

Introduction

The sample questions set out in this document were produced by the NCCA to support teaching and learning in junior cycle Religious Education and prepare students for assessment in this subject.

The sample questions presented here support assessment of a selection of learning outcomes in the Junior Cycle Religious Education specification at a common level. The items included should be read as examples of assessment questions that can be used to guide classroom assessment. They are not representative of the wide range assessment methods formats that may be used. Neither do they attempt to show the types of questions that will appear on the examination paper or how the examination paper might be laid out, for example, as an integrated booklet that includes the questions and the space for the student's responses. The State Examinations Commission (SEC) will issue a sample examination paper during the first term of Year 3 of the new course.

The Junior Cycle Religious Education specification and assessment guidelines can be found on

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Junior-Cycle-Subjects/Religious-Education/>

Question 1

- (a) On the map of Ireland, name and locate one important archaeological Christian site that you have studied or visited.



- (b) Briefly describe why this site was important for Christians in the past.

- (c) Imagine you work for a local Tourist office. Write a short account describing an archaeological Christian site in your locality which tourists can visit and explain why it is an important part of Irish culture and heritage.

Question 2

According to an Indigenous Australian creation story, the world was a featureless place until ten ancestors or spirit people emerged and travelled across the land, creating geographical features like Ayers Rock (also known as Uluru). The caves and cliffs in Ayers Rock contain prehistoric rock carvings that tell the story of these ancestors. Certain rock ledges represent ancestral spirits, and the local Aboriginal Australian people (also known as the Anangu people) believe that by touching these rocks they can communicate with and receive blessings from their ancestors. After decades of controversy, the decision was made to stop visitors from climbing Ayers Rock in October 2019—a decision welcomed by the Anangu people, the area's traditional owners.



- (a) Until October 2019, visitors were not stopped from climbing Ayers Rock, although it was made clear that climbing was against the wishes of the traditional owners of this sacred site. Imagine you were visiting this site before October 2019 and faced with this decision. Give a reason why you would or would not climb this sacred site?

Question 3

What happens when we die? This is one of the big questions that people often ask.

- (a) Explain how this question is answered from the perspective of one major world religion.

Name of religion: _____

- (b) Name one artist (painter, musician or craftsperson) that you have studied whose work has prompted people to think about the meaning of life.

Artist: _____

Piece of work: _____

Briefly explain how the piece of work (mentioned above) answers this question.

Question 4



Photo: Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Getty Images.

'Much as I'd love to see all the world's churches, mosques, synagogues and temples overflowing with humanity, how good it is we are not measured by the number of times we attend formal religious ceremonies. Among the most heartening trends I have noticed on my travels over the past dozen or so years has been the spiritual strength of young people. They don't necessarily occupy the front pews on Sunday, but they seem to have been born with an enhanced sense of tolerance and a deep understanding of our inter-dependence.' Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu

- (a) Where does Archbishop Tutu see evidence of young people's spiritual strength?

Question 5



Photo: Harry Clarke stained glass windows in Cong, Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick

Look closely at the detail in this example of stained-glass windows.

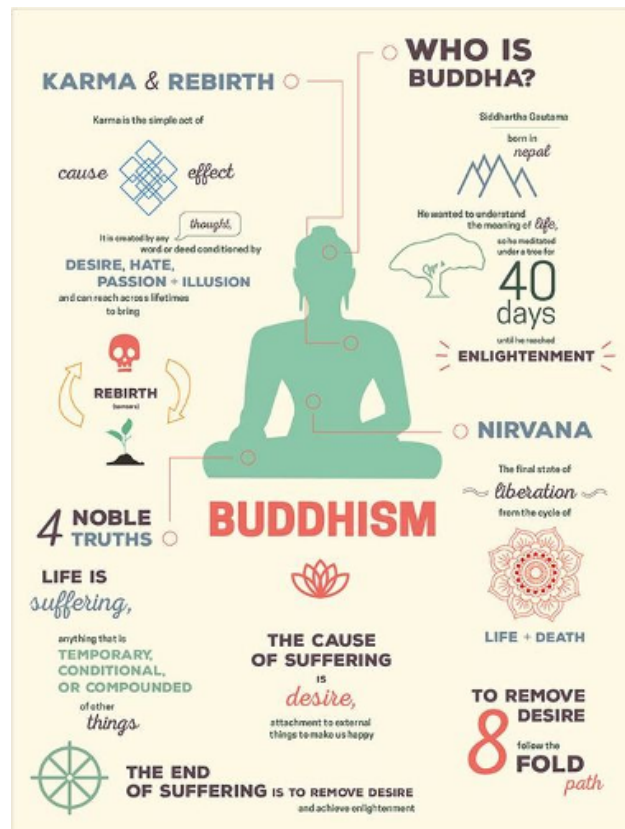
(a) List 2 ways that show how religious belief is expressed in this piece of religious art?

1. _____

2. _____

Question 7

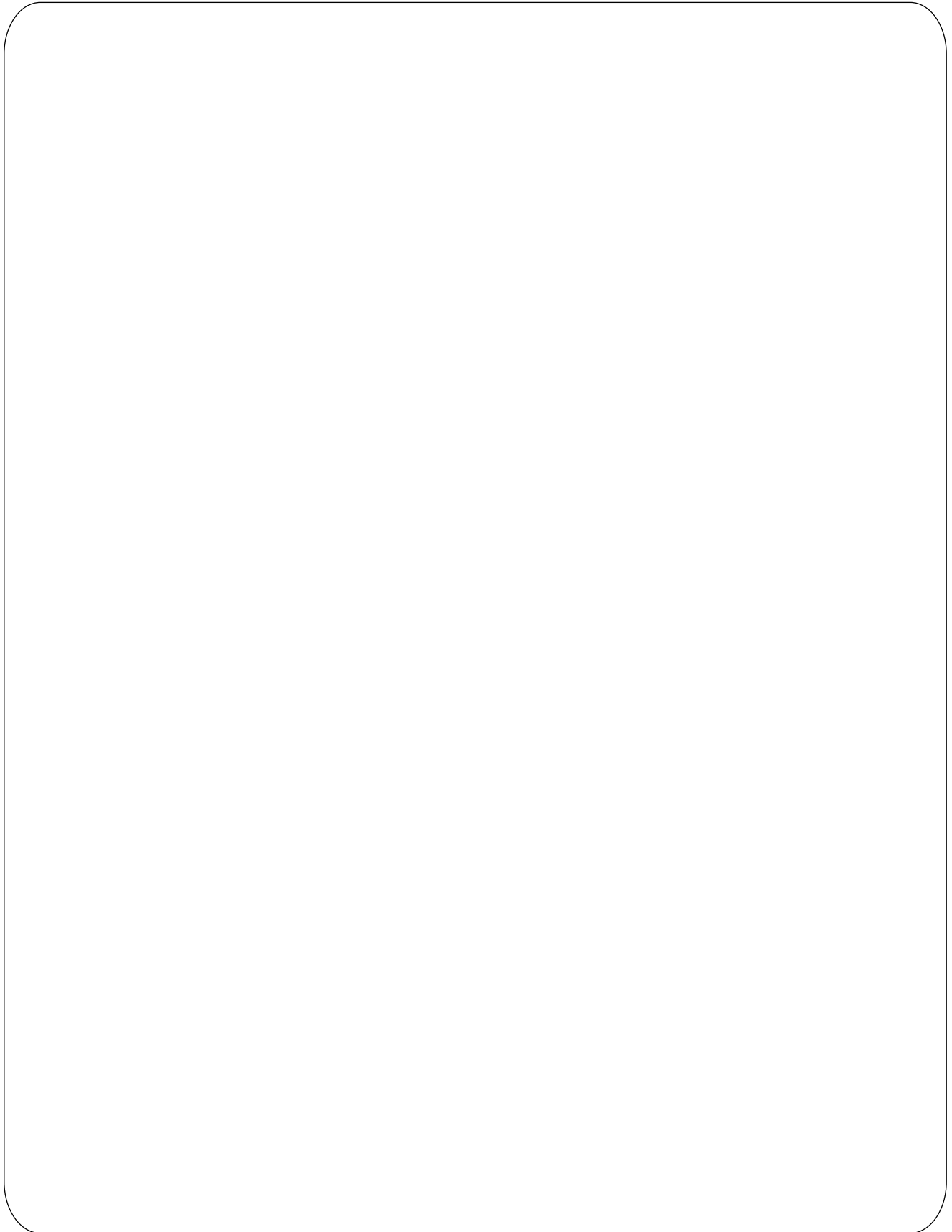
Look at the image below that sets out some key facts about Buddhism.



Pick one of the four remaining world religions that you studied and create a simple image in the box below to include:

- The name of the religion
- An important sacred place associated with this religion
- A symbol of this religion
- 3 key beliefs held by followers of the religion

Junior Cycle Religious Education Sample Questions



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- (b) Name one organization you studied that works to promote peace and reconciliation between people of different faiths and briefly explain how they work to promote peace and reconciliation.

Name of organisation: _____

- (ii) How they promote peace and reconciliation:

Question 9

(a) Give one reason why a non-religious person might go on a religious pilgrimage.

(b) Give one reason why a religious person might go on a religious pilgrimage.

(c) Give one example of a Christian place of pilgrimage and one example of a place of pilgrimage associated with another world religion.

Christian place of pilgrimage	Place of pilgrimage associated with another world religion

(d) Give 2 reasons why a person of faith prays or meditates:

1.

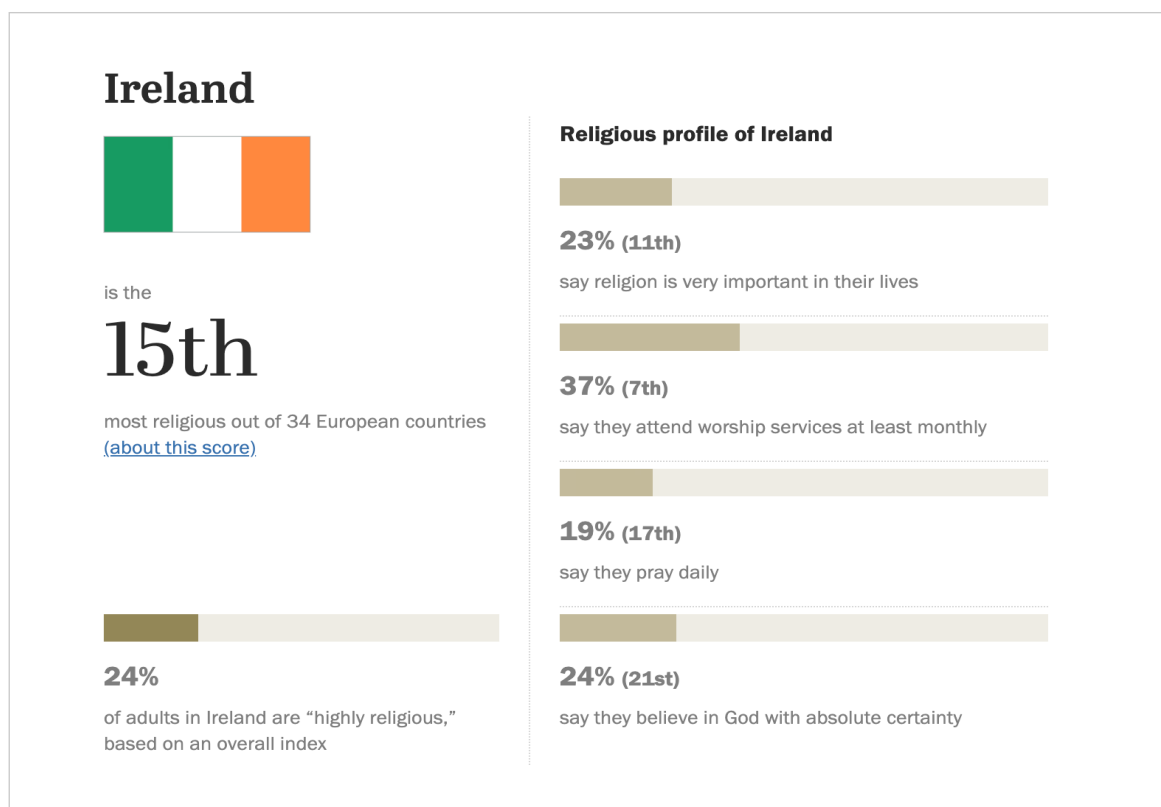
2.

Question 11

- (a) The 2016 Census (national survey) found that the total number of people in Ireland identifying as having no religion (e.g., atheists, agnostics and humanists) had increased by 73.6 per cent since the 2011 Census.

Give one reason for the increase in the number of people identifying as having no religion in Ireland today.

- (b) In another survey that measured religious commitment, Ireland was ranked 15th amongst 34 European countries.



Source: <https://www.pewresearch.org/>

Question 13



Most people wonder why are we here and ask what is the meaning and purpose of life?

Outline two different responses to this question that you have studied.

Response 1:

Response 2:

Question 14

(a) When faced with making a moral decision, name 2 possible influences on a person's decision-making process:

1. _____

2. _____

(b) Name a source of authority that might influence a Christian in making a moral decision and say why this is important for Christians.

(c) Give one reason why people living together in a community or society need to be moral:

Question 15

As the dominant species on this planet it is our moral duty to protect and preserve all forms of life. For species such as elephants and rhinos to be fighting for their existence due to human exploitation and interference is unacceptable and we must do everything within our power to turn this dire situation around. We are responsible for the problem and we must be held responsible for the solution. It will indeed be a very sad indictment on our species if rhinos and elephants are no more, and that day will come sooner than we think if we do not take action.' Sir David Attenborough



Photo: Huw Cordey, BBC Worldwide Americas/
PRNewsFoto/AP Images

In this quote, Sir David Attenborough is talking about protecting endangered species, like elephants and rhinos, as a moral issue. He says it is our 'moral duty' to protect and preserve all forms of life.

- (a) Write a paragraph explaining why protecting the natural world is a moral duty, from the perspective of a person belonging to one of the major world religions.

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(b) Name one other issue that you consider to be an important moral issue in the world today

(c) Name a source of authority that might influence a Christian in making a moral decision and say why this is important for Christians.

(d) Outline how a teaching of one major world religion responds to this issue (different to the religion you chose in question (a) above).

Question 15

The following picture shows the work of a group of volunteers who cleared a large forest area of rubbish. Some of the rubbish had been dumped there for more than 70 years.



Photo: Letterkenny cultural centre

- (a) These people may be volunteering to help with a community clean-up for a variety of reasons. What are some of the *values* or *beliefs* that might motivate people to volunteer for this kind of project?
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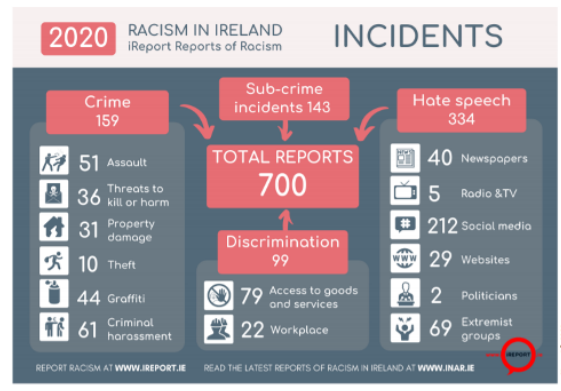
- (b) Explain the reason why a major world religion you studied promotes care for the planet. Your answer should refer to a specific sacred text or teaching.

- (c) Identify one other big issue of concern for the world today.

(d) Outline how a community of faith or organisation linked to a major world religion is responding to this issue.

Question 17

iReport is a human rights online tool that allows people to report on racist incidents in Ireland. This information is used in a report that is published every six months.



In 2020 there were 334 cases of racist hate speech logged on iReport.ie. The groups most targeted by hate speech were Black-African, Black-Irish and Black-Other (74 in total), Muslim (69), Traveller (35), South Asian (54), Chinese (29), Jewish (23).

- (a) Pick one major world religion and explain how it promotes equality amongst people. Make sure you refer to a specific sacred text teaching in your answer.

Question 18

During the Covid pandemic around 200 Muslim gathered (socially distanced) in Croke Park in Dublin for the celebration of Eid al-Adha, an important event in the Muslim calendar. Eid al-Adha is an annual celebration that takes place at the end of the Hajj pilgrimage and is known as the “Festival of Sacrifice”. In attendance were the Muslim faith leader Shaykh Dr Umar Al-Qadri, the Roman Catholic Archbishop, Diarmuid Martin, the Church of Ireland Archbishop, Michael Jackson, and Rabbi Zalman Lent.



Photo credit: Mark Stedman

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- (a) Give one reason why Jewish and Christian leaders were invited to this Islamic celebration.

(b) Describe another example of interfaith dialogue that you have studied.

(c) Explain 2 ways that the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced religious practice among communities of faith in Ireland.

Question 19

Some suggest that there are stages of faith development that people of faith move through. These are summarised below.

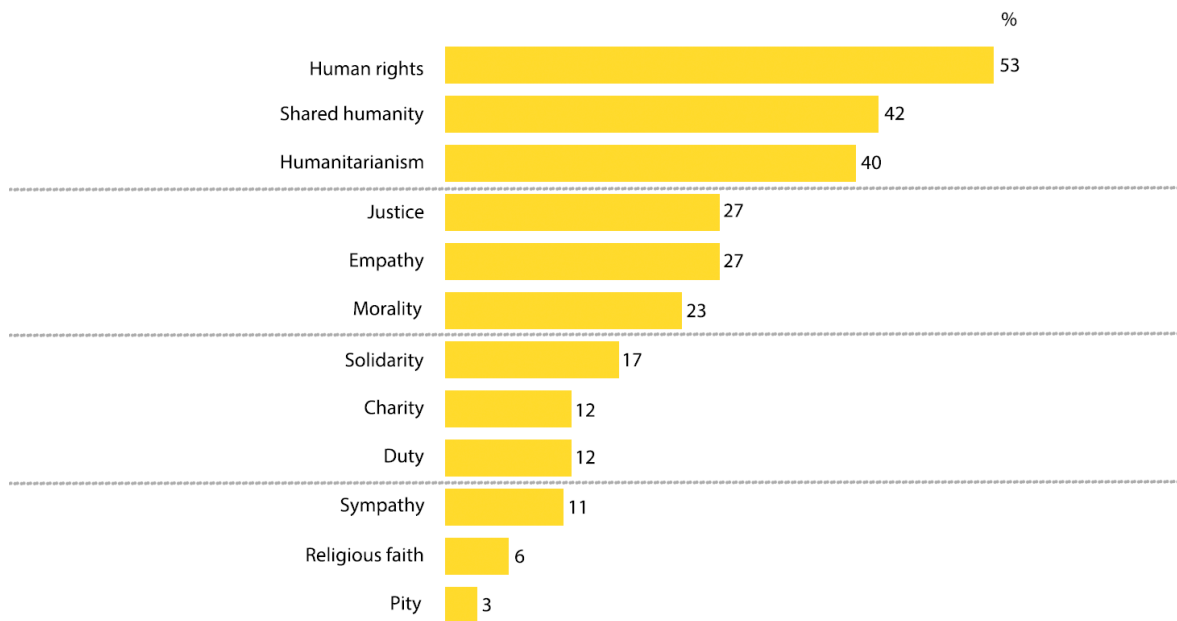


- (a) If a person is at the searching stage and asking questions about their faith, what kind of questions might these be?

- (b) Based on your study or experience of religious beliefs, explain what it means for a person to come to a stage where they make the faith their own?

Question 20

In January 2021, Dochas (the network for overseas non-governmental organizations, or charities, in Ireland) surveyed Irish adults to find out about their attitudes towards global poverty, injustice and inequality. 75% of 3,008 people who took part in the survey said they were concerned about levels of poverty in the “developing world” and said it was important for the Irish government to provide aid. When asked what prompted their support for helping the world’s poorest people the people who were surveyed gave the reasons shown below.



Source: <https://www.dochas.ie/resources/worldview/quantitative-findings/>

- (a) Based on the values that are listed in this graph, would you agree that compassion is important in influencing Irish people to help the world’s poorest people. Explain why you agree/disagree.

(b) Do you think global poverty is a moral issue? Explain your answer.

(c) Explain how the religious teachings of one major world religion addresses global poverty.
