

# Looking Toward a Higher Deity

## Summary

This lesson will introduce students to the five major religions in the world and their basic tenets.

**Essential Question:** How does religion play a central role in lives of people throughout the world?

## Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 6th Grade

[Standard 1 Objective 2](#)

## Time Frame

5 class periods of 60 minutes each

## Group Size

Small Groups

## Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning

## Materials

- Internet, texts, and atlases
- [World Religions Matrix](#)
- PowerPoint program
- [Comparison graphic organizer](#)

## Background for Teachers

Buddhism originated in Nepal; Hinduism originated in India; Christianity, Judaism, and Islam originated in the Middle East and claim Abraham as a forefather. They are all similar in their belief in a power that has created and directed humankind throughout the ages. They are different through their impact on culture and customs as practiced globally and in ancient times. Universal questions such as Why am I here? Where do we go when we die? are answered by the practice of these religions.

## Student Prior Knowledge

Students need an understanding of the concept of religion and how it shapes our everyday lives and interactions with other people and cultures.

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to identify the five major world religions and their key tenets.

## Instructional Procedures

Question #1:

*What is something or who is someone that you look to for guidance or help? Explain why.*

Give the students a few minutes to think and record their thoughts on paper. Then discuss.

After students have had opportunity to share, direct students' attention to the fact that there is something that people throughout all the world turn to for guidance, help, and answers and that is religion. Discuss with students the meaning and characteristics of religion by activating their

prior knowledge.

Quickly review with class the purpose of graphs ( *a visual display of information*) and take a survey of the class by asking how many students belong to a religion or not. Record the information on a line plot. Line plot titles may include *but are not restricted to* Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and U/K ( *unknown*).

Using the line plot as a visual, direct the students' attention to the commonalities and differences of beliefs among the class. Discuss with the students that just as there are differences in the class, there are many religious differences throughout the world and that during the next few days students will focus on the five major worldwide religions.

Question #2:

What are the key tenets of the major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism)?

Assign groups of 3-4 students a world religion. Hand each student a World Religion matrix and review the meaning of each category ( *e.g. Traditions = what traditional things does each religion do to worship it's God(s)*). Instruct groups to take notes on assigned religion on their matrices using available resources.

Pre-determine a medium or media that groups may use to present their research such as PowerPoint presentation, dramatization, etc. Create a rubric with students of requirements.

When ready, each group presents their researched religion to the class.

After the presentations, review the key tenets of each religion. Pose such questions as "*What would this religion be if it didn't have -- or if it had -- this or that tradition or belief?*"

Hand out a comparison graphic organizer to each student and lead an analytical comparison of the religions in the matrix. "*What is the same, what is different about each one?*" Students complete the comparison graphic organizer throughout the discussion.

Question #3:

How does religion play a central role in lives of people throughout the world?

Students respond in one paragraph. They may use any notes if they wish.

### Strategies for Diverse Learners

Teacher will meet with small groups of students to help them with their matrices and research queries.

### Extensions

Students can research divisions within specified religions ( *e.g. LDS, Baptist (Christian); Reform, Ultra-Orthodox (Judaism), etc.*)

Students can draw significant images or symbols from a chosen religion ( *if available and appropriate*).

Students may choose to visit a religious ceremony ( *Sabbath, Wedding, etc.*) and write a one page comparison of that ceremony with one from their family religion/belief system.

Students may cut out images of various religions from print media and create collages that are representative of the chosen religion.

### Assessment Plan

Teacher can create rubrics with or without students to grade matrices, comparison graphic organizer, and PowerPoint presentations.

### Bibliography

- <http://www.readingquest.com>
- <http://www.mrdonn.org>

- <http://www.worldbookonline.com>
- <http://www.religionfacts.com>

## Authors

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