Routes of Belief

Trace where religions began and where they spread

SS24.HG.7a "Identify major religions, their places of origin, and areas of expansion."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the place where each religion began and circle at least two areas it later reached, so you can distinguish origins from areas of expansion.

From Birthplaces to Distant Shores

1. Imagine tracing religious ideas along the roads and sea lanes used by travelers. Hinduism developed over many centuries in the Indian subcontinent, especially around the Indus and Ganges river systems. It has no single founder or exact founding date. Hindu beliefs and practices spread across much of South Asia and reached Southeast Asia through trade and cultural exchange. Buddhism began in northeastern India around the fifth century BCE, following the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama. Monks, merchants, and rulers carried Buddhism into Sri Lanka, Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan, and mainland Southeast Asia.

2. Judaism took shape among the ancient Israelites in the land of Israel, in Southwest Asia. After conquests and migrations, Jewish communities formed around the Mediterranean and later across Europe, North Africa, and other regions. Christianity began in Roman Judea, also in Southwest Asia, in the first century CE, centered on the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Early Christian missionaries traveled through the Roman Empire. Over later centuries, Christianity expanded across Europe and parts of Africa; European colonization and missionary work carried it to the Americas and beyond. Nearby origins did not mean identical paths of expansion.

3. Islam began in the seventh century CE in Mecca, on the Arabian Peninsula, where Muhammad first preached. Muslim communities grew across the peninsula, and Islam expanded into North Africa, Southwest and Central Asia, parts of Europe, and South and Southeast Asia. Expansion took several forms: political rule, trade, migration, and the work of teachers. Indian Ocean merchants helped bring Islam to coastal East Africa and island Southeast Asia. These histories show that a religion's birthplace is not the same as its full range. To identify a religion's geographic story, name its place of origin first, then trace regions reached later.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Where did Hinduism develop, and what are two areas where it spread?

2. Where did Buddhism begin? Name two places outside its area of origin that it reached.

3. Identify the origin of Judaism and the origin of Christianity. Name one area each later reached.

4. Where did Islam begin, and what are two areas beyond the Arabian Peninsula where it expanded?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write four or five sentences for a museum exhibit comparing two religions from the passage. Identify where each began and at least one area each reached, then explain how travel or geography helped one of them spread.

ANSWER KEY

Routes of Belief

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the place where each religion began and circle at least two areas it later reached, so you can distinguish origins from areas of expansion. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Where did Hinduism develop, and what are two areas where it spread?	**Hinduism developed in the Indian subcontinent and spread across much of South Asia and into Southeast Asia.**
2	Where did Buddhism begin? Name two places outside its area of origin that it reached.	**Buddhism began in northeastern India. Accept any two listed destinations, such as Sri Lanka and China.**
3	Identify the origin of Judaism and the origin of Christianity. Name one area each later reached.	**Judaism took shape among the ancient Israelites in the land of Israel and later reached areas such as Europe. Christianity began in Roman Judea and later reached areas such as the Americas.**
4	Where did Islam begin, and what are two areas beyond the Arabian Peninsula where it expanded?	**Islam began in Mecca on the Arabian Peninsula. Accept any two listed areas beyond the peninsula, such as North Africa and Southeast Asia.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My exhibit compares Buddhism and Islam as religions that traveled far from their birthplaces. Buddhism began in northeastern India and expanded into Sri Lanka and China. Islam began in Mecca on the Arabian Peninsula and expanded into North Africa and island Southeast Asia. Indian Ocean trade helped merchants bring Islam to island Southeast Asia, showing how sea routes connected distant communities.

Accept any expansion area named for the religion in the passage. For the exhibit, look for two accurate origins, an accurate expansion area for each religion, and an explanation connecting travel or geography to expansion.