

World Religions

Overview and Objectives

Overview

In this Response Group activity, students learn about the development, key beliefs, and influence of six major world religions—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

Objectives

In the course of reading this lesson and participating in the classroom activity, students will

- explain the origins of six major world religions: Hinduism, Judaism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.
- describe the key beliefs of these six world religions.
- explain the spread and influence of each of the six world religions.

Social Studies Vocabulary

Key Content Terms: monotheism, polytheism, ideology

Preview

Suggested time: 15 minutes

- 1 Introduce the Preview activity.** Students will watch six short videos and look for social, geographic, and cultural clues that help determine which religion is being practiced.
- 2 Show the videos.** As each video is shown, have students write down their guesses as to which religion is being practiced in the video.
- 3 Call on volunteers to drag and drop the name of the religion to its correct video.** If correct, a description of the video will appear.

Vocabulary

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Key Content Terms: monotheism, polytheism, ideology

1 Project the slide with the three Key Content Terms. Have students work individually or in pairs to match the definitions.

2 Call on students to drag and drop each term to its correct definition. Review the answers with the class.

Response Group

Suggested time: 90 minutes

1 Introduce the activity. Tell students they are going to learn about the development, key beliefs, and influence of six major world religions--Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. After reading about each religion, groups will play a game to see who can answer the most questions correctly. (Note: You may wish to offer extra credit or a prize to create a game-like atmosphere for this activity.)

2 Place students in groups of three and distribute materials. Give each group a plastic cup and one copy of *Student Handout: Answer Slips*.

3 Prepare materials. Tell groups to cut apart the answer slips and arrange them in three separate piles: Origins and Development, Beliefs, and Spread and Influence.

4 Have students read about Judaism. Tell students to read only the Judaism part of Section 2 in the Student Text.

5 Project the slide about Judaism and conduct the activity. Follow these procedures:

- Call upon one group to select an image. Click "Q" to reveal the question for their chosen image.
- All groups write their answer to the question on an answer slip in pen.
- Have a volunteer share their answer with the class. Then dramatically click "A" to reveal the correct answer and read it aloud.
- Each group with a correct answer places their answer slip in the plastic cup for one point.
- Continue until all six questions related to Judaism have been answered.

6 Repeat Steps 4-5 for the other five world religions. Each time, have students read about the religion in the Student Text, and then play the game using the corresponding slide.

7 Have students complete their Reading Notes for Sections 2-5 in their notebooks.

8 Conduct the Wrap-Up activity. Hold a class discussion centered on the following questions:

- What is similar about these world religions?
- What are some ways each religion is unique?
- Why are these six faiths considered world religions?
- How have religions influenced human society?

Processing

Suggested time: 15 minutes

1 Tell students to turn to the Processing activity in their Notebook Guides.

2 Have students complete the Processing activity. Students choose three world religions they studied in this lesson and complete a Venn diagram to show the following:

- similarities shared by all three religions
- similarities shared by two religions
- unique characteristics of each religion.

Quicker Coverage

Streamline the Activity Instead of having students decipher each photo, have them choose one photo in each of the three categories (Origins and Development, Beliefs, Spread and Influence).

Deeper Coverage

Independent Research on World Religions Have students conduct research about the extent of world religions today. Have them use Internet or other sources to find out the following information about the six major world religions:

- the numbers of people who belong to each religion
- nations with the largest numbers of members in each religion
- rate of increase or decrease for each religion

Have students present their findings visually using presentation software. Alternatively, have students create posters of their findings.