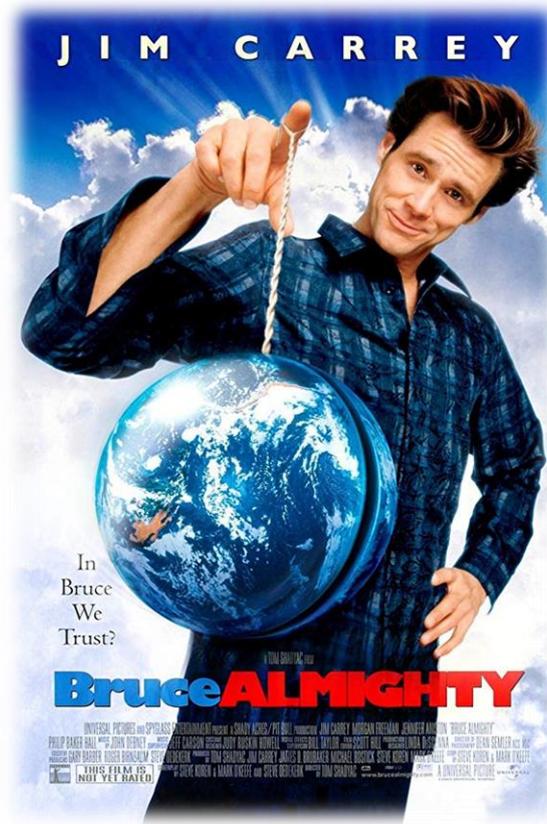


Year 8 RS



Topic 1 – Bruce Almighty: A film study

Knowledge and Assessment Organiser

Student name:



Why do bad things happen to good people?

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Did you know...?

In the scene where Grace is jogging, the song that is playing in the background is by a Christian band called Plumb. It is called "God-Shaped Hole". Music has always been important in worship – whether it's with other people or by yourself. You'll find a lot of singing in the Bible. It talks about angels singing constantly to God to praise him. The longest book in the Bible – the book of Psalms – is actually a collection of song lyrics that were used by the people of Israel to worship God when they went to the Temple. When good things happen to people in the Bible they often respond by singing praise to God. That is still the same for Christians today!

Scan the QR code to listen to the full song; what message do you think they are trying to get across through their lyrics?



What's the Story?

Why do bad things happen to good people?

1 I'd like to introduce you to Philip. He had a wonderful job in a bank and was living a very successful life with wonderful holidays, fast cars and a string of "A List" friends. As he approached his thirties, it looked as if his life was set on a fairly steady, successful, stellar path. But fate stepped in and Philip's world came crashing down around his ears.



5 It was a cold day in January. One of those days when the trees are so cold they look as though they already have snow sticking to their branches. Philip was running late and needed to be in the city for nine o'clock sharp. His lovely old, next door neighbour, Joan, was eighty! Today was her birthday. If Joan didn't get her card today, she might be in bed when he came back from work. Grabbing his coat, briefcase and phone, he sprinted from the house, raced round to Joan's, posted her card and ran back towards his car, slipping massively on a frozen puddle.

14 He tried to stay on his feet when he felt a crunch and a wrench, his knee flaring in red hot pain and he crumpled to the floor in an untidy heap. He tried to straighten his knee, popped the dislocated joint back and gingerly got to his feet. Hobbling to his car, a Porsche 911, he was grateful that he had an automatic gear box.

18 In quite a bit of pain, he drove to his office and limped his way to the meeting, arriving on time ... only to find that the meeting had been moved to a venue on the top floor! Ten floors higher. Racing to the lift – as best he could – he was horrified to see that the lift was broken meaning the walk to the meeting was going to be long and painful. Half way up, the fire alarm sounded! So down he went again!

I think someone was smiling at Philip, because the whole office block was sent home that day due to a fire which ripped through the sixteenth storey and destroyed the meeting room scheduled for that morning. Philip allowed himself a little smile at this point.

25 But imagine his horror upon returning his car when he found he had forgotten to set the hand break and his beautiful, spotless, pristine had crashed with the bottom of the car park ramp, wrapping itself around the parking bollard. At this point ... Philip may have cried.

28 Philip however is made of sterner stuff! Any normal soul would have tantrumed and raged against the fates. Our hero however, put others first. Limping to the bus stop, he caught the bus home and popped in to the corner shop to buy Joan a big bunch of flowers for her birthday. Dropping them off to her, he was delighted to discover that she had baked him a huge chocolate cake and invited him to a home cooked dinner of his favourite meal; steak, chips and mushy peas!

Why does this matter?

We are looking at the importance of choices this term and how our choices can help us better meet our challenges. We will be following the life of Bruce, a TV journalist aspiring to be an evening anchor. He seems beset by challenges until God decides to swap places with him ...

Sounds familiar?

Can you think of days when everything goes wrong? What would you do if given the chance to be God for the day?





Why do bad things happen to good people?

Small
Question

1. Who is to blame when things go wrong?

Small
Question

2. Is it possible to prove the existence of God?

Small
Question

3. Does seeing mean believing?

Small
Question

4. Are we really free?

Small
Question

5. Would the world be a better place if God controlled everything?

Small
Question

6. What questions should God answer?

Key Quotes

“You're the one who should be fired! The only one around here not doing his job is *You!* ANSWER ME!!! - **Bruce**

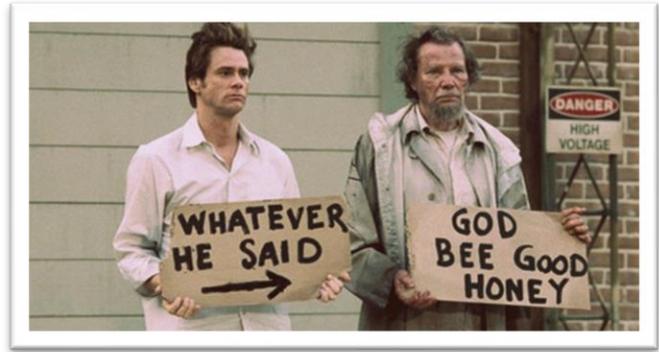
“God, why do you hate me?” - **Bruce**

“Everything happens for a reason” - **Grace**

"God is a mean kid with a magnifying glass."- **Bruce**

“Life is just” – **God**

“Sometimes you have to be the miracle” - **God**



Key Words

Blame – to say or think that someone or something is responsible for an accident, problem, or bad situation.

Fiction – a report, story, or explanation that is not true.

Theist – someone who does believe that God exists.

Atheist – someone who does not believe that God exists.

Natural evil – very bad or cruel things caused by nature.

Human evil – very bad or cruel things caused by humans.

The media - radio, television, newspapers, the Internet, and magazines, considered as a group.

Vision - a person or image that appears to someone, for example in a dream.

Fiction – a report, story, or explanation that is not true.

Proof - evidence that shows that something is definitely true.

Evidence - facts or physical signs that help to prove something.

Faith –Belief without any evidence.

Belief - a strong feeling that something is true or real.

Predestination - The belief that people have

no control over events because God or has arranged everything that is going to happen.

Free will – The idea that people can choose what to do and are responsible for their own actions.

Control - The power to make decisions about something and decide what should happen.

Love - To be very strongly attracted to someone in an emotional way.

Communication - the process of speaking or writing to someone to exchange information or ideas.

Worship – the activity of showing respect and love for a god, for example by singing or praying.

Praise – to express strong approval or admiration for someone or something, especially in public.

The Bible Story of Job

1 Job lived in a country called Uz. He had great number of cattle
2 that numbered in the thousands. He had three daughters, seven
3 sons, and even more servants. Job was considered a rich man.

4 Job was also a Godly man. Job did things that pleased God.

5 He regularly prayed and asked God to bless him and forgive
6 him for his sins. He built altars and made offerings to God.

7 When Job's sons grew up, they would have large feasts. The

8 morning after each feast, Job would place offerings on the

9 altar for all of his children. Satan knew that God loved Job, and that Job loved God. God blessed Job with
10 many friends, with wealth, and with happiness.

11 Satan did not like this. He complained to God one day about Job. Satan said that Job only serves him

12 because he is blessing him. Satan also said that if Job had a lot of trouble, he would turn away from God.

13 Even though God knew that Satan was wrong, he allowed Satan to send Job a lot of trouble. And that is just
14 what happened! Job's troubles began.

15 As Job's children were having a feast, a messenger brought bad

16 news to Job. The messenger told Job that people came and stole

17 all his donkeys and oxen and killed all the servants. He was the

18 only one that got away. Just then another servant came to tell

19 Job some more bad news. He told Job that lightning had killed

20 his sheep and more servants. He barely escaped too. Along

21 came another servant tell Job more bad news. He told Job that some other people stole his camels and killed



22 the servants. Then another servant came and told Job that a great wind blew down the house that his children
23 were in and they all died. As you can imagine, Job was very upset with all of this bad news. He tore his
24 clothes and fell down on his face. Even though he was very upset, he never turned away from God like Satan
25 thought he would.

26 Since all of these bad things did not make Job turn away from God, Satan made life miserable for Job.
27 Satan thought that if he made life even harder for Job, that he would surely turn away from God. Back when
28 Job lived, people believed that bad things happened to people because God was punishing them for their
29 sins. Satan thought that Job believed this too, so he caused ugly
30 sores to break out on Job's body. Everyone was horrified;
31 including his wife. She even told Job to curse God and die. Job
32 had three friends that came over to help him feel better. Even
33 they thought that Job must have done something wrong. They
34 thought God was punishing Job.



35 Then one day God spoke to Job. God told Job that he was upset with his three friends because they were
36 wrong. Job had not done anything wrong. Job was not being punished by God. God began to bless Job
37 again. His sores went away. He grew richer than he was before. In fact, he soon had twice as much! God
38 gave Job more children, servants, and animals. Even when times were bad, Job trusted God.

Model Assessment

Answer

QUESTION:

'Is God to blame when our lives go wrong or when things don't turn out the way we want them to?'

1 Some religious people may believe that God is not to blame when our lives go wrong and doesn't turn out the way we want it to. For example, when an earthquake occurs, a religious person might think that it was not caused by God but that it was caused by science (plate tectonics). God may have created the earth like the 7 day creation story in the Bible tells us, but that doesn't mean God is responsible for every little thing afterwards! If we choose to build our house where we know earthquakes happen, then only we are to blame!

7 On the other hand, some religious people may think that God is to blame and that God is testing them. For example, in the film, when Bruce split up with Grace, both of them were very upset. This could have been a test to see how long Bruce could go without Grace and to see if he could change his ways. By the end of the film, their relationship was stronger than ever.

11 Bad things might also happen because God is punishing us for bad things we have done. This is what Job's friends' and family thought was happening Job; experiencing suffering as a consequence of something he must have done wrong.

14 Non-religious people might think that when bad things happen, like Bruce stepping in a puddle, it is just bad luck! Or as they don't believe in God, it is our own fault, like in the film when Bruce behaved really badly and lost his job. That was his fault!

17 However, most religious people may believe that God is not to blame due to the fact that they believe that he is omnibenevolent (all-loving). So if God is all-loving, why would he make things go wrong?

Did you know...?

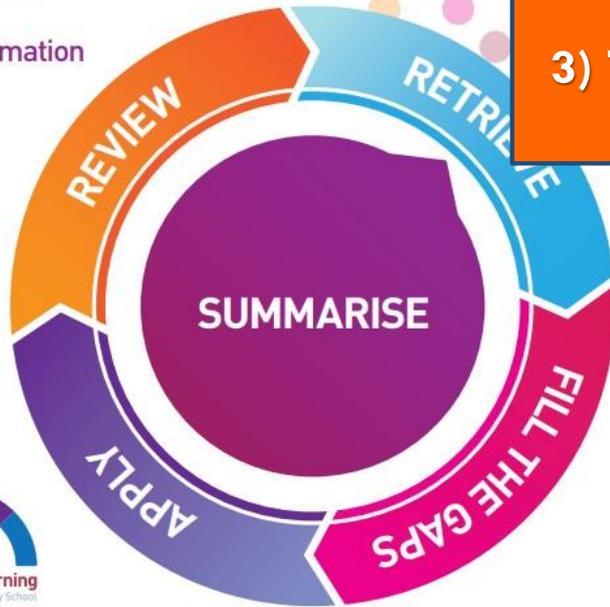
By 2050, Christianity is expected to remain the majority in the **United states** (66.4%, down from 78.3% in 2010), and the number of Christians is expected to **grow** from 243 million to 262 million!



MY TRACK	D	C	B	A	Beyond
My view	You have included a brief statement of your point of view.	You have explained your point of view.	You have included a detailed explanation of your point of view and included some evidence to explain it.	You have included a thoughtful explanation of your point of view and backed it up using a range of evidence.	You have included a philosophical explanation of various points of view, backed up with evidence and have evaluated your ideas.
Some religious people	You have included a brief statement about the beliefs of religious people. OR	You have considered the point of view of some religious people.	You have considered the point of view of religious people in detail and have included some evidence to explain it.	You have considered a wide range of views (and have tried to counter-argue them) that different religious people may have and backed them up using a range of evidence.	You have considered a wide range of views philosophically that many religious people may hold and have backed them up with evidence and have evaluated your ideas.
Some non-religious people	You have included a brief statement about the beliefs of non-religious people.	You have considered the point of view of some non-religious people.	You have considered the point of view of some non-religious people in detail and have included some evidence to explain it.	You have considered a wide range of views (and have tried to counter-argue them) that different non-religious people may have and backed them up using a range of evidence.	You have considered a wide range of views philosophically that many religious people may hold and have backed them up with evidence and have evaluated your ideas.
Key terms	You have not used key terms in your work.	You have attempted to use some key terms in your work.	You have used some key terms in your work correctly.	You have used several key terms in your work correctly.	You have used a range of key terms correctly to help explain your ideas.

Revision Cycle

1. **SUMMARISE:** shorten information
2. **RETRIEVE:** find out what you know
3. **FILL THE GAPS:** look at what you don't remember
4. **APPLY:** practice using the information
5. **REVIEW:** reflect on how you have done and repeat



KAOs: New for this year
3) The Revision Cycle



Articles for Wider Reading and Flipped Learning



Scan the QR code on your phone to read more about the power of prayer. Does it work like in the film?



1 **The world's religions got together a month ago to pray for peace. Has the planet seen any impact - and**
2 **is there any evidence that praying works anyway?**

3
4 There was certainly no shortage of good intentions, or of symbolism.

5 Just a month ago, the Pope led 200 religious leaders from round the world in prayers for peace.

6 The venue for this landmark occasion was Assisi - the place which, fittingly, gave the world St Francis and his
7 prayer "Make me a channel of your peace".

8 And yet a month on, peace seems as elusive as ever. Dozens of Israelis and
9 Palestinians have died. Worshippers at a Rawalpindi mosque have been gunned
10 down. Fears of further conflict rose after President Bush spoke of an "axis of evil".
11 Zimbabwe grows further from the world community.

Hands together, eyes
closed.

12 The impact of the day of prayer is on the agenda in the House of Lords on Wednesday as crossbench peer
13 Lord Hylton asks the government what conclusions it draws from the event.

14 It could scarcely conclude that prayers had been answered in any miraculous way. And it goes without saying
15 that non-believers would not be surprised by that.

1 But for believers, whether there is any point in praying can be a complicated issue, crucially taking in two
2 distinct aspects:

- 3 Can praying change "external" things, for example the weather?
- 4 Can it have an "internal" effect on the person who is doing the praying?

5 Believers can answer the latter point for themselves, but the former point is more open to debate.

6 **Crude methods**

7 Some of the first experiments to try to answer it came in the 1800s, when the worlds of science and religion
8 began to eye each other uncomfortably.

9 The tests used crude methods, concluding for instance that prayer was proved by the
10 long lifespans of royals - people who were much prayed for. These methods have
11 been superseded by more rigorous trials.

12 But, remarkably, many modern tests have reached similar conclusions. Professor Leslie Francis of the University
13 of Bangor has studied 31 experiments (conducted to the "highest professional standards") into the
14 effectiveness of prayer.

15 The trials would typically take a group of hundreds of patients recovering from heart surgery, randomly
16 divided into two groups, one of which is prayed for. None of the patients would know they were or weren't
17 being prayed for.

18 "The findings are quite staggering," he says. "Studies show that patients in hospital who are being prayed for
19 (even when they do not know they are being prayed for) are more likely to recover."

20 But according to Dr David Laws of the University of Manchester the kind of prayer which asks God to do
21 something is only relevant if you have a particular understanding of God.

22 "It depends on God being an intervening God who breaks into our world and mops up our mess whenever
23 we make one."

24 That is a kind of God that Professor Francis says he would be uncomfortable with,
25 since it raises questions that if God can intervene, why does he not do so to avoid
26 more human suffering?

Jews praying at the
Wailing Wall in
Jerusalem

27 But former cancer patient Mary Ligertwood, from Milton Keynes, believes prayer
28 did play a part in her recovery.

29 When she was found to have cancer in her breast, kidney and lymph gland at the age of 50, she was given
30 a year to live. And yet within six months, she walked away free of the disease.

31 Now 13 years on, she puts her recovery down to a combination of the power of surgery - she had five
32 operations - and the prayers of her friends. But she does not consider herself to have experienced a "miracle
33 cure".

34 She does though consider it a miracle that the whole experience of diagnosis, surgery and recovery was for
35 her such an enjoyable - and spiritual - one.

36 "Again and again, people visiting me in hospital would say: 'Why are you so happy?' For me it really was a
37 very wonderful time... There was no element of fear there at all."

1 **Peace prayers**

2 The inner effect on praying people has a bearing on prayers for world peace such as those said at Assisi,
3 says Dr Laws.

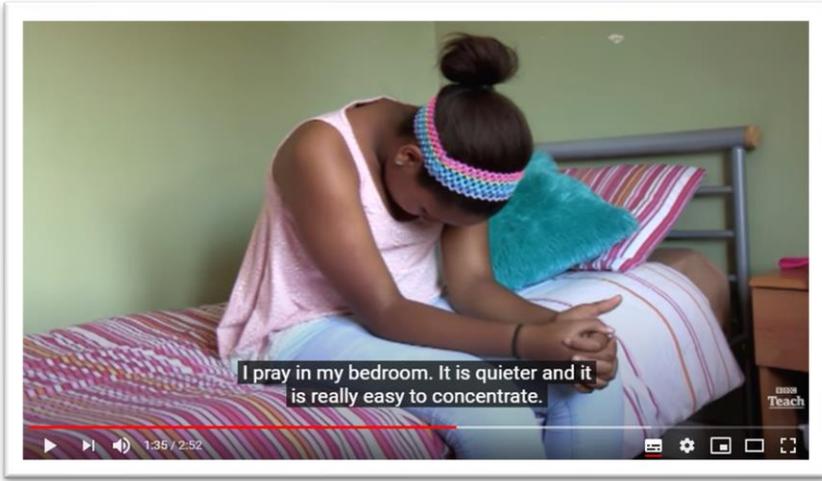
4 "For me it's not a matter of persuading God to do something, but of people praying for peace looking to
5 become peaceful people. It starts with the internal effect and that, hopefully, will have an impact on the
6 outside world."

7 Lord Hylton says the fact of the religious leaders praying together was a significant statement in itself, and
8 one which has made its own contribution to a more peaceful world.

9 In particular, he says, a declaration the leaders made that their religions should not be used as pretexts for
10 violence or wars could have a huge impact. He believes that even now, the religious leaders in the Middle
11 East have become more inclined towards engaging with each other.

12 Professor Francis suggests that should another day of prayer for peace be organised, subsequent levels of
13 fighting should be monitored, as should people's perceptions of peace.

14 Many religious people may feel however that having tangible proof is not really what prayer is about, and
15 that - believe it or not - they rather enjoy simply believing.



Scan this QR code to watch a video about Christian children discussing the meaning of prayer. We see examples of how they pray and they also talk about the meaning of the Lord's Prayer.



Retrieval Quiz

1. How would you describe the concept of blame?
2. What is the differences between Natural and Human evil?
3. Who had the harder time when we compare the stories of Bruce and Job?
4. What is meant by the concepts Omnipotence, Omnibenevolent and Omniscience?
5. What is meant by the term “Free Will”?
6. Describe the differences between and Theist and an Atheist?
7. How can you justify god’s existence in a world of natural disasters and suffering?
8. Is human suffering down to Predestination?
9. Why do Christians visit the Shrine of Lourdes in France?
10. How could you describe worship in today’s society?

Answers

1. How would you describe the concept of blame?

To say or think that someone is responsible for an accident, problem or a bad situation.

2. What is the differences between Natural and Human evil?

Natural Evil is evil caused by the natural world, for example earthquakes, tsunamis or infections. Human evil is when humankind is responsible for evil deeds such as murder, robbery, assault and war.

3. Who had the harder time when we compare the stories of Bruce and Job?

Bruce's day and wider experiences were very difficult but over a relatively short time. You could also argue that Bruce's misfortunes were sometimes down to free will. Job on the other hand, was being tested by God and his trials, spread over a long time, were very difficult to bear, involving bereavement and loss.

4. What is meant by the concepts Omnipotence, Omnibenevolent and Omniscience?

Omnipotence: All powerful

Omnibenevolent: All loving

Omniscient: All knowing

5. What is meant by the term "Free Will"?

Free will is the ability to make decisions for one self. The idea that people can chose what to do and be responsible for their own actions.

6. Describe the differences between and Theist and an Atheist?

A Theist believes in the existence of God, An Atheist believes that there is no such thing as God or a Divine Being.

7. How can you justify God's existence in a world of natural disasters and suffering?

Many of the trials and tribulations we face in the world are as the result of Natural and Human evil. Nature is difficult to harness and control and some natural disasters can be explained away by the activity of humans, such as disasters brought about as a result of global warming or over-fishing and farming. Free will is something most humans will experience in some form or other and Human evil plays a huge part in

creating or worsening the suffering we see in the world today. Human evil can drive wars, genocide and environmental catastrophe.

8. Is human suffering down to Predestination?

Predestination is the belief that we are meant to suffer and face challenges and hurdles as designed by God. Much of the suffering we face however, can be argued as having been created by ourselves and the decisions we make. For example, we suffer health issues if we eat the wrong foods and shun exercise. Is that God's fault or our own?

9. Why do Christians visit the Shrine of Lourdes in France?

Christians believe that when the Virgin Mary appeared to St. Bernadette in the grotto at Lourdes, that she gave the ability to heal people who came to bathe and take the waters that sprang from a well that she caused to flow. Today, thousands of believers make the journey to Lourdes in the hope and belief that taking the waters blessed by the Virgin Mary, will restore them to health and vitality.

10. How could you describe worship in today's society?

Worship is the act of showing love, adoration and devotion to a divine being or beings. Worship often involves song, dance, prayer and celebration.

