Belief and Ballots

How religious beliefs can shape different political views

SS24.HG.7c "Explain how religion influences political views around the world."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each religious belief or practice, circle a political view it may shape, and draw an arrow connecting each belief or practice to a related view.

One Belief, Different Policies

1. Imagine a city council meeting in India where residents debate a proposed limit on cattle slaughter. Many Hindus regard cows as sacred, so some support laws that protect them. Their religious belief helps shape a political view about what the government should allow. Other residents, including some Hindus, worry that strict limits could threaten farmers' incomes or the food choices of religious minorities. They may favor fewer restrictions. The disagreement is not simply religion against religion. People can share a religious identity yet weigh animal protection, jobs, and individual rights differently when judging a law.

2. In Indonesia, Muslims often practice zakat, an obligation to give a portion of eligible wealth to people in need. This practice can lead voters to value policies that help families with low incomes. Yet it does not dictate one budget plan. One voter might favor government-funded aid because it can reach many households. Another might prefer giving through local religious groups, believing neighbors can identify needs more directly. Both voters may connect their political views to the same religious duty. Their disagreement concerns who should organize help and how public money should be spent, not whether helping people matters.

3. In the United States, some Christians describe care for the Earth as stewardship, a duty to protect what God has made. This belief may lead them to support laws that reduce pollution. Others who share that belief may question a particular rule if they think it would raise energy costs for families. A person with no religious belief could support the same pollution law for health reasons. Across these debates, religion can influence political views without producing a single vote or policy. Economic concerns, rights, and different ideas about how to act on a belief also shape decisions.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could a Hindu belief about cows lead someone in India to support a law?

2. How could two voters in Indonesia connect zakat to different views about aid?

3. How could stewardship shape two different views about a pollution rule in the United States?

4. In both the India and Indonesia examples, why might people who share a religion disagree about a policy?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In a town facing floods, two residents share a religious duty to care for neighbors but disagree about a proposed tax to fund public flood shelters. In three or four sentences, explain how that duty could lead to two different political views, and name one nonreligious concern that could affect their disagreement.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HG.7c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each religious belief or practice, circle a political view it may shape, and draw an arrow connecting each belief or practice to a related view. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could a Hindu belief about cows lead someone in India to support a law?	**Because they regard cows as sacred, some Hindus may support laws that limit cattle slaughter.**
2	How could two voters in Indonesia connect zakat to different views about aid?	**Both may believe in helping people in need. One may support government-funded aid to reach many households, while the other may prefer giving through local religious groups.**
3	How could stewardship shape two different views about a pollution rule in the United States?	**One Christian may support the rule to protect the Earth. Another may question that particular rule because of its possible effect on families' energy costs.**
4	In both the India and Indonesia examples, why might people who share a religion disagree about a policy?	**They may weigh other concerns differently, such as jobs and rights in India or who should organize aid and spend public money in Indonesia.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Both residents believe caring for neighbors is a religious duty. One supports the tax because public shelters could protect more people, while the other opposes it because community groups could provide shelter without a new tax. Concern about the cost to households could also shape their views.

Accept explanations that connect a belief or practice to a policy view without suggesting that all members of a religion agree. For Part 3, look for two distinct positions and a plausible nonreligious concern.