital punishment because Jesus emphasises that everyone should have the opportunity to reform as in the parable of the Prodigal son. A Buddhist might be against capital punishment as it contradicts the principle of ahimsa (non-harm) and executing a sentient being might lead to negative karma for the executioner.

Past Exam Questions

1. Religions teach that people should live together in peace and harmony.(1)
2. Give two reasons why many religious believers are against violent protest. (2)
3. Explain two contrasting religious beliefs about nuclear weapons. In your answer you must refer to one or more religious traditions. (4)
4. Explain two religious beliefs which show that all acts of terrorism are wrong. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer. (5)
5. 'War is the best way to solve problems between countries.' (12)
6. Which one of the following gives the meaning of pacifism?(1)
7. Give two ways that religious believers can work for peace. (2)
8. Explain two similar religious beliefs about reconciliation. In your answer you must refer to one or more religious traditions. (4)
9. Explain two reasons why religious people help victims of war. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer. (5)
10. 'Religious believers should never fight in a war.' (12)
11. Which one of the following describes what is right and fair, as required by the law? (1)
12. Give two reasons why most religious people are against terrorism. (2)
13. Explain two contrasting religious beliefs in contemporary British society about pacifism. In your answer you should refer to the main religious tradition of Great Britain and one or more other religious traditions. (4)
14. Explain two reasons why some religious people support the just war theory. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer. (5)
15. 'It is wrong for any country to have weapons of mass destruction.' (12)
16. Which one of the following is not a reason for war? (1)
17. Give two religious beliefs that show that violence is wrong. (2)
18. Explain two similar religious beliefs about pacifism. In your answer you must refer to one or more religious traditions. (4)
19. Explain two religious beliefs about justice. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer. (5)
20. 'There are no good reasons for countries to possess nuclear weapons.' (12)
21. Which one of the following best expresses the religious ideal that there should be no violence in the world? (1)
22. Give two ways in which religious believers help victims of war. (2)
23. Explain two contrasting beliefs in contemporary British society about weapons of mass destruction. In your answer you should refer to the main religious tradition of Great Britain and one or more other religious traditions.(4)
24. Explain two religious beliefs about forgiveness. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer. (5)
25. 'War is never right.' (12)

Sample answer

'Religious believers should never fight in a war.'

I disagree. Sometimes war can be just and religious believers have a responsibility then to take part.

However, others disagree. They might say that their religious teachings suggest that war can never be right. Buddhists for instance follow the principle of ahimsa which means 'nonharm.' The idea is that all sentient beings feel pain and have been relatives in previous lives so we would not want to harm them. Causing harm leads to negative karma so although you might win the war in this existence, because you have caused suffering to others, you will be reborn in a hell realm. Finally, Christians might say that war is always wrong because Jesus said, when Peter was trying to defend him violently, that 'he who lives by the sword shall die by the sword.' Jesus also said that we should try and love our enemies and so how can we love them when we go to war with him.

Despite these arguments I disagree. Sometimes war can be for a good thing. If we had not gone to war against Hitler then he could have caused more suffering than he actually did. Buddhist is about ending suffering but by not going to war you will be increasing suffering. Christians are also supposed by the responsible stewards on the earth. This means that they should protect the weak and the innocent. When these sorts of people are being attacked then it is a duty of a Christian to defend them whatever means. Finally, Christians came up with the Just War Theory which is the idea that, as long as your war is Just it is okay. Most Christians agree broadly with this theory so it would seem that a Christian should fight in a just war, if it is to right a wrong.

