

Beliefs in Comparison

Compare shared features and differences among major belief systems.

6.4a "Civilizations and complex societies developed belief systems and religions that have similar, as well as different, characteristics."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a teaching or practice in each paragraph. Mark S beside one shared feature, and D beside one difference you can explain.

Three Traditions, Shared Questions

- ① Judaism developed among the ancient Hebrews in Southwest Asia. A central teaching is belief in one God and a covenant, or special agreement, with the Jewish people. The Torah contains sacred teachings and laws. Prayer, study, and ethical conduct are important parts of Jewish life. Jewish communities have diverse customs and interpretations. Their shared teachings helped connect communities in different places. When historians study Judaism, they examine texts, practices, and changes over time rather than assuming every person lives in the same way.
- ② Hindu traditions developed in South Asia and include many philosophies and practices. The Vedas are among their sacred texts. Many Hindus describe ultimate reality as Brahman and honor the divine in different forms. Teachings about dharma, karma, and rebirth influence many Hindu traditions. Dharma concerns right conduct or duty, while karma concerns actions and their consequences. These ideas are understood in different ways. It is inaccurate to describe all Hindus as having exactly the same beliefs about gods, worship, or spiritual goals.
- ③ Buddhism began in South Asia with Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha. His teachings address suffering and a path toward ending it through ethical conduct, wisdom, and mental training. Buddhism does not depend on belief in a creator god, although some Buddhist traditions include divine beings. Like Judaism and Hindu traditions, Buddhist traditions guide conduct and preserve teachings. Their texts, explanations, and practices differ. Comparing a specific teaching from each tradition helps students notice similarities without erasing differences within or between communities.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Name one feature shared by the three traditions in this passage.

2 How does belief in a creator god differ in Judaism and Buddhism as described here?

3 Why is it inaccurate to say that all Hindus have identical beliefs?

4 Give one teaching from Judaism and one from Buddhism that helps distinguish them.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose two traditions. In the table, record one feature they share. Give a different teaching or practice for each, using the passage.

TRADITION	SHARED CHARACTERISTIC	DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTIC

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline a teaching or practice in each paragraph. Mark S beside one shared feature, and D beside one difference you can explain. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name one feature shared by the three traditions in this passage.	All guide conduct and preserve important teachings.
2	How does belief in a creator god differ in Judaism and Buddhism as described here?	Belief in one God is central to Judaism. Buddhism does not depend on belief in a creator god.
3	Why is it inaccurate to say that all Hindus have identical beliefs?	Hindu traditions include different philosophies, practices, and interpretations of teachings.
4	Give one teaching from Judaism and one from Buddhism that helps distinguish them.	Examples: Judaism teaches a covenant with God; Buddhism teaches a path toward ending suffering through conduct, wisdom, and mental training.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

TRADITION	SHARED CHARACTERISTIC	DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTIC
Judaism	Guides conduct and preserves teachings	Covenant with God
Buddhism	Guides conduct and preserves teachings	A path toward ending suffering

Accept accurate passage-based comparisons. Do not infer that all members practice alike, that every Hindu worships many gods, or that Buddhist traditions never include divine beings.