

Faiths Within Communities

Explore religious diversity among Arab, Persian, and Kurdish communities.

SS7G8.b "Describe the diversity of religions within Southwest Asian (Middle Eastern) ethnic groups (e.g., Arabs, Persians, and Kurds)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each word or phrase that names a religion or religious tradition. Then write A, P, or K in the margin for each paragraph and circle one detail that shows why an ethnic group cannot be described by only one religion.

More Than One Faith

- ① Arab is an ethnic and cultural identity connected to the Arabic language, not a single religion. Many Arabs are Muslim, and most are Sunni Muslims, while some are Shia Muslims. Arab communities also include Christians, whose churches have long histories in places such as Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Iraq. Some Arabic-speaking communities follow the Druze faith. A person's religion and ethnic identity are related to culture and family history, but they are not the same thing.
- ② Persians are an ethnic group with roots in Iran and a Persian language tradition. Most Persians are Shia Muslims, reflecting Iran's large Shia population. However, religion is not identical for every Persian person. Some Persians are Sunni Muslims, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, or members of other religious communities. Zoroastrianism began in ancient Iran and remains a living religion today for some families. These examples show that a group may have a majority religion without every member sharing it.
- ③ Kurds are an ethnic group whose communities live mainly in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and nearby areas. Many Kurds are Sunni Muslims. Other Kurds are Shia Muslims or follow Alevi traditions. Yazidis practice an ancient religion with its own beliefs and rituals, and many Yazidis identify as Kurdish, though identities differ among individuals. Kurdish Christians also live in the region and beyond. Looking within one ethnic group reveals religious diversity instead of one uniform belief.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What two non-Muslim religious communities are described in paragraph 1?

2 What is the majority religion named for Persians? Name two other religious communities that may include Persians.

3 Name two religious affiliations or traditions, other than Sunni Islam, that the passage links to Kurds.

4 Which ethnic group is connected to Zoroastrianism? What does the passage say about this religion's history?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write exactly four sentences for a museum label titled "Many Faiths, Many Communities." Name Arabs, Persians, and Kurds, and give one accurate example of religious diversity for each. End by explaining why ethnicity does not tell you one person's religion.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each word or phrase that names a religion or religious tradition. Then write A, P, or K in the margin for each paragraph and circle one detail that shows why an ethnic group cannot be described by only one religion. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two non-Muslim religious communities are described in paragraph 1?	Christians and Druze communities.
2	What is the majority religion named for Persians? Name two other religious communities that may include Persians.	Most Persians are Shia Muslims. Other examples include Sunni Muslims, Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians.
3	Name two religious affiliations or traditions, other than Sunni Islam, that the passage links to Kurds.	Any two: Shia Muslim, Alevi traditions, Yazidi, or Christian.
4	Which ethnic group is connected to Zoroastrianism? What does the passage say about this religion's history?	Persians. Zoroastrianism began in ancient Iran and remains a living religion.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Many Faiths, Many Communities Many Arab communities are Muslim, but Arab Christians and Druze communities also exist. Most Persians are Shia Muslims, yet some Persians are Sunni Muslims, Jews, Christians, or Zoroastrians. Many Kurds are Sunni Muslims, while other Kurds are Shia Muslims, Alevi, or Christian. Ethnicity describes cultural connections, so it cannot tell us exactly what religion one person follows.

Accept accurate examples named in the passage and reasonable wording. Students should show that each ethnic group includes people with more than one religious identity or tradition, without claiming that every member shares the same faith.