Past Paper Questions for Theme E: Crime & Punishment

Key

Red writing = has already had an essay question on it.

Black writing = no past paper has had a question directly on this yet.

*The questions in red might come up again but the most likely topics for the future essay questions are the black ones.*

**3.2.1.5 Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment**

Students … must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the main religious tradition in Britain (Christianity) and one or more other religious traditions:

• Corporal punishment.

• Death penalty.

• Forgiveness.

**Religion, crime and the causes of crime**

• Good and evil intentions and actions, including whether it can ever be good to cause suffering.

Reasons for crime, including:

• poverty and upbringing

• mental illness and addiction

• greed and hate

• opposition to an unjust law.

• Views about people who break the law for these reasons.

• Views about different types of crime, including hate crimes, theft and murder.

**Religion and punishment**

The aims of punishment, including:

• retribution

• deterrence

• reformation.

The treatment of criminals, including:

• prison

• corporal punishment

• community service

• forgiveness

• the death penalty

• ethical arguments related to the death penalty, including those based on the principle of utility and sanctity of life.

Specimen paper

‘Corporal punishment can never be justified.’ (Similar to 2021)

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you:

• should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement

• should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view

• should refer to religious arguments

• may refer to non-religious arguments

• should reach a justified conclusion

[12 marks] SPaG 5 Marks

Additional specimen paper

‘Reformation is the best aim of punishment.’

2018 paper

‘The death penalty should never be used.’

2019 paper

‘There is nothing wrong with sending a criminal to prison.’

2020

‘Deterring people from committing crime is the best aim of punishment.’

2021

 ‘Religious believers should never agree with corporal punishment.’

2022 paper (mock exam)

‘Religious people should always obey the law.’

2023 paper

‘Community service does not punish the criminal enough.’

2024 paper

‘Religious believers should never support the use of the death penalty.’

Textbook questions:

*These questions are written by the same person who writes the exams. Some of them have come up in the real exam.*

Key: red = similar to an essay question that has already been in the real exam. Yellow = relatively likely to be an essay question in the real exam.

‘[There are never] any circumstances in which it may be acceptable to cause suffering.’

‘There is never any reason why somebody should commit a crime.’

‘Should offenders have rights?’

‘Hate a crime but not the person who commits it.’

‘All crimes are hate crimes.’

‘Theft due to poverty is [n]ever justified.’

‘God [should not] allow people to suffer.’

‘Prisoners should be treated with dignity while in prison.’

‘Corporal punishment would reduce crime if it was reintroduced.’

‘It is right to forgive all offenders whoever they are and whatever they have done.’