



GCSE

Religious Studies A

8062/2B Thematic Studies (including textual studies)

Report on the examination

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Introduction

This report deals with Themes G and H of the 8062/2B paper. For detailed comments on Themes A-F refer to the 8062/2A report on the examination.

The examination this year was taken seriously by the students. There were very few papers where the student made little or no attempt at answering the questions. This is a credit to them and those who prepared them for the examination.

As always, the most successful students were those who had a good grasp of the passages being examined taken from St Mark's Gospel. Where they knew the text, they were able to gain marks even if the interpretation was flawed. For most questions, simply knowing the outline of the narrative was enough to gain some credit.

Occasionally, there was some muddling between passages set in the examination. In the question paper, we try to use the specification title wherever possible. This is particularly applicable to the AO1 questions (parts 1,2,3,4). If the students know the specification passages, this is worth remembering. This point is illustrated in the comments on the individual questions.

There were some students who misunderstood the rubric and either attempted to answer all eight of the themes or did not understand that Themes G and H are required in this paper.

Theme G: St Mark's Gospel – the life of Jesus

7.1

Most student identified the place of baptism correctly as the River Jordan.

7.2

This is a text recall exercise in many ways. Students need to identify two things from the correct text. It does not need to be a long answer. There were some students who gave a developed answer explaining their choice of example. This is not required. If a word or phrase is possible then that will be credited if it is correct. The other thing is that only the first two examples are credited if three or more are offered. The most common mistake in this answer was where the student gave examples from the trial before Pilate, not the High Priest.

7.3

The reference to contrast in this question did not seem to present many problems. Students were able to give two different beliefs about the conversation between Jesus and the disciples at Caesarea Philippi. However, there was some muddling between that conversation and the Transfiguration or call of the first disciples. Hence the emphasis in the comment above about knowing the heading in the specification.

7.4

This was not a contrast question. It was a straightforward question about what Christians might learn from the healing of Jairus' daughter. Students who only knew the narrative could gain up to 2 marks for that. Further marks were given when some understanding of the meaning of the text was demonstrated e.g. it showed that Jesus had God's power. The 'fifth mark' for the quotation comes when the student gives a reasonably accurate quotation and identifies it e.g. 'Jesus said to give the girl something to eat.' Many understood the correct meaning of 'Talitha cum'.

7.5

The best answers here focussed clearly on the question. The central theme of the question was whether the testimony of the women was sufficient evidence to support the claim of the resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, those that developed this through reference to the women seeing where he was buried, finding the tomb open, the message from the young man and their fear were all important. Those who developed other arguments about the possible explanations for the missing body did receive credit as alternative arguments, but this was not the prime focus of the question.

Theme H: St Mark's Gospel as a source of religious, moral and spiritual truths

8.1

The vast majority of students were able to identify that clay soil was not mentioned in the Parable of the Sower.

8.2

This passage about the epileptic ('demon possessed' boy) was not well known by many students. There were many attempts to answer using the sort of things that Jesus might say, e.g. 'Your faith has healed you.' Attempts like this are better than leaving a blank. In some instances, the attempt can be close enough to gain some credit. Where students did know the story of this healing, they were able to gain the 2 marks available.

8.3

The story of the children being brought to Jesus was again not as well-known as other passages. There were some students who believed that the children had been brought to be healed and that Jesus refused to heal them. Others thought that the children had been brought for forgiveness and that Jesus forgave them. Again, those who knew the text were able to gain the credit with little difficulty.

8.4

This question about the Mission of the Twelve caused most problems for students confusing their answers. The most common mistake was muddling the Mission with the Commission at the end of St Mark's Gospel. Where there was overlap between the two passages e.g. healing the sick this could be credited. This is a good example of getting the titles of the passages clear in students' minds.

8.5

As would be expected by the focus of this question, the answers which focussed on those who were ignored by society in Jesus' day were strongly in evidence. There were many references to the healing of the leper, the woman with haemorrhages and Levi being one of the disciples. Those who added a little explanation as to why these people were ignored were able to get up to level 4. The commonest contrasting examples were Jesus answering the rich young man's questions and Jairus' daughter. What was missing from many good answers was any reference to what Christians today might think about this and who the outsiders in today's society might be. This skill of applying the teaching is worth developing in Theme H.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.