Beliefs in Public

How religious beliefs can shape community life and public decisions

7.C.5.3 "Examine the dominant religions of the world, including Chrisitanity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Examine how major belief systems influence societies and governments, including through use of sacred texts, basic tenets..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each sacred text and underline one belief or teaching linked to each religion. Write 1 beside an effect on community life and 2 beside an effect on a government decision.

Planning a Town Event

1. At a town hall, residents plan a community meal and ask how to welcome neighbors. Judaism teaches care for others and studies the Torah, a sacred text. Christianity teaches love of neighbor and reads the Bible. Islam teaches charity and reads the Qur'an. These traditions can inspire food drives run by local groups. Their calendars also include different holy days, so a town might consider religious schedules when setting the date. No single practice describes every follower, and a town government does not need to adopt a faith to respect residents.

2. Another group suggests a quiet space at the event. Hinduism includes many traditions and often teaches that actions have consequences, a principle called karma. The Bhagavad Gita is an important sacred text for many Hindus. Buddhism teaches that suffering can be eased by following the Eightfold Path, which includes right speech and right action. The Dhammapada is a respected Buddhist text. These teachings can shape how people treat others, but neither tradition requires all followers to organize the same kind of public event.

3. The town council must decide whether its public event will offer different meal choices and a place for quiet reflection. Some residents connect these requests to faith; others have nonreligious reasons. Council members can listen to residents without treating any sacred text as a town law. For example, they could offer several food options and a quiet room open to everyone. This choice affects government services, while volunteers' food drives show an effect on community life. It also shows that a shared public decision need not make everyone believe the same thing.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Judaism and Islam name different sacred texts. Name both texts, then explain one similar way their teachings could affect community life.

2. Name the sacred texts mentioned for Hinduism and Buddhism. How could each religion's teaching affect the way a volunteer acts?

3. How could the council respond to residents' requests without making a sacred text into town law?

4. How do the food drives and the council's choices show two different ways beliefs can influence a town?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A town plans a neighborhood cleanup at a public park. In 4 or 5 sentences, explain how teachings from two different religions in the passage could shape volunteers' actions, then propose one fair way the town could support everyone without adopting a religion.

ANSWER KEY

Beliefs in Public

GRADE 7 · 7.C.5.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each sacred text and underline one belief or teaching linked to each religion. Write 1 beside an effect on community life and 2 beside an effect on a government decision. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Judaism and Islam name different sacred texts. Name both texts, then explain one similar way their teachings could affect community life.	**Judaism studies the Torah, and Islam reads the Qur'an. Jewish care for others and Islamic charity could both inspire food drives.**
2	Name the sacred texts mentioned for Hinduism and Buddhism. How could each religion's teaching affect the way a volunteer acts?	**The Bhagavad Gita is an important Hindu text, and the Dhammapada is a Buddhist text. A volunteer thinking about karma might consider the effects of their actions; one following right speech might speak respectfully.**
3	How could the council respond to residents' requests without making a sacred text into town law?	**It could offer several food options and a quiet room open to everyone, including residents with nonreligious reasons for using them.**
4	How do the food drives and the council's choices show two different ways beliefs can influence a town?	**Religious teachings can inspire residents to run food drives, changing community life. Residents' requests can also influence government services, such as meal choices at a public event.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Christianity's teaching to love your neighbor could lead volunteers to pick up litter in areas used by many families. Buddhism's Eightfold Path includes right speech, so Buddhist volunteers might speak respectfully when they plan jobs. The town council could provide trash bags to all volunteers. This supports the cleanup without making any religious teaching a rule.

Accept other accurate links between the passage's teachings and community actions. For the open task, the town's proposed support should be available without requiring religious participation.