



Religion Studies

××× THE CENTRAL TEACHINGS ACROSS RELIGION
×× SELF STUDY GUIDE
× BOOK 7



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1. INTRODUCTION

The declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation in 2020, led to the disruption of effective teaching and learning in all schools across South Africa.

Many learners, across all grades, spent less time in class due to the phased-in reopening of schools, as well as rotational attendance and alternative timetables that were implemented across provinces, to comply with social distancing rules. This led to severe teaching and learning time losses. Consequently, the majority of schools were not able to complete all the relevant content prescribed in Grade 10-12 in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement.

In order to mitigate and intervene against the negative impact of COVID-19, as part of the Recovery Learning Plan for Grades 10-12, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) worked in collaboration with Subject Specialists from various Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) to develop this Self-Study Guide for learners in Grade 12.

The content in this study guide is critical towards laying a strong foundation to improve your performance in this subject.

The main aims of this study guide is to:

- Assist learners to improve their performance, by revising and consolidating their understanding of the topic;
- Close existing content gaps in this topic; and
- Improve and strengthen understanding of the content prescribed for this topic.

This study-guide is meant as a self-study guide for learners and therefore should be used as a revision resource to consolidate learning at the end of a particular topic taught in class.

Learners are encouraged to complete the exercises and activities to test their understanding and to expose themselves to high quality assessment.

This study guide can also be used by study groups and peer learning groups, to prepare for the final NSC examination in this subject.

2. How to use this Self Study Guide?

This study guide covers 9 of the topics that pose the most challenges in the examinations. Please also note the remaining topics that are set out in the CAPS. This Self-Study Guide includes the following topics:

- History and present dynamics of inter-religious relationships in South African, African and international communities
- Religion in areas of recent conflict in South Africa, Africa, and the world
- Analysis of secular worldviews with reference to the definition of religion and universal dimensions of religion: atheism, agnosticism, humanism, and materialism
- Religion and the natural sciences
- Religious freedom, human rights, and responsibilities
- Normative Sources
- Internal Differentiation
- Central Teachings
- Social Issues

This is a Self-Study Guide that is designed to explain the concepts and content that is examinable in Religion Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2. It also provides explanations of the common action/command verbs used in the Question Papers and how to use these to analyse and understand what you are required to do to respond to a question. It also provides quick tips on how to approach specific content in an exam situation in order to save time.

The booklets have been designed to provide simplified notes and a variety of questions sourced from various past question papers. Instead of providing responses for all questions, the Self Study Guides assist with the analysis and interpretation of questions. This is to ensure that learners focus on studying the content instead of the questions. Learners are also reminded that the same content may be tested in different ways. Therefore, it is important to understand the command verbs and to have both conceptual and content knowledge.

A second package of the Self Study Guide labelled the Revision Package focuses on subject specific key concepts as examined over a period of 6 years and sourced from past Question Papers. There are 12 sets of questions/activities and Marking Guidelines provided to guide you and assist with revision and exam preparation. You are expected to answer these questions without looking at the responses. You may do a self-assessment after you have completed answering the questions.

Additional to this Self Study Guide learners are expected to:

- (a) Know current affairs or topical issues in the media that are relevant to Religion Studies
- (b) Use of past NSC papers – (Thutong and past papers on your internet search engine)
- (c) Use the 2021 Examination Guidelines (Thutong – Religion Studies Exam Guideline)
- (d) Use various textbooks, newspapers and other sources such as internet

Lastly, Religion Studies is designed to test critical thinking, application of knowledge and provision of advice or solutions from a religious perspective. Therefore, a good grounding in the prescribed knowledge, skills and values in Religion Studies is essential.

3. TOPIC: CENTRAL TEACHINGS ACROSS RELIGIONS

3. 1 BACKGROUND TO CENTRAL TEACHINGS

The religious teachings are the teachings of a particular religion that make up a particular religious tradition. Every religion communicates its teachings to its followers. These teachings are accepted as the fundamental values and principles by the followers. There are several concepts that relate to these religious teachings, but they mean slightly different things. These concepts also convey religious meanings and truths. The concepts that will be discussed here are the following

- Beliefs
- Myths
- Doctrines and Dogma
- Ideologies
- Parables

Belief refers to what the followers claim /feel it is true. This belief binds a religious community together

Myths are seen as the sacred stories that explain why the world is as it is. They are seen as sacred because they come from divine realm. In most religions myths are found to be explaining how everything was divinely created and what will happen to humans after they die.

Doctrines refer to the set of principles and values that are accepted by the followers, they are not fixed but they are adapted over time to suit the needs of the followers

Dogma refers to those principles and values of a religion that **cannot** be changed, it is the claim of absolute authority of certain teachings. They are binding on the followers who want to claim membership of a religion

Ideologies refer to a set of ideals and principles that explain how a society or culture should be ordered. These ideas are based on the needs and goals of a political or religious group

Parables refer to simple story that is used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson. Through the parable the followers will understand and live their lives according to those morals. There are several examples of parables in the different religions

These religious teachings can be in the form of written or oral text. The discussion of the religious central teachings will embrace the following aspects:

- Nature of **divinity**
- Nature of the **world**
- Nature of humanity with reference to community and the individual
- Place and responsibility of humanity in the world
- The origin and role of evil and how to overcome it
- Life after death

3.2 KEY CONCEPTS

No.	KEY CONCEPTS	MEANING
1	Divinity	The state or quality of being divine
2	Humanity	The quality of being humane
3	Doctrines	A belief or a set of beliefs held and taught by various organisations such as church, political party, or other groups
4	Overcome	Succeed in dealing with a problem
5.	Supreme Being	The perfect and all-powerful spirit or being that is worshipped
6.	Dogma	The source of life and the ultimate cause of death
7	Parables	A simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson
8	Myths	A type of sacred story, mainly about the origin or the end of time or a key event in time
9	Adherents	Supporters or believers of a certain organisation
10	Reincarnation	The belief that beings are born into a next life repeatedly.
11	Ritual	A religious observance intended to remind of a sacred occasion or to bring a sacred presence about
12	Belief system	Set of views about ultimate reality or divinity
13	Evolving	Developing into something else

3.3 NATURE OF DIVINITY



Divinity refers to **a state of being divine, like a god or an angel**. It means holy or sacred, anything very holy is full of divinity. The core teaching of the nature of divinity will be discussed under those religions that acknowledge the existence of the divine being and teach the followers about who the divine being is

African Traditional Religion

- They believe in the existence of a Supreme Being.
- The Supreme Being is given different names in different parts of Africa, e.g., Bembe, Oludumare, and Umvelinqangi.
- The Supreme Being does not communicate directly with the living.
- Communication is conducted through the intermediaries, called ancestors, also known as the living dead.
- African tribes recognise the existence of different gods such as Oludumare, Bembe and Mvelinqangi

Islam

- The Muslims believe in a universal God called Allah.
- Belief in oneness with Allah as the foundation of Islam.
- Allah has other titles, which reflect His attributes.
- He is the Creator (Khaliq) and Originator (Badi) of the universe, continuing to create new forms of life and sustaining all of creation.
- Human beings must affirm and acknowledge the existence of Allah and live in accordance with His divine will.
- The Muslim understanding of divinity is essentially shaped by the Qur'an

Judaism

- The Jews believe in the existence of a Supreme Being called Yahweh.
- God is the Creator of the universe.
- God revealed Himself to the forefathers and prophets.
- God is the Spirit but has the attributes of man.
- He is eternally present, through history and beyond.
- God continuously creates, judges, redeems, and has personal involvement in human life

Buddhism

- Buddhism does not acknowledge the divine being like other religions do.
- Most forms of Buddhism accept that there are beings who are more powerful and who live longer than humans who may be referred to as 'gods'.
- These gods in Buddhism are not immortal.
- They may live for millions of years, but eventually will die and be reborn.
- They did not create the universe, for they themselves are part of it.
- Buddhists may pray to a local god, but they do not believe that the god can help them become enlightened

Hinduism

- Vedas teach that although there are many different gods and goddesses in the universe, they are all manifestations of the same divine power.
- This power is referred to Brahman – Brahman is not a supreme being or deity.
- Brahman is the divine power that makes up the entire universe.
- It is the 'World Soul' that exists everywhere, and everything is part of it.
- Brahman is an impersonal power that cannot be described or known by humans, unless and until they attain spiritual liberation (moksha)

Christianity

- Christians believe in the existence of the supreme and divine being known as God
- God manifests himself in three persons:
- God the Father - Creator of the universe
- God the Son - The Saviour and Liberator of humanity
- God the Holy Spirit - the Counsellor and advocate of Christians
- Christians believe in the existence of the supreme and divine being known as God

Baha'i Faith

- God is the creator of the universe and is infinitely exalted above his creation.
- Human beings do not have the capacity to fully understand God's unknowable essence.
- They can see the signs of God's power and qualities in creation.
- God is not limited to or defined solely by his or her creation.
- Neither is God limited in any way by the qualities of his creation.
- Both the spiritual and the physical creations are creations of the same God

Taoism

- In Taoism all there is, is the universe and so all there is, is divine.
- The workings of the universe are divine.
- Taoists suggest that the Tao cannot be described.
- The things that are seen and touched are 'being'.
- Unlimited divine is described as 'non-being'
- The non-being is the starting point of everything.
- According to the Taoists everything in creation consists of two kinds of forces: the yang is active, light, forceful, male, and the yin is passive, dark, and female

3.4 NATURE OF THE WORLD



Nature of the world refers to the earth, together with all its countries and peoples to all of the animals, plants, and other things existing in nature and not made or caused by people. All that exists is looked upon as a living wholeness manifesting itself in a variety of faces

African Traditional Religion

- For the indigenous traditional African the idea of the world includes all that exists
- The world is understood as the cosmos
- All that exists is looked upon as one living wholeness manifesting itself in a variety of faces and phases
- Life is understood as a perpetual exchange of interconnected forces among and between all beings
- Life is regarded as a force that is forever in motion
- Principle of motion underlies the African understanding of life as a perpetual exchange of forces
- According to this understanding the cosmos or the universe does not have a centre hence some philosophers speak to the African understanding of life as **Vitalogy**
- If the understanding of life follows this notion, there is a consequence which says that it is difficult to be sure what life is
- The second consequence is that the future is understood as containing an element of secrecy which makes it impossible to predict it with precision and certainty
- The uncertainty compels the human beings and other living beings to seek certainty which simply means seeking for security

Islam

- According to Qur'an Allah created the universe in six phases/stages for the benefit of humanity
- Allah provides the energy to everything the universe needs for survival and growth
- According to Islam the existence of the universe is not accidental, and life is not purposeless but planned and purposeful
- Plant and animal species in the world have a role in the ecosystem
- New forms of life are continuously created and function according to the established laws
- The universe is not eternal but have a fixed timespan
- Allah alone is eternal
- There is also a belief in the Day of Judgement, Day of Resurrection, Day of Recompense which is when the world will cease to exist

Buddhism

- According to Buddhism, this world is one of millions of worlds. In each, a Buddha will rediscover the true nature of reality.
- A Buddha flourishes for thousands of years, declines, and eventually dies out. Thereafter the next Buddha arise
- Near its demise, a young man will try to understand reasons for human suffering and how to eliminate it.
- His discovery makes him the new Buddha.
- The cycle then repeats itself.

Christianity

- According to Christianity the world was created for the pleasure of humanity.
- God created the earth and allowed humans to use the resources of the Garden of Eden
- Humans, marine, animal and plant lives all belong to God.
- It is God who oversees the weather, climate, time, and seasons of the year.
- God the Father sent his Son, Jesus, into the world
- After ascending to heaven, the Son then sent the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit in turn sent the Church into the world to continue God's missionary work.

Baha'i Faith

- According to the Baha'i Faith, God created the universe and humanity is supreme among its creatures.
- According to Baha'i Faith the world originally had no national boundaries instead people divided the world into different territories and countries.
- In reality the world is one place, the home of all humankind
- Human beings with their rational powers can conquer the world.
- The world is a transitory place.
- The world and what is in it is not worthy of attachment, and humans have been continually reminded that they must detach themselves from things of this world
- Living in this world people are given a chance to develop virtues, build character and advance spiritually

3.5 NATURE OF HUMANITY WITH REFERENCE TO COMMUNITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

The community refers to **all the individual people living in an area or a group or groups of people who share common interests such as sharing the same religion, language, and culture**. For an example a group of Buddhists who meet and chant together.



African Traditional Religion

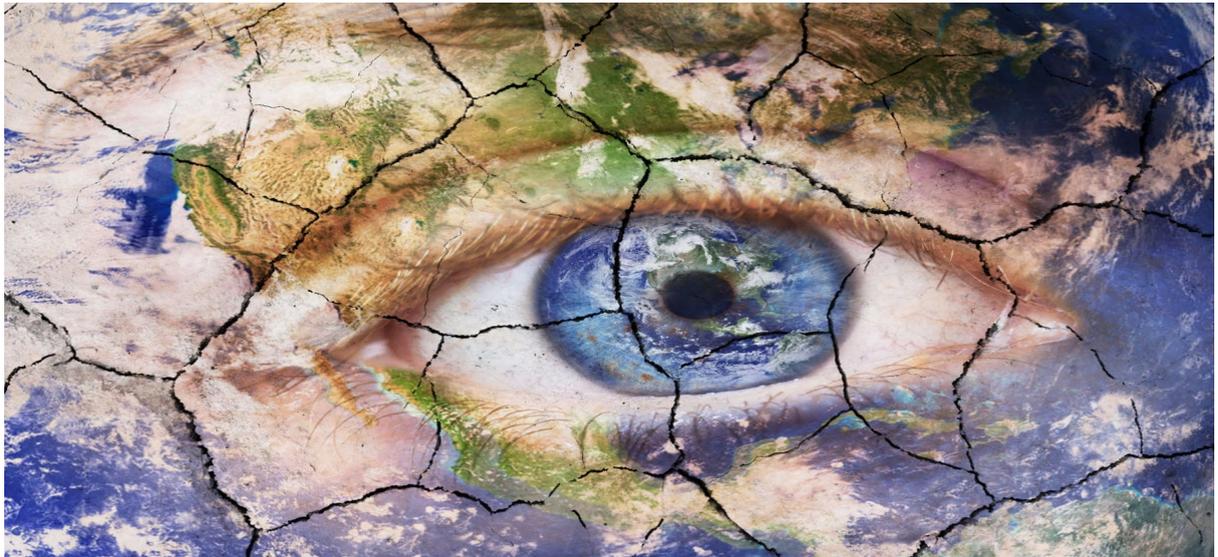
- The understanding of life in the ATR is based on the idea of the relationship among and between all living beings
- This principle: “I am related therefore I am” – means that the human being as an individual cannot be reduced to anything else.
- The individual depends on the community for growth,
- The individual also derives the meaning of life from the community which serves as the source
- Individual security is also attained through the construction of the community.

Bahai Faith

- Baha’i Faith teaches that humans are the greatest representatives of God
- Humans were created to know and to worship God
- Humanity will not be able to achieve the success and prosperity of which it is capable until women are treated as equal to men

3.6 PLACE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF HUMANITY IN THE WORLD

Human nature is a **concept that refers to the important nature and characteristics—including ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that humans are said to have naturally**. The term is often used to denote the essence of humankind, or what it 'means' to be human.



Taoism

- Humans are a tiny, microscopic by-product of the Tao's creation.
- The Tao is infinitely more powerful than humans.
- Humans are not a special creation, and they are not in charge of the world.
- The universe will continue its path, as determined by the Tao.
- Whatever humans do is exactly according to the whims of the Tao.
- Humans should look after the earth because polluting it is harmful for them.
- It is not done to appease the Tao.
- Humans can destroy only a small part of creation.
- Despite this, the bountiful creative activity of the Tao will continue.

Judaism

- According to Judaism humans are God's most amazing creation.
- However, Judaism also teaches that humans are weak and insignificant.
- This is because of our temptation to sin.
- By following the Torah, man can achieve spiritual communion with God.
- As humans are created in the image of God, the goal of human existence is to try and be like God.

- Humans must not only believe in the teachings but must express their faith through right actions.
- A major action that Jews must carry out is the act of charity.
- This is aimed at uplifting the Jewish community.
- It also includes outreach programmes for non-Jews, as their right action must benefit mankind as a whole

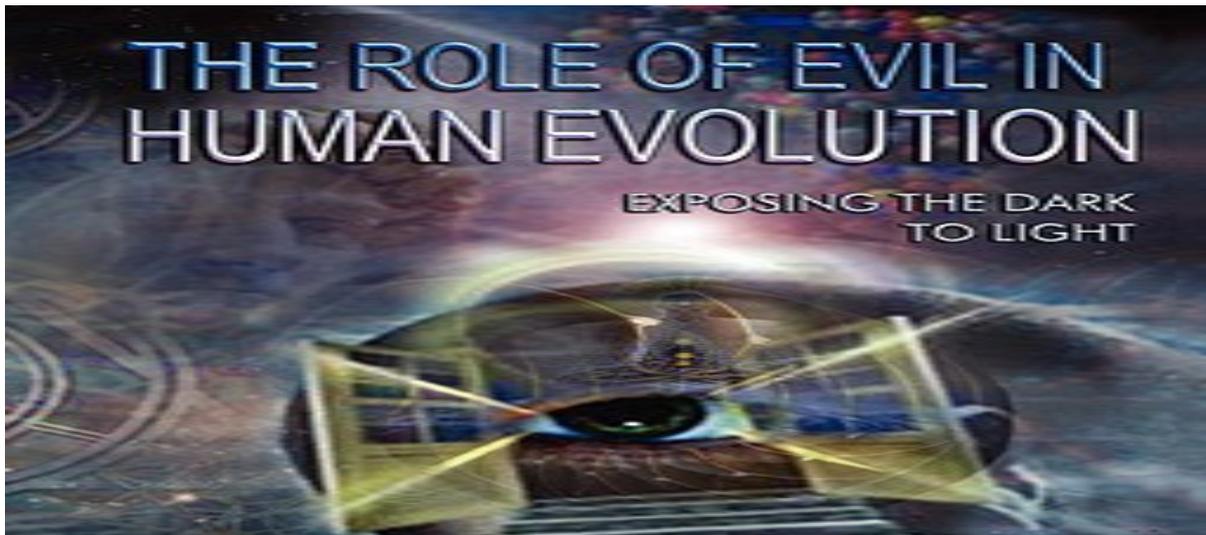
Islam

- Humans are one of the many species that make up creation.
- Humans in Islam are the highest form of creation.
- They are vice-regents (khalifah) of Allah.
- This places an enormous responsibility on human beings.
- They are entitled to use the earth's resources for their own benefit.
- They must respect creation highly and use resources responsibly and efficiently.
- They are accountable for their actions on the Day of Judgment.

Buddhism

- Buddhism sees being born as a human as rare and very precious, since one can be born as so many other types of being.
- Humanity is the only condition in which enlightenment is possible.
- In Buddhism human reincarnation is very important.
- The primary responsibility of every human is to become enlightened.
- Humans must share the way of enlightenment with others.
- Everything else is secondary and, anyway, impermanent.

3.7 THE ORIGIN, THE ROLE OF EVIL AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT



Evil refers to **profound immorality and wickedness**. It is generally seen as taking several possible forms, such as the form of personal moral evil commonly associated with the word, or impersonal natural evil (as in the case of natural disasters or illnesses), and in religious thought, the form of the demonic or supernatural/eternal. In everyday usage it is often more narrowly used to talk about profound wickedness.

Religion: **African Traditional Religion**

- In this religion evil **originates** from human action which includes purposeful disruption of community life, through witchcraft, acting against the ethical principles to promote and protect life, deciding to forget about the living dead and ignoring their wishes made known to the living through dreams and in other ways, and being disrespectful for nature
- Such violation carries the name evil and the person who commits evil is regarded as the evil doer.
- The evil doer might be punished by the ancestors who will bring about disease, floods, droughts on the community
- The **role** of evil is to disrupt the order of the universe and the community

How to overcome evil

- The person who did evil (evil doer) should undergo a ritual cleansing
- The purpose of this cleansing is to appease the ancestors and to reconcile the evil doer with the community

Religion: **Islam**

In Islam the concepts of evil and good are determined by three sources namely:

- The primary sources: **the Qur'an and hadith** specify what is virtue and what is vice
 - **Consensus of Muslim scholars**, if the sacred scriptures are not clear about the issue, scholars apply their minds and decide if it is beneficial or harmful
 - **Human nature**: human beings have a natural moral sense given to them by Allah, which enables them to distinguish between good and evil
- The Muslims believe that evil is linked with Satan or the devil.
 - Allah created Adam and commanded all of creation to bow before him.
 - Satan refused to bow claiming that he was better than Adam because he was created from fire, whereas Adam was created with clay.
 - That pride led Satan to fall from grace with Allah
 - Satan vowed that forever, he would use his power to mislead people and dissuade them from obeying God.
 - Human beings have a natural moral sense given to them by Allah, which enables them to distinguish between good and evil.
 - Every individual is obliged to avoid what is evil and do what is good

Judaism

- The members of the Jewish Religion believe that people are born good.
- Each person has a holy spark, a divine soul with the unlimited potential for good.
- God gives everyone free will to choose whether to retain this goodness or not.
- It is most important to do what God wants you to do.

How to overcome

- Through personal growth we can overcome evil.
- The study and practice of the Torah are seen as the antidote to evil.
- Through repentance - when one commits a sin one can draw close to God and improve oneself there is no need for the intermediary as God deals directly with each person

Buddhism

- Evil is not the problem in the Buddhist understanding but ignorance is
- Buddhism sees people as basically good, but unaware of their potential.
- Evil has no origin because reality itself has no origin.
- Reality and its ignorant inhabitants stretch back infinitely into the past
- Universes arise, last for a while, and then disappear. Within these universes, Buddha appears to show people how to escape from the suffering that characterises reality.
- Because people are ignorant of how the universe works, they desire things
- To get these things, they are prepared not only to suffer themselves, but also to make others suffer.
- Ignorance leads people to regard themselves as permanent, unconnected entities, and to deny that their actions have consequences.

How to overcome evil

- Buddhism sees evil as being a result of ignorance it therefore holds that this evil can be overcome by knowledge
- But this knowledge is not from the books.
- It has to be felt 'in the bones' at a deep existential level.
- To obtain this knowledge Buddhism prescribes meditation.
- To meditate effectively, people have to follow a strict but reasonable lifestyle.
- They should refrain from doing what is evil and inharmonious.

Religion: **Christianity**

- According to Christianity God did not create evil when he created the world.
- He created a perfect world and perfect human beings.
- Evil was introduced later when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's commands.

- Christians call this kind of disobedience 'sin'.
- Christians believe that evil is often used by Satan who was once God's angel but rebelled against God and tried to claim power for himself
- When Satan uses evil, it causes communities to disintegrate and destroys the fellowship that should exist between humans and God, humans and other humans, and God's world

Purpose of evil

- God can use evil as a tool to teach humanity

Taoism

- In Taoism, there is no such thing as evil since everything is the Tao.
- The belief is that everything is as it should be.
- The Tao-te Ching has little to say about the existence of evil or about the fight against it.
- The Tao-te Ching has a lot to say about human suffering and how life can be lived in a way that minimises suffering.
- Human suffering arises when human desires are thwarted.
- Taoists believe that there is no reason for us to conflict with things.
- According to the Tao, in aligning you with the true nature of the Tao, and then a kind of miracle happens.
- You discover that life has an almost miraculous power to be engaging and enriching because that is its nature.
- Giving way is the recipe for coping with suffering or disappointment if your problem is that things are happening that you don't want

Hinduism

- Hindus do not deny the reality of pain, misery and evil in the world.
- They believe that evil is not inherent in the human being.
- Evil is like a cloud throwing its shadow over the passing sun.
- The cloud passes but the sun does not change.
- In Brahman there is no evil.

- Suffering and evil are caused by a perception of duality between man and the universe, between people and god.
- If we become one with Brahman, there will be no evil

Baha'i Faith

- According to Baha'i teachings God created a perfect world
- Any perceived evil is simply the lack of goodness, as darkness is the lack of light.
- Where there is no light, we perceive darkness
- According to Baha'i teachings God created a perfect world
- This is a positive way of perceiving the world which enables people to concentrate on what is desirable and avoid giving the undesirable prominence

3.8 LIFE AFTER DEATH



Death is the end of human/animal/any living creature's existence. Death also refers to the act of dying; the end of life; the total and permanent. Different religions have teachings about life after death

HINDUISM

Life after death

- The soul is more important than the physical self.
- The body will die, but he who dwells within the body is said to be deathless. (Bhagavad Gita)
- The soul goes through a series of births and deaths. This process is fuelled by desires.
- The quest for worldly desires gives rise to rebirth.
- Just as the person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new, so does the soul cast off worn-out bodies and enter into others that are new.
- The soul is driven from birth to death and from death to birth in a continuous cycle called *samsara*.
- The soul never perishes. Eventually the soul reaches knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme Being and so destroys its *karmas*.
- The soul then doesn't need to be re-born into another body, because it realises its eternal nature

- This is encapsulated in the Law of Karma.
- Living a good life will result in better rebirths, eventually becoming one with God.
- Each person's life is divided into four stages, or *ashrams*.
- A person progresses to the final stage of renouncing life

CHRISTIANITY

- According to Christianity, life does not cease with death, but continues beyond the grave.
- Those who die enter a new phase called paradise.
- Sinners go to hell where they are punished.
- On the Last Day, the ordinary world will no longer exist. The rule of God will prevail.
- Only those who will have lived according to the will of God will live eternal life.
- Death is not the end of life but a phase in the journey of humankind.
- The resurrection implies that life has a purpose. There is a Day of Resurrection during which the good and the evil will be rewarded according to their actions on this world.

TAOISM

- According to the Taoists, death is simply a process of transformation in which you go from one form to another.
- In this religion, the faithful are encouraged not to fear death and that they should make fun of it.
- The Taoists do not mind death, they are taught to appreciate it.
- Death is also understood as a stage in the ongoing process of transformation which characterises the universe.
- The belief is that one does not need life after death or the kind of heaven

BUDDHISM

- For unenlightened beings, many rebirths occur.
- Enlightened beings like Buddhas can see the futility of the process and step out of the cycle.
- This is referred to as "nirvana".
- Most Buddhists put off the search for nirvana for numerous lifetimes as they are engaged in worldly matters.

- Buddhists do not strive for life after death. They desire nirvana.
- Life after death is seen as the normal course of events.
- On attaining enlightenment, a Buddhist sees that individuality is an illusion, and life after death is unworthy of serious attention.

ISLAM

- Those who believed in Allah and fulfilled their obligations to the Creator and creation, will enter Paradise.
- They will dwell forever in this place, and this will be their destination.
- Those who denied Allah will be sent to Hell, to be tormented forever
- According to Islam, life does not end with death.
- The dead enter a state of being called *barzakh*, which lasts until Judgement Day.
- On Judgement Day, all people will be resurrected and called to account for their deeds before Allah.

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION

- When a human being dies, he/she departs to the land of the spirits.
- This world after death is understood as a place; a space that is occupied by the living dead.
- From this world they keep watch over the deeds of the living and protect or punish them and sometimes appear to them.
- Death takes them away from planet earth but does not take away life from them.
- Only those persons who lead good lives can become ancestors

JUDAISM

- The thirteen articles of faith say that in the time of the Mashiach, there will be resurrection of the dead.
- Judaism maintains that when people die, their souls move on to another existence.
- The Torah does not discuss this world but just hints at it.
- The oral tradition expands on the understanding of this world yet a number of mysteries as to the exact details remain.
- It is also stated in their belief that a person attains a place or portion in the world to come by performing good deeds.

- The belief in the world to come is based on the belief that the soul returns to a place of spiritual closeness to its source i.e, from God.

BAHA'I FAITH

- According to this religion human soul is created by God and becomes associated with the body at the time of conception and continues to live beyond physical death
- It is the same process that the child in a womb prepares for life after birth by developing hands, legs and other physical elements – people develop spiritual qualities in this life in preparation for the life beyond their passing
- Heaven and hell are symbolic of the soul's relationship to God.
- Nearness to God results in good deeds and gives infinite joy (heaven), while remoteness from God leads to evil and suffering (hell)
- The condition of the soul after death depends on the spiritual qualities or attributes a person attains during this earthly life.
- A faithful soul will attain sublime position and eternal happiness, but unfaithful soul will recognise his/her loss and be consumed in remorse
- None of us know our own ends therefore we should forgive others and not feel superior towards them
- Prayers and devotions by the loved ones in this world can affect the state of departed souls and help their progress

3.9 ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES AND EXAM SKILLS ON HOW TO ANSWER

The purpose of this Section is to show possible questions that could be asked.

Focus will be on the **exam skills** required to answer these questions in the exam paper.

The questions below were taken from previous years question papers.

You'll be guided on how to answer these questions.

Read the extract below and answer the questions that follow.

Teachings are related to belief in the sense that followers will have faith in a particular religion because they have accepted a set of teachings that they feel is true.

[Source: *Religion Studies Grade 12*, RD Donne et al]

1. With reference to **ONE** religion you have studied, answer the following:
 - 1.1 Discuss the nature of the world
 - 1.2 Discuss the nature of divinity
 - 1.3 Write FIVE facts that explain what this religion teaches about life after death

How to answer this question:

When you answer a question:

- The focus should be based on the religion of your choice. If you choose ATR, for example, your responses should be based on ATR and throughout. (Q.1.1. – 1.3.)
- Take note: if you decide to change the religion you mentioned in Q1.1. above, your responses will not be rewarded any marks because it would mean that you have not adhered to the instruction and what the question requires you to do
- For **Q.1.1 - 1.3**. Refer to the study guide.

2. Discuss the responses of any ONE religion to the following fundamental questions about human existence:

- What was man's origin?
- What is the role of humankind in the universe?
- What is humankind's ultimate destination?

How to answer this question?

Q: What was man's origin?

- Choose any **ONE** religion that you have studied to answer all the three questions asked.
- Explain **how man came into being / existence** in the religion that you have chosen.
Refer to the notes about nature of humanity in the Study Guide.

Q: What is the role of humankind in the universe?

- Continue to use the same religion that you have chosen in the first question to discuss the **role of humanity in the world** and **human kind's ultimate destination**

3. According to some religions human sufferings is caused by evil. Do you agree with the statement? Support your answer by referring to the teachings of any **ONE** religion.

HOW TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION

- Think of a religion that does not agree to the statement
- Explain the teaching of the chosen religion about origin and role of evil.

OR

- Think of a religion that agrees to statement
- Explain the teaching of the chosen religion about origin and role of evil

4. Study and exam tips

Command verbs

Candidates need to be skilled in the application of knowledge. Analytical skills of candidates need to be developed through open-ended questions. It is essential that candidates have a good understanding of the “action words” commonly used in the NSC Examinations.

L1 and L 2	
Remembering	Understanding
Exhibit memory of previously learned material by recalling facts, basic concepts; and answers.	Demonstrate understanding of facts and ideas by: organising, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptions and stating main ideas.
Choose Define Find How List Match Name Relate Select What When Where Which Who Why	Classify Compare Contrast Explain Illustrate Outline Summarise Infer Relate Show Demonstrate

L3 and L 4	
Applying	Analysing
Solve problems to new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts techniques and rules in a different way.	Examine and break information into parts by identifying reasons or causes. Make inference and find evidence to support generalisations.
Apply Choose Develop Identify Interview Construct Report Change Conclude Demonstrate Discuss Explain Illustrate Interpret Report Review Summarise Tell Prepare Show	Analyse Assume Categorise Classify Compare Contrast Conclude Distinguish Examine Infer

L5 and L 6	
Evaluating	Creating
Present and defend opinions by making judgements about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria	Compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing an alternative solution
Apply Appraise Assess Compare Conclude Consider Criticise Decide Defend Determine Evaluate Explain Interpret Judge Justify Recommend Support Argue	Change Choose Combine Compile Compose Construct Create Develop Elaborate Imagine Improve Plan Predict Propose Solve Suppose Produce

IMPORTANT:

- Command verbs guide us on what each questions is requiring us to do.
- Ensure that you analyse the question to understand the command verb.
- Use a highlighter to highlight or underline the command verbs.

4.1 Study and Examination Tips

The table below outlines the topics that need to be covered in Grade 12 for Religion Studies.

TOPIC	SUB-TOPICS
VARIETY OF RELIGIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual distinctions • Internal differentiations within religions • Main features of such differentiations * • Unique features of various religions * • History and present dynamics of inter-religious relationships
COMMON FEATURES OF RELIGION AS A GENERIC AND UNIQUE PHENOMENON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious teachings • The central teachings in one religion • Normative sources in various religions • Interpreting one normative source • Analysis of secular worldviews • The origin, purpose and influencing factors behind at least two worldviews
TOPICAL ISSUES IN SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a strategy to solve a major social problem * • Role of media in influencing public opinion on religion * • Religious freedom, human rights and responsibilities
RESEARCH INTO AND ACROSS RELIGIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion in areas of conflict in South Africa, Africa and the world • Religion and the natural sciences

NB: The SELF STUDY Guide consists of 8 BOOKLETS that cover a variety of topics. The only topics that are not covered by the SELF STUDY Guide are those indicated with an asterix (*). These are generally open-ended topics that will require application of knowledge. You need to go through past papers to ensure that you see how this content is assessed.

5. REFERENCES

Steyn, H.C; Kruger, J.S & Clasquin, M. 2007: Religion Studies Grade 12 Learner's Book

Hofmeyr, J;Mndende, N; Maclagan,B; Ryan, M & Thraves, P. 2019: Shuttters Top Class Grade 12 Learner's Book

