Beliefs Across Borders

Trace how religious traditions shape ceremonies and public debates.

SS24.HG.7 "Describe ways religion influences cultures, citing examples from around the globe. 7a Identify major religions, their places of origin, and areas of expansion..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two places of origin and circle two areas of expansion. Write matching numbers beside two pairs of ceremonies with the same purpose but different practices, then box one example of religion affecting a public debate.

Traditions in Motion

1. Religious traditions travel with people, texts, and trade. Hinduism developed on the Indian subcontinent and spread to Nepal and Southeast Asia. Buddhism began in northeastern India and spread across East and Southeast Asia. Judaism emerged in the ancient Levant and later took root in Europe, North Africa, and the Americas. Christianity began in the eastern Mediterranean and expanded into Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Islam arose in the Arabian Peninsula and spread across North Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.

2. Ceremonies make these traditions visible in daily life. In some Hindu weddings in India, a couple takes seven steps near a sacred fire; in many Christian weddings in Brazil, a couple exchanges vows before a minister. Both mark a marriage, but the actions differ. In many Hindu communities, families cremate the dead, while Muslims generally bury the dead. For Jewish youth, a bar or bat mitzvah marks new religious responsibilities; in some Buddhist communities, temporary novice ordination gives young people a different path into religious learning.

3. Religion can also influence public debates, although believers within one tradition may disagree. In India, some Hindu groups support laws protecting cows because they consider cows sacred; other citizens question how such laws affect farmers and food choices. In the United States, some Christian groups oppose abortion on religious grounds, while other Christian groups support legal access. In Indonesia, some Muslim organizations seek stronger restrictions on alcohol, while others prioritize different concerns. These examples show influence, not a single political position shared by all believers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Compare where Buddhism and Islam began and where each spread.

2. What purpose do the Hindu and Christian wedding examples share, and how do their actions differ?

3. Compare the Hindu and Muslim funeral practices described in the passage.

4. Compare how religious beliefs influence public debates in India and Indonesia.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your city has a shared ceremony hall. In four sentences, propose a policy for the two wedding traditions in the passage, compare their actions, and explain how a religious belief and a civic concern might shape debate about your policy.

ANSWER KEY

Beliefs Across Borders

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HG.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two places of origin and circle two areas of expansion. Write matching numbers beside two pairs of ceremonies with the same purpose but different practices, then box one example of religion affecting a public debate. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare where Buddhism and Islam began and where each spread.	**Buddhism began in northeastern India and spread across East and Southeast Asia. Islam arose in the Arabian Peninsula and spread across North Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.**
2	What purpose do the Hindu and Christian wedding examples share, and how do their actions differ?	**Both mark a marriage. In the Hindu example, the couple takes seven steps near a sacred fire; in the Christian example, the couple exchanges vows before a minister.**
3	Compare the Hindu and Muslim funeral practices described in the passage.	**Both concern care for the dead, but the Hindu example describes cremation, while the Muslim example describes burial.**
4	Compare how religious beliefs influence public debates in India and Indonesia.	**In India, some Hindu groups support laws protecting cows because they consider cows sacred. In Indonesia, some Muslim organizations seek stronger restrictions on alcohol.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The city should allow a supervised sacred fire in a fire-safe area of its shared ceremony hall. Some Hindu couples take seven steps near a sacred fire, while many Christian couples in Brazil exchange vows before a minister. Both ceremonies mark marriage, but only the Hindu example uses fire. Some residents may support the policy to respect Hindu practice, while others may worry about fire safety.

Accept other policies that accommodate both wedding traditions and identify a plausible civic concern. Students should distinguish the practices described from rules followed by every member of either religion.