



AQA qualification support

**GCSE Religious Studies
Specification B**

AO2 Exemplar Responses

Specimen Paper 1 Question 01.5 Creation

'Michelangelo's painting of *The Creation of Adam* perfectly expresses a Catholic understanding of Humanity'

- Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:
 - Give developed arguments to support this statement
 - Give developed arguments to support a different point of view – refer to this work of art and Catholic teaching
 - Reach a justified conclusion

[12 marks] [SPaG 5 marks]

Answer A

Michelangelo's painting of 'the creation of Adam' perfectly expresses catholic understanding of humanity as it shows that God is omniscient and omnipotent. We can see this because God appears to in a large brain in the painting, showing he is omniscient. And we can see he is omnipotent because he is floating above Adam and he is reaching down towards him. Some may think that the painting doesn't perfectly express a catholicic understanding of humanity as it doesn't fully show and explain how the world and humans were created. It doesn't explain/show about God giving Adam stewardship or power over other living creatures and animals on planet. It also doesn't express that God is transcendent and that he was there before anything else.

In conclusion I believe that this painting doesn't show enough to fully express a catholic understanding of humanity. It doesn't show God as omnibenevoient or transcendant which are crucial elements of the creation stories because they help us to understand how God made the world perfect for humans.

Answer B

Michelangelo was asked by the Pope at that time to paint the creation of Adam in the Sistine chapel. You could say that it perfectly expresses a Catholic understanding of humanity. A reason for this is that it shoes God created mankind in his image of knowledge, love and rationality. This is shown as God with angels presented in front of a brain. In this image, God shown as an ancient, powerful man (he is muscular). Him being ancient represents Him being eternal and His power is shown by his muscles. Some people say that this is wrong as God is a metaphysical being and should not be shown as a man.

God is also seen as being more powerful than Adam, but also giving Adam some of his power. He is seen 'floating' above where Adam is lying. They are both reaching out to eachother but not quite reaching. They are reaching, but not touching as it is before God passed His power into Adam, making him omnipotent, but humans aren't.

On the other hand, the Creation of Adam does not perfectly express the Catholic understanding of humanity God is not physical so how can we look like Him? Also, it doesn't show Eve or Eve's creation and half of mankind is feminine.

Overall I feel that it is pretty accurate, but not perfect. We do not know perfectly how Adam/humanity was created. It is good visually for us, as we are trying to understand ourselves.

Answer C

Michelangelo's painting of The Creation of Adam perfectly expresses a Catholic understanding of humanity. Some people may agree with this point because in this picture Adam is below God and is looking up to him and this is what Catholics do is look up to God in a time of need. Also Catholics believe that God is the brain of the world and this is shown because God has been drawn in a brain shaped object.

Others may disagree with this point because they may not believe that God is that close to man because he is transendant so he is beyond time and space. They may also believe that God is not presented in a physical form or that he is presented an object but Michelangelo has made God as a muscular human.

In conclusion to this, I believe that Michelangelo has presented the Catholic understanding of humanity clearly because Catholics believe that we should always look up to God and he is a higher rank so he is above us like presented in the picture.

Answer D

Michelangelo's painting of the creation of Adam shows God and man (Adam) being close to eachother. This picture was painted in Rome by the artist Michelangelo on a ceiling in a church. Some people state the 'The painting of the creation of Adam perfectly expresses a catholic understanding of humanity'.

People who agree with this statement would say yes it does as it shows Man is lower than God so is shown to be less powerful. Adam is reaching out to God and they are very close but not touching and this shows God is always with us but never a living thing that we can touch, smell, see or hear. Another point is that Adam is naked so it shows he is not cautious about his body and in fact there is nothing wrong with it.

On the other hand people who disagree with this statement will say people do not like their body and features so we are not like Adam God is to much like man.

Answer E

The painting portrays how humanity depends on God. God is shown as a human in the painting this shows we are made in the likeness of God. In this picture you can see the strong relationship between God and Adam. Their finger tips meet showing a strong connection. It shows that without God humanity would be nothing.

On the other hand it doesnt give a clear indication what is happening in the painting it does not give Catholic a clear teaching as they might understand the purpose or teaching of the painting.

In conclusion, I believe this perfectly expresses Christians beliefs because it teaches Christians that they made in likeness of God. It also shows is we depend on him because in painting it shows us god is higher up and more powerful

Answer F

The creation of Adam does perfectly express a Catholic understanding of humanity as it shows how we are made in the likeness of God as God and Adam look similar. It also shows God is slightly better as he is higher up than Adam. also the angels express God is as they made him look superior. Finally, it shows man is in the rational image of God as logic and wisdom is portrayed the brain surrounding God.

On the other hand, we could disagree as many Catholics believe God couldn't have the power to create us if he was almost identical to us. he has arms, legs and everything Adam has according to how they are portrayed so how is God so much better? It also shows how Adam is set to rule over things such as animals as he's the only man but why God and Adam got the exact same figures when God is able to do anything and know everything.

Finally I believe that the statement is correct as it shows things we are told in the Genesis, we see God's omnipotence how man and God are extremely close as their fingers are almost touching and also it shows how we are made in the rational image of God. No Eve contradicts Genesis Chapter 1 and 2 God is imminent.

Specimen Paper 1 – Question 02.5 Trinity

'Christians should only use traditional prayers, not spontaneous prayers.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- Give developed arguments to support this statement
- Give developed arguments to support a different point of view
- Refer to Christian teaching
- Reach a justified conclusion

[12 marks] [SPaG 5 marks]

Answer A

The above statement is one of great controversy, however this view could easily be supported.

Firstly, the prayers that are traditional such as the Our Father offer is with a prayer that is set in stone, they're not rough and roll of the tongue making them easy to remember. this makes the prayer more considerate and greatens the involvement with God. Secondly, traditional prayers can often offer great support during a certain period of time. For example when in a time of mourning believers can say the eternal rest. this means a person won't have to think of what to say making the prayer easier and less rough. yet still they can pay their respects.

On the other hand, many would argue that Christians should be able to pray using spontaneous prayers aswell. These can allow people to get their exact message across to God rather than saying the Hail Mary when they might not be stating what they want to be. Also, many would argue that the involvement with God could be more personal if you speak from the mind rather than speaking from the Bible.

To conclude – I believe that the statement should be supported as it would then mean every prayer is thoughtful, in great connection with God and would be far less rough and awkward. However it would help much more in certain situations like the Eternal Rest during mourning.

Answer B

Some Christians believe that sticking to the traditional prayers is more holy because they have been around for a long time and are used in many different situations eg. funerals, weddings and in some cases remembrance. Also it can be quite hard to make a prayer up on the spot, even just having the words to a traditional prayer can help a lot. Moreover for generations traditional prayers have helped bring communities together. An example of a traditional prayer is the Lord's Prayer and the Eternal Rest these prayers have been praised in mass for those who are mourning and need to be comforted.

Others disagree they think that spontaneous prayers are the best type because it can be a very emotional experience hearing what someone else's thoughts are.

To conclude I believe traditional prayers should be used because you can't go wrong with them they have been around for many years.

Answer C

Christians should only use traditional prayers, not spontaneous prayers.

Some people may say that Christians should only use traditional prayers because these are something that everyone can share and join in saying. They are popular because they have been passed down through the generations and are easy to remember, for example the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and the Eternal Rest. The Lord's Prayer is said every day in school and at every mass – everybody knows it off-by-heart and it's a way to unite in prayer.

However people may say that spontaneous prayers are better because they are unique, come from the heart and are just how someone feels in certain occasions. People are guided by the Holy Spirit when they say these prayers and sometimes speak in languages and somebody to translate.

In conclusion, I think that Christians should only use traditional prayers as this is a way people can truly unite in prayer without confusion.

Answer D

Some Christians may agree with the point that Christians should pray through traditional prayers. They may believe this because they might think that the traditional prayers have been taught and passed down through generations for a reason. Some of these traditional prayers involve prayers like, God's prayer, Eternal Rest and the Hail Mary, every Christian will know these prayers. These prayers are good because they teach others and tell us how to live.

On the other hand others may argue that spontaneous prayers are better than traditional prayers. These people may argue this because in traditional they cannot express how that person is feeling. But in spontaneous prayers you can add how you feel about a subject and you can directly speak to God. A way of doing spontaneous prayer is sitting in a circle and each person adds a thing or subject in. Another way is through music.

In conclusion to this, I believe that the best way to pray in is spontaneous because you can pray about more modern subjects like the people in Africa etc.

Answer E

Some Christians may support this statement as they think it's better and more respectful to use the traditional prayers that have been passed down for many generations. They may disagree with the use of traditional prayers because they may think that they weren't as respectful and they may go off the topic of religion or people get carried away with what they are praying about. Traditional prayers, such as the Hail Mary, the Our Father and the Eternal may be seen as the best prayers to use because they're short and get a clear message across.

However other Christians may disagree as they think spontaneous prayers are better to use. They may think spontaneous prayers are better because they allow you to pray for something very specific that isn't included in a traditional prayer. Spontaneous prayers can be better if there is something you need to ask for or anything you need or want to confess.

In conclusion I disagree with this statement, that Christians should only use traditional prayers. I think that they should be able to use spontaneous prayers as well because they are a lot more personal.

Specimen Paper 2A Question 03.5 Judaism Beliefs

'For Jews, the most important belief about God is that God is the Law-giver.'

Evaluate this statement.

- In your answer you should:
 - Give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
 - Give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view – refer to the teaching of Judaism
 - Reach a justified conclusion

[12 marks] [SPaG 5 marks]

Answer A

Firstly: supporting the statement – many Jews believe God as lawgiver is the most important belief of God as this changes how they live it allows them to follow mitzvot and be sent to Gan Eden as a result of following God as lawgiver. God as law-giver also is the belief that sustains Jewish life the most as Pikuach Nefesh is enforced by him. God as lawgiver is also the most likely element of God that could lead to world peace as people follow his necessary and good laws. You would also go against God as creator and other beliefs of God if you didn't place God as lawgiver at the centre of your beliefs as one law is to have 1 God – the element of monotheism – God as Creator and God as one.

On the other hand, his statement could be rejected as many Jews believe God as Creator is most important as without him there's nothing, he is the source of everything and he keeps Jews going on Earth as he doesn't abandon his creation he will stay with it and preserve looking at our omnibenevolence. Also many would argue God as Judge is the most important as his omnipotence and omniscience decides your fate – whether you go to Gan Eden or Sheol and at Rosh Hashanah when people are judged Jews lead a good life so they are judged well by God as Judge also made earth better.

To conclude – I disagree with the statement as I believe the omnipotence and omnibenevolence of God as Creator is what keeps Jews going as they know if God doesn't abandon them why should they abandon him. Also, as he's the source of everything without him they'd be nothing at all.

Answer B

The most important Jewish belief about God is that God is the law giver because if we didn't have laws to follow we wouldn't know what to do.

God as lawgiver isn't the most important because God as Creator is because without God being the Creator he wouldn't have anything to give laws to.

All in all, I think that God as lawgiver isn't the most important belief because God as creator is because the laws he would give would be pointless without people or things to abide by them.

God as One is also more important than God as lawgiver because it is Jewish belief that God is one and not multiple Gods.

Answer C

Some Jews think that the most important belief about god is he is law giver they would say this because the 613 Mitzvot are contained in the torrah and they guide Jews and tell them how to live their lives.

Others would disagree because they believe that god as creator is the most important belief about God as in the creation story in genesis it tells us about how god created the whole world in 6 days. Also it shows that God is omnipotent and omnibenevolent as he made all we have and provides all we need.

Also others would disagree as they believe that Gods best quality is God as Judge because he will judge us all, Jews and gentile and show us what we did right and wrong.

In conclusion I believe that God as the creator is the most important quality as he provides to us and creates all we have.