# Beliefs on the Move

Compare religion in Europe and Mesoamerica

**6.H.2** "Describe and compare the beliefs, the spread, and the influence of religions throughout Europe and Mesoamerica."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline one belief in each region, circle words that show how religious ideas traveled, and number two ways religion shaped community life in each region.

### Faith Across Communities

1 Around 800 CE, many people in Europe practiced Christianity. Christians believed in one God and taught that Jesus showed people how to live. Missionaries traveled to new communities to share these teachings. Some rulers supported Christianity and encouraged their people to join the church. Roads and sea routes helped travelers carry the faith across Europe. In towns and villages, people gathered at churches for worship and yearly festivals. Church leaders also taught lessons about caring for neighbors and helped shape rules for their communities.

2 At about the same time, Maya people lived in many cities across Mesoamerica, a region that includes parts of present-day Mexico and Central America. Many Maya honored gods tied to rain and maize, a crop important to their lives. Priests used calendars to choose days for ceremonies. Traders and other travelers carried stories and practices between cities, but each city kept its own traditions. Families joined public ceremonies near temples, and rulers took part to show their connection to the gods. Religious ideas helped shape farming celebrations and public spaces.

3 These religions did not spread in exactly the same way. In Europe, missionaries and rulers helped Christianity reach new communities. Among Maya cities, travelers shared ideas, but no single ruler controlled all Maya religious practices. Both regions built important gathering places for worship, yet churches and Maya temple plazas served different traditions. In each region, religion influenced leaders and public celebrations. Christianity centered on one God, while Maya people honored several gods. Comparing how beliefs traveled and affected daily life shows both shared patterns and clear differences.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Christian and Maya beliefs about gods differ?

2. Compare one way religious ideas traveled in Europe with one way they traveled among Maya cities.

3. How did religion shape gathering places in both regions?

4. Compare the roles of rulers in the religious life of Europe and Maya cities.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A visitor says, “Religions spread only when rulers order people to change, and every community practices them the same way.” Write a five-sentence reply using both regions to challenge the claim. Compare a belief and a public influence, and describe how ideas moved.

ANSWER KEY

# Beliefs on the Move

GRADE 6 · 6.H.2

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one belief in each region, circle words that show how religious ideas traveled, and number two ways religion shaped community life in each region. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How did Christian and Maya beliefs about gods differ? | **Christians believed in one God, while many Maya honored several gods, including gods tied to rain and maize.** |
| 2 | Compare one way religious ideas traveled in Europe with one way they traveled among Maya cities. | **Missionaries shared Christianity in Europe, while traders and other travelers carried religious ideas between Maya cities.** |
| 3 | How did religion shape gathering places in both regions? | **Europeans gathered at churches for worship and festivals. Maya families joined ceremonies near temples.** |
| 4 | Compare the roles of rulers in the religious life of Europe and Maya cities. | **Some European rulers encouraged people to join the church. Maya rulers took part in ceremonies, but no single ruler controlled all Maya religious practices.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Travelers carried religious ideas among Maya cities, so rulers were not the only people who helped ideas spread. Missionaries also shared Christianity across Europe, although some rulers encouraged people to join the church. Christians believed in one God, while many Maya honored gods tied to rain and maize. Churches in Europe and temple plazas in Maya cities both drew people together for religious events. Maya cities kept their own traditions, so shared ideas did not make every community's practices identical.

Accept other accurate comparisons supported by the passage. Students should distinguish the roles of travelers and rulers without suggesting that every Maya city followed identical practices.