

TEACHER GUIDE:

Teaching Students How to Analyse and Evaluate



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The Task

STUDENTS ARE ASKED TO:

- 01 Analyse the statement by breaking it down and considering what it means.
- 02 Evaluate the statement by weighing up arguments for and against it.
- 03 Refer to religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, and perspectives in their analysis. (This requires students to understand content, use evidence from sources, balance perspectives, and form a reasoned judgement.)



The Core Skills to Teach

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| <p>01 ANALYSIS</p> <p>Unpacking the meaning of the statement and showing how religious/non-religious sources relate to it.</p> | <p>02 EVALUATION</p> <p>Judging the strength of arguments, recognising diversity within traditions, and weighing up evidence.</p> |
| <p>03 USE OF SOURCES</p> <p>Applying religious texts, teachings, or practices accurately to support points.</p> | <p>04 BALANCING PERSPECTIVES</p> <p>Presenting more than one side of the argument before drawing a conclusion.</p> |
| <p>05 REASONED JUDGEMENT</p> <p>Forming a final, justified conclusion that directly answers the statement.</p> | |

Step-by-Step Teaching Ideas



1 Unpacking the Statement

- **Explanation:** Students often jump into writing without understanding what the statement is really asking.
- **Teaching Idea:**
 - Give students a statement (e.g. “War can never be justified”).
 - Ask: What key terms need defining? (e.g. “war”, “justified”).
 - Use a **“Question Web”**: in groups, students brainstorm questions the examiner might expect them to consider (e.g. “What do religions say about peace?”, “What about Just War Theory?”, “How do Humanists respond?”).

2 Using Sources Effectively

- **Explanation:** Students may list quotes or teachings without linking them to their argument. They need to apply sources.
- **Teaching Idea:**
 - Provide three quotations from different traditions.
 - Ask students to explain:
 - What the quote means.
 - How it supports or challenges the statement.
 - Example: “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9) → supports pacifist arguments against war.

3 Building Analytical Points

- **Explanation:** Analysis means showing how beliefs connect to the statement, not just repeating information.
- **Teaching Idea:**
 - Model the difference:
 - “Christians believe in forgiveness.”
 - “Christians believe in forgiveness, which suggests reconciliation is better than war, so this challenges the idea that war is justified.”
 - Activity: Give students belief/practice cards and ask them to complete the sentence:
 - “This belief/practice shows that...”

Step-by-Step Teaching Ideas



4 Developing Evaluation Skills

- **Explanation:** Evaluation is about weighing arguments, not just describing them.
- **Teaching Idea:**
 - Introduce “PEEL” for evaluation:
 - **Point** - make a clear argument.
 - **Evidence** - use a source, teaching, or example.
 - **Explain** - show how it relates to the statement.
 - **Link** - judge its strength compared to another view.
 - Discussion Carousel: students rotate around the room with mini-discussions (religious vs non-religious perspectives) before writing a paragraph where they weigh up the two sides.

5 Including Diversity Within Traditions

- **Explanation:** Higher marks are rewarded showing that not all religious believers agree.
- **Teaching Idea:**
 - Use “spectrum lines” in class. (e.g. place “Strongly Agree” at one end and “Strongly Disagree” at the other.
 - Give groups different religious denominations or schools (e.g. Catholic vs Quaker views on war).
 - Students place themselves on the line and explain why.

6 Structuring Evaluation Paragraphs

- **Explanation:** A well-structured paragraph helps clarity and shows balance.
- **Teaching Idea:**
 - Provide sentence starters:
 - “Some religious believers argue that...”
 - “However, others in the same traditions might...”
 - “A non-religious perspective is...”
 - Overall, this suggests that...”
 - Encourage students to aim for **two balanced evaluation paragraphs** plus a reasoned conclusion.

Step-by-Step Teaching Ideas



7 Writing a Reasoned Conclusion

- **Explanation:** Students often restate both sides rather than making a clear judgement.
- **Teaching Idea:**
 - Model “tiered” conclusions:
 - **Basic:** “Some agree, some disagree.”
 - **Better:** “The stronger argument is X because...”
 - **Best:** “The stronger argument is X because... However, in a different context (e.g war of self-defence), the other side may carry more weight.”
 - Provide a conclusion checklist: Does it (a) answer the statement? (b) use evidence? (c) weigh up arguments?

Extension/Challenge Activities

- **Ranking Task:** Students rank arguments from strongest to weakest, justifying their order.
- **Mock Examiner Role:** Students swap work and highlight whether the answer has (1) clear analysis, (2) evaluation, (3) a justifies conclusion.
- **Times Exam Practice:** Set a past paper evaluation question and use peer-marking against mark schemes.

Teacher Reminders

- Keep supporting students to **apply, not just recall:** knowledge earns marks only when linked to the statement.
- Encourage **balance:** at least one religious and one non-religious perspective must appear.
- Emphasise that **evaluation ≠ opinion:** it’s about evidence-based judgement.
- Remind students that **clarity and structure** are as important as content for examiners.