3.1 The investigative study

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

KEY WORDS investigative study • primary source • secondary source • consent • place of worship

Objective

Prepare for the **investigative study** (internal assessment): choose a focused question about a religion, gather **primary** and **secondary** evidence (including, where possible, a visit or an interview with consent), analyse it, and present it fairly.

You must be able to:

- write a focused, answerable question about a religion
- plan research with primary and secondary sources
- interview or observe respectfully and with consent
- analyse evidence and diversity within a tradition
- reflect on the study and its limits

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

A focused question

Too wide: "What is Buddhism?" *Focused*: "How does the local Buddhist temple in [a named city] celebrate Vesak, and what does it mean to members?" A good question names **one practice or belief**, **one community** or source, and asks for **meaning** or **change**.

Evidence

- **Primary**: a visit to a place of worship; an interview with an adherent or a leader (with consent); the community's own materials.
- **Secondary**: scholars' books and articles; reliable encyclopedias of religion.
- Compare your local community with the wider tradition: is it typical?

Respect and ethics

Ask permission before visiting or recording; follow dress and behaviour rules; do not use full names without consent; describe beliefs fairly, in the community's own words.

Your teacher will give the format, word or time limit, and criteria from the guide.

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Worked example. A student interviewed three members of a gurdwara about the langar. Two said it shows equality; one said it is mainly about service (*seva*). The student linked both to the Guru Granth Sahib and to Guru Nanak's teaching, and noted that three people cannot represent all Sikhs.

2 Practice

2.1 State **two** features of a well-focused question for the investigative study. [2]

2.2 In the worked example, 2 of 3 interviewees linked the langar to equality. Calculate the fraction as a percentage, and explain why the percentage should not be reported as "67 % of Sikhs". [3]



2.3 Explain **two** ethical rules for visiting a place of worship for the study, and why each matters. [4]

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2.4 Explain how a student should use **secondary** sources to check the findings of a local **primary** study. [6]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Investigative study style.)* Plan an investigation on: "What does the festival of Eid al-Fitr mean to members of [a named] mosque community?" Include sources, ethics, analysis and a conclusion. [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

any two: one practice or belief; one named community or source; asks about meaning, role or change, not just description; answerable with available evidence

2.2

$2/3 \approx$ **67** %; three people are a tiny sample from one gurdwara; they were not chosen at random, so the result cannot be generalized to all Sikhs; it shows a range of views

2.3

any two, explained: ask permission in advance: respects the community's rights; follow dress and behaviour customs, e.g. covering the head in a gurdwara, removing shoes in a mosque: shows respect; consent before recording or interviewing: protects people's privacy; represent views fairly: academic honesty

2.4

compare local practice with scholarly accounts of the wider tradition; identify what is typical and what is local; check the meaning of terms and texts; use more than one scholar; note disagreements; evaluate the reliability of each secondary source; explain any difference found, e.g. culture or branch

3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, accurate knowledge of beliefs, practices and texts, different views within the tradition, academic (not devotional) analysis, 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: focused question restated with its scope; background: Eid al-Fitr ends Ramadan; zakat al-fitr; prayer and celebration; primary sources: visit, interviews, the mosque's materials; secondary sources: scholarly accounts; ethics: permission, consent, anonymity, respect; analysis plan: themes such as gratitude, community, charity; diversity within the community, e.g. ages, cultures; comparison with the wider tradition; limits: sample, the student's own position; a planned conclusion that answers the question

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