

TEACHER GUIDE:

# Developing Skills for Summarising Beliefs, Teachings, Practices and Perspectives



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# The Task

## STUDENTS ARE ASKED TO:

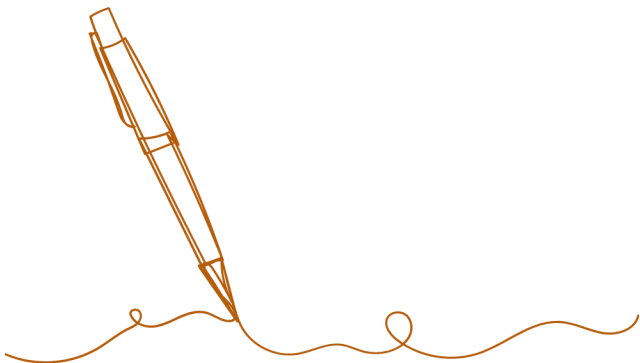
- 01 Summarise what two religions teach, believe, and practise about the statement provided.
- 02 Summarise what non-religious perspectives say about the statement.



This requires students to **understand content**, **select key information**, and **present it concisely and clearly**.

# The Core Skills to Teach

- |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>01 <b>SELECTION</b></p> <p>Knowing how to choose the most relevant material.</p>                                 | <p>02 <b>SUMMARISING</b></p> <p>Condensing detailed knowledge into short, clear points.</p>                   |
| <p>03 <b>COMPARING PERSPECTIVES</b></p> <p>Presenting religious and non-religious views without mixing them up.</p> | <p>04 <b>CLARITY OF EXPRESSION</b></p> <p>Writing in a way that is accurate, neutral, and easy to follow.</p> |



# Step-by-Step Teaching Ideas



## 1 Understanding the Statement

- **Explanation:** Students must first unpack the statement before they can summarise responses to it.
- **Teaching Idea:**
  - Give students a statement (e.g. “Life after death is real”).
  - Ask them to break it down: What is it really asking about? (e.g. what happens after death, whether life continues, how religions interpret this).
  - Use a **“circle of meaning” activity**: students write the statement in the middle of a page, then brainstorm key themes around it.

## 2 Selecting Relevant Information

- **Explanation:** GCSE tasks often overwhelm students because they try to include everything they know. The skill is in selecting **just what applies to the statement**.
- **Teaching Idea:**
  - Provide a bank of quotes, teachings, and practices (religion-specific).
  - Ask students to **sort into piles**: Relevant / Not directly relevant.
  - Extension: Rank the relevance (what’s central, what’s supporting detail).

## 3 Summarising Religious Perspectives

- **Explanation:** Students must summarise without copying full textbook paragraphs. Summarising is about condensing into **2-3 clear sentences or bullet points per perspective**.
- **Teaching Idea:**
  - Model a **“long answer > short answer” process**:
    - Give them a chunky paragraph (e.g. “Hindus believe in karma and reincarnation...”)
    - Show how to reduce it into a **succinct summary** (e.g. “Hindus believe actions (karma) affect rebirth; liberation (moksha) is the ultimate aim”).
  - Pair activity: Students summarise for each other’s paragraphs, then compare.

# Step-by-Step Teaching Ideas



## 4 Including Practices as well as Teachings

- **Explanation:** Students often only write about beliefs but forget practices. Examiners reward balance.
- **Teaching Idea:**
  - Create a **T-chart**: Beliefs/Teachings on one side, Practices on the other.
  - Example (Christianity on forgiveness):
    - Beliefs: Jesus taught forgiveness (Lord's Prayer, parable of the Prodigal Son).
    - Practices: Confession in Catholicism, acts of reconciliation.

## 5 Summarising Non-Religious Perspectives

- **Explanation:** Students sometimes think “non-religious” = “atheist only”. Instead, it includes **Humanism, secular ethics, scientific views, or philosophical stances**.
- **Teaching Idea:**
  - Provide a **menu of non religious views** (e.g. Humanist views on morality, Utilitarian arguments, scientific explanations).
  - Use role cards: Humanist, Atheist scientist, Secular philosopher - each group summarises how their perspective responds to the statement.

## 6 Structuring the Summary

- **Explanation:** Students need a clear, examiner-friendly way to present their summaries.
- **Teaching Idea:**
  - Use a **three-box structure**:
    - Religion A (beliefs, teachings, practices)
    - Religion B (beliefs, teachings, practices)
    - Non-religious perspectives
  - Within each, limit to **3-4 key points**.
  - Sentence starters can help:
    - “A key teaching in [religion] is...”
    - “This is shown in practice through...”
    - “A non-religious perspective is...”

# Step-by-Step Teaching Ideas



## 7 Developing Clarity and Neutral Tone

- **Explanation:** Students must avoid personal bias or vague phrasing. They need to report, not argue (that comes later in evaluation).
- **Teaching Idea:**
  - Give examples of biased vs neutral phrasing:
    - “Christians wrongly believe in...”
    - “Christian teach that...”
  - Quick rewriting task: students practice changing biased phrases into neutral summaries.

## Extension/Challenge Activities

- **Comparison Task:** After summarising, ask students to highlight similarities and differences between religious and non-religious perspectives.
- **Exam-Style Practice:** Provide a past paper statement and ask them to produce a model 3-paragraph summary using the structure taught.



## Teacher Reminders

- Keep emphasising **relevance**: no reward for showing off all knowledge, only what links to the statement.
- Balance **beliefs and practices**.
- Encourage students to **practise summarising little and often** - it builds confidence before they tackle full exam answers.