3.1 Inquiry method and source evaluation

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS inquiry question • source evaluation • origin • purpose • limitation

Objective

Prepare for inquiry in the new course: build a focused **inquiry question**, choose and **evaluate sources**, and plan an investigation that uses the four concepts.

You must be able to:

- write a focused inquiry question that uses a concept
- choose a mix of primary and secondary sources
- evaluate a source's origin, purpose, value and limitations
- plan research that respects participants
- reflect on the limits of the evidence

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

A focused question

Too wide: "How has religion changed?" *Focused*: "How has the move to online services since 2020 changed **identity** and **belonging** in [a named] church community?" It names a **case**, a **time**, and a **concept**.

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Evaluating a source

ask	example: a church's own report on online attendance
origin	written by the church leadership, 2023
purpose	to inform members and show the church is doing well
value	direct numbers on attendance; insider knowledge
limitation	may present results positively; counts "views", not real participation

Plan

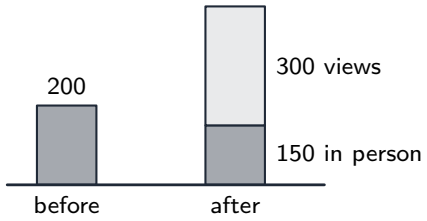
Question → concept(s) → sources (primary: interviews, observation, the community's materials; secondary: scholars, surveys) → ethics (consent, anonymity, respect) → analysis → conclusion with limits.

Worked example. Online "views" rose from 120 to 300 a week, while in-person attendance fell from 200 to 150. Total contacts = 450, up 50 % from 320, but a "view" may be a few seconds, so the true change in participation is unclear.

2 Practice

2.1 State **three** parts of a well-focused inquiry question. [2]

2.2 Before: 200 in person and 0 online. After: 150 in person and 300 online "views". Calculate the percentage change in total contacts, and explain **one** problem with counting views. [3]



2.3 Evaluate the **origin** and **purpose** of a church's own report on its attendance. [4]

2.4 Plan an inquiry on online worship in **one** community, naming sources, ethics and **two** concepts. [6]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Preparation inquiry.)* Write the plan and opening analysis for: "To what extent has online worship changed **belonging** in a religious community you can study?" [15]



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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

a named case or community, and a time period; a concept, e.g. identity or change

2.2

before 200; after $150 + 300 = 450$; change $= (450 - 200)/200 \times 100 =$ **125** %; a "view" may last seconds or be counted twice, so it is not the same as attending; online viewers may not take part in the community, so belonging may not grow

2.3

origin: the church leadership: insider knowledge and direct data; value: accurate local numbers; purpose: to show members the church is doing well; limitation: may select or present figures positively

2.4

a focused question; two concepts linked, e.g. change and identity; primary sources: interviews, observation, the community's data; secondary sources: scholars or surveys; ethics: consent, anonymity, respect; limits planned for, e.g. small sample, insider bias

3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, accurate knowledge of at least three traditions, the four concepts applied, different views and sources evaluated, well-developed critical analysis, different perspectives evaluated, a reasoned conclusion; [10-12] focused, mostly accurate knowledge, analysis with some evaluation; [7-9] some focus, relevant knowledge, mostly narrative or description with limited analysis; [4-6] little focus, limited knowledge, mostly narrative; [1-3] little understanding of the question. Points that may be included: clear question with case and time; concept of belonging defined; sources chosen and justified; source evaluation (origin, purpose, value, limits); ethics; opening analysis with evidence; different members' views (diversity); comparison with a scholar or wider data; limits of the evidence; a planned conclusion that answers "to what extent"

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