

Item 1

Both religion and science are belief systems that claim to offer explanations for the way things are. For example, some religions explain ill health in terms of God's will, while science will offer medical explanations.

Karl Popper argues that science and religion are very different, because science is open to falsification. However, not everyone agrees that science is as objective and open as Popper suggests.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** similarities between science and religion as belief systems (10 marks)

Item 1

Most feminist sociologists see religion as a patriarchal institution. While some point to various ways which religious organisations and doctrines are fundamentally sexist, others focus on more subtle ways in which religion encourages women to accept a subservient role in society.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** ways in which religion supports patriarchy. (10 marks)

Item 1

Marxist sociologists argue that religion is of benefit to the rich. They argue that religious teachings keep the working class obedient and docile and also, through ideology, encourage them to accept that the way society is must be how it has to be.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** ways in which religion benefits the ruling class. (10 marks)

Item 1

Although many sociologists argue religion is a conservative force, there are those who argue that religion can lead to social change. That social change might be an unintended consequence of the ideas put forward by religion, or else specific religious teachings might encourage people to campaign to change society.

Applying material from **Item 1** analyse **two** ways in which religion can lead to social change. (10 marks)

Item 1

New Age movements differ significantly from traditional churches – so much so that some question whether they are religions at all. Unlike churches, New Age movements are often loose-knit and individualised, without the formal ceremonies and with different levels of commitment and belief. Some, like yoga for instance, are more like therapy or leisure than religion.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons why New Age beliefs are becoming more popular, at the expense of traditional churches. (10 marks)

Item 1

Statistics suggest that women attend church more than men and generally are more likely to hold religious beliefs than men.

While some would explain this in terms of women's role in society, others (particularly some feminists) would explain it in terms of the function of religion in a male-dominated society. Other sociologists consider the impact of gender socialisation.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons why women are more religious than men (10 marks)

Item 1

In the past, traditional established churches, like the Church of England, had considerable power and influence in society, much of which is no longer there.

It is also the case that most people used to participate in these religious organisations, which were mainstream, compared with other spiritual organisations and sects.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons why churches have lost support during the last 30 years. (10 marks)

Item 1

Religions typically hold strong beliefs and values about issues such as life, gender roles and relationships, sexuality, and how society should be organised. Through its rituals, religion can make individuals feel part of something greater than themselves and bind them together, curbing their selfishness and enabling them to cooperate to achieve shared goals. However, religion has also often been closely allied to privileged groups in society and has been accused of upholding their interests.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** arguments in support of the idea that religion is a conservative social force. (10 marks)

Item 1

The United States is home to groups such as the New Christian Right that campaign to promote religious values in wider society, and opinion polls show that about 40% of Americans describe themselves as 'regular church attenders'. Although these figures may lack validity, church attendance in the USA is certainly higher in European societies such as the United Kingdom. As such large numbers of people are churchgoers, it is likely that there are a wide variety of motives for church attendance.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons why apparently high church attendance figures may not mean that the United States is a religious society. (10 marks)

Item 1

In today's secular Western societies such as Britain, traditional religion still remains an important source of identity and belonging for some people. For many, religious socialisation into the faith of their parents has formed an important part of their upbringing. Traditional religion may also appeal to some because it celebrates their role. For others, New Age spirituality may have particular appeal because it allows them to deal with the role conflicts that arise in modern societies and choose an 'authentic' identity for themselves.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons for differences in religiosity between social groups. (10 marks)

Item 1

As a result of globalisation, the world today is increasingly interconnected. New information technology has created a global communication network and the media transmit images and ideas around the world, often spreading Western values to the developing world. Globalisation has produced economic growth and brought rising prosperity to some groups in developing countries, creating a new middle class, but it has also widened the gap between rich and poor. It has also led to greater flows of people across frontiers as people seek opportunities in the developed countries.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** effects of globalisation on religion. (10 marks)

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Religious organisations tend to be patriarchal. Many religions exclude women from leadership roles and segregate the sexes in worship. Often, religions legitimate and regulate women's domestic roles or require women to cover their bodies in particular ways, such as veiling.

However, despite this, women are generally more likely than men to hold religious beliefs and to participate in religious organisations. They are more likely to attend church and to be involved in its day to day functioning. For example, women are often heavily involved in running fundraising events and in carrying out pastoral work in the community as well as missionary work.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons why women are generally more involved than men in religion, despite its apparently patriarchal nature. (10 marks)

Item 1

Minority ethnic groups often arrive in the United Kingdom with a different culture from that of the host society. Also, members of minority ethnic groups often face racism in their everyday lives.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons why minority ethnic groups in the United Kingdom are often more religious than the majority of the population. (10 marks)

Item 1

Both science and religion are belief systems that involve sets of knowledge-claims: that is, statements that claim to offer explanations of why things are as they are. For example, science uses concepts such as germs to explain why people fall ill from infectious diseases, while some religions use ideas such as the will of God to explain human illness and suffering.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** differences between science and religion as belief systems. (10 marks)

Item 1

Minority ethnic groups often arrive in the United Kingdom with a different culture from that of the host society. Also, members of minority ethnic groups often face racism in their everyday lives.

Applying material from **Item 1**, analyse **two** reasons why minority ethnic groups in the United Kingdom are often more religious than the majority of the population. (10 marks)