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91919

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 1 Religious Studies 2025

91919 Demonstrate understanding of perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on an issue

Credits: Five

SAMPLE ASSESSMENT

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Demonstrate understanding of perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on an issue.	Explain perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on an issue.	Examine perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on an issue.

This sample assessment relates to the issue of working on holy days. The full assessment will provide two issues; candidates will choose ONE of those issues for their response to the questions. This sample assessment includes resource material that would be provided in a separate resource booklet.

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INSTRUCTIONS

This assessment explores the perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on two issues: working on holy days, and whanaungatanga (relationships). You will be asked to consider a religious or spiritual community you have studied in class, **as well as** the material provided in the resource booklet.

RESOURCE

Working on holy days

Holy days are an important aspect of many religious and spiritual traditions. They often require rest or participation in rituals, which may conflict with regular work commitments. Balancing work and religious or spiritual observance can be challenging in today's world. The case study below explores one community's approach to this issue.

Case study: Eli and the storm

In rural Pennsylvania, a young Amish man named Eli lived according to customs passed down through generations. The Amish, a devout Christian group, are known for their simple way of living, shunning modern technology in favour of traditional methods. Their faith teaches them to live humbly, avoid worldly distractions, and strictly observe religious practices. Sundays, along with certain other holy days like Good Friday and Christmas, are sacred times for rest and worship. On these days, no work is to be done, except in cases where the care of their animals urgently requires it.

One Sunday afternoon, a fierce storm swept through Eli's town, leaving a trail of damage across farms and fields. The storm had ripped open part of the roof of a barn belonging to Eli's family, exposing livestock to the elements. Worse, the fence line that separated their property from their non-Amish, or 'English', neighbours had also been badly damaged. The fence, vital for keeping the neighbouring farmer's cattle from wandering, was left in a precarious state. As the wind howled and the rain continued, Eli and his father stood outside, surveying the wreckage. The neighbours arrived shortly after, worried about their cattle escaping and eager to begin repairs immediately.

For the 'English' farmers, this was an urgent situation. Their livestock could easily break through the damaged fence, and if they did, it would cost both time and money to recover them. The neighbours knew that repairs couldn't wait until Monday. They asked Eli and his father to help with the repairs, hoping the Amish family would make an exception to their Sabbath rule in light of the storm. From the neighbours' perspective, this was a shared responsibility, and delaying repairs even by a few hours could result in significant losses.

Eli's father, however, was unmoved. He explained to the neighbours that their faith required them to rest on the Sabbath, a principle they held deeply. Work, unless absolutely necessary for the welfare of their animals, was not permitted.

The text that guided Eli's beliefs was *Rules of a Godly Life* – a book that many Amish followers use to help to centre their daily lives around God. It states: "Make the Sabbath a day of prayer, of listening to and studying sermons; make it a day of holy thoughts and holy conversation. In this way you can keep the Sabbath holy, as is so often commanded in

God's Word. If one does not keep the Sabbath holy, it is certain that he will also take into contempt all the other commandments of God."

The following Bible verse also helps to explain why Eli's family is acting in this way:

> Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.
> For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Even though the situation was dire, Eli's father believed that honouring God by resting and worshiping took precedence. He calmly assured the neighbours that they would begin repairs as soon as the sun rose the next morning, but until then, their hands were tied by their religious obligations.

The neighbours, though frustrated, respected the decision and left to handle what repairs they could on their side of the fence. For them, the idea of waiting seemed impractical.
As Eli and his father returned to the house for the evening, the storm finally began to subside. Inside, the family gathered for their evening meal, following their usual Sunday routine, while their damaged barn and fence remained untouched. Eli, though concerned about the situation, respected his father's decision. He knew that in the morning, the entire Amish community would likely come to their aid, and the repairs would be done quickly and effectively.

An Amish barn with storm damage to the roof

Image source: https://www.pennlive.com/news/2016/02/amish_hard_hit_when_confirmed.html

Please turn over ➤

QUESTION

Answer all parts of this question.

(a) Explain how the perspectives of a religious or spiritual community you have studied in class shape their response to the issue of working on holy days. Identify the community in your answer.

(b) Explain how the perspectives of Eli's community shape their response to the issue of working on holy days. Identify the community Eli belongs to in your answer.

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(c) Discuss the principles that shape the response of both of these religious or spiritual communities to the issue of working on holy days. Consider the wider social context in your answer.

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Write the question number(s) if applicable.

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