

# RELIGIOUS PLURALITY-KOREA: A CASE STUDY

**GRADES:** 9-10 Grades

**AUTHOR:** Jennifer Turner

**TOPIC/THEME:** Religion and Philosophy

**TIME REQUIRED:** Two 60 minute class periods

**BACKGROUND:** The country of Korea possesses a wide array of religious and philosophical persuasions, from Christianity to Confucianism. This lesson first concentrates on why religions and philosophies spread and then addresses some of the similarities and differences between them. Students will also analyze the challenges faced by the co-existence of these differing viewpoints, but also recognize the benefits of this plurality.

**CURRICULUM CONNECTION:** This lesson is a summative lesson for a unit on world religions and philosophies. The students will have already learned about the major religions and philosophies of the world. This lesson will look at the geographic theme of movement and help students to understand why religious beliefs spread. It will also allow students to analyze each of the major religions and philosophies of Korea by comparing and contrasting important aspects of them. Students will also have the opportunity to develop their persuasive writing skills.

**CONNECTION TO STUDENTS' LIVES:** This lesson will provide students with exposure to the religions and philosophies that have shaped Korean society. By looking at the religious diversity of Korea they will also start to reflect on the religious plurality of the United States. It will serve to create a better understanding and tolerance of different religions within their own communities.

## **OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS:**

1. Students will be able to identify the major religions and philosophies of Korea.
2. Students will be able to explain why religions and philosophies spread.
3. Students will be able to comprehend and analyze challenges faced in a religiously plural society.
4. Students will be able to apply the benefits of religious plurality to their own communities.

### **NCSS Standard:** Theme I: CULTURE

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity, so that the learner can:

- e. give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

### **NCSS Standard:** Theme IX: GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global dependence and independence, so that learners can:

- a. Explore ways that language, art, music, belief systems, and other cultural elements facilitate global understanding or lead to misunderstanding.

### **AZ Standard:** World History Concept 2: Early Civilizations

**PO 2.** Analyze the development and historical significance of Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.

**AZ Standard:** Geography Concept 4: Human Systems

**PO 8.** Explain how ideas, customs, and innovations (e.g., religion, language, political philosophy, technological advances, higher education, and economic principles) are spread through cultural diffusion.

**Common Core Standards**

**SL 1** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

**SL 2** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media

**WHST 4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience

**MATERIALS REQUIRED:**

- Websites for maps and tourists books of Korea and Seoul:  
[http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/TRV/TV\\_ENG\\_3\\_5.jsp](http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/TRV/TV_ENG_3_5.jsp) (Provides an e-book of maps/tourist sites you can order for free)
- Interactive map: [http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/common\\_intl/mapInformation.kto?md=enu&func\\_name=main](http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/common_intl/mapInformation.kto?md=enu&func_name=main) (students can type in church, temple, etc. to find specific places on a digital map)
- HANDOUT 1: RELIGIOUS SITES
- HANDOUT 2: GRAPHIC ORGANIZER
- HANDOUT 3: PERSUASIVE ESSAY (EDITORIAL) RUBRIC

**INTRODUCTION and EXPLORATION:** Ask students if we can find different religions all over the world, regardless of their region of origin. Follow this up with asking them about why religions and philosophies spread. Show images of local religious sites (churches, mosques, temples, synagogues, etc.), so students can think about how this idea applies locally. This will vary depending on your community.

**PROCEDURE:** This lesson allows students to first identify major religions and philosophies in Korea. Next, they will look at visuals to identify features that help to further emphasize the presence of these religions historically and still today. By building upon the knowledge they already have about the major religions and philosophies they will see the challenges and benefits of religious plurality as they compare different aspects of each religion/philosophy.

**THE DELIVERY OF THE CONTENT:**

First, the students will look at maps of Korea (paper or on-line) to identify religious or important philosophical sites. Make sure to remind students to look for terms that may suggest a religious place such as temple, shrine, etc. Next, show the images in HANDOUT 1 to groups of 3-4 and have students note the features that further help to identify religious persuasion. Make sure to cut images out and do not include the caption. Following this group identification activity, discuss the findings as a class.

Next, review the students' previous knowledge about where Christianity, Buddhism, and Confucianism originated from and, in groups, have them brainstorm specifically how these religions/philosophies arrived in Korea in their groups using a brainstorming web. Have them share their webs with the class. Then, provide the class with additional information for their webs as provided at: <http://www.pbs.org/hiddenkorea/religion.htm>. Students will learn about how their original ideas specifically apply to Korea.

**THE APPLICATION that OF THE CONTENT:**

First, ask students to think-pair-share about how a society may face challenges with religious diversity. Next, provide a printout of HANDOUT 2 (graphic organizer), so students can compare and contrast different aspects of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity. First individually and then in their groups, students will look at the concepts of Core Beliefs, Practices, Text, Place of Worship, After Life. Students will use knowledge gained in previous lessons on religion to fill out the organizer. Students will then choose three of these concepts and will write a reflective paragraph for each explaining the similarities and differences that they noted in their graphic organizers. They will also address some issues that may have come about from opposing beliefs and/or ways in which the religions would easily co-exist because of similar beliefs. This task may be assigned for homework.

Finally, students will be required to write an editorial for a local newspaper emphasizing the importance of religious tolerance in their communities or the United States in general. See HANDOUT3 for rubric.

**ASSESSMENT:** Students will be informally assessed throughout the two day lesson. They will have to identify religious sites on a map and participate in class discussions. They will be formally assessed by the reflection paragraphs created from their graphic organizer brainstorm. They will also be required to write an editorial about the importance of religious tolerance in their communities or the United States as a whole. A rubric (HANDOUT 3) is provided.

**RESOURCES:**

“Hidden Korea,” PBS, accessed August 10, 2011, <http://www.pbs.org/hiddenkorea/religion.htm>

## HANDOUT 1: RELIGIOUS SITES



Confucian Shrine



Confucian School



Buddhist Temple Guardians



Buddhist Temple



Methodist Church



Haein Buddhist Temple



Haein Temple Maze



Christian Church in Seoul

**HANDOUT 2: GRAPHIC ORGANIZER**  
**Comparison Chart**

	Christianity	Confucianism	Buddhism
C o r e  B e l i e f s			
P r a c t i c e s			
P l a c e  o f  W o r s h i p			
A f t e r l i f e			
T e x t			

### HANDOUT 3: PERSUASIVE ESSAY (EDITORIAL) RUBRIC

#### History Writing Rubric

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ /16

Category	4pts.	3pts.	2pts.	1pt.
<p><b>Thesis:</b></p> <p><i>Did you address the prompt?</i></p>	Clearly addresses the prompt and fully develops the topic in a relevant way.	Addresses the prompt. May be simple and/or adequately developed.	Offers general ideas on the topic with little reference to prompt. May wander or be confusing.	Incorrect thesis statement or did not address the prompt correctly.
<p><b>Organization &amp; Critical Thinking:</b></p> <p><i>How did you organize your argument to support your thesis statement?</i></p>	Constructs logical argument to support the topic. Offers solid interpretation of evidence. Shows strong grasp of historical concepts.	Constructs basic set of reasons to support thesis. Describes evidence with a good grasp of historical concepts.	Repetitive reasoning; shows minimal attempt to explain historical evidence. Conclusions may be inaccurate or invalid.	Offers a random string of ideas and opinions that fail to address the prompt. Incomplete or incoherent work.
<p><b>Evidence &amp; Supporting Details:</b></p> <p><i>How effective was your use of evidence?</i></p>	Uses specific evidence in frequent, accurate ways. Displays depth and/or quality. Uses content specific vocabulary.	Shows clear grasp of evidence on general level. May omit some relevant issues or content specific vocabulary that could strengthen essay.	Uses evidence in vague, simple ways. Inaccuracies distract reader, weaken the essay and argument.	Fails to use evidence in useful or accurate way.
<p><b>Conventions:</b></p> <p><i>How did you express your ideas in writing?</i></p>	Employs precise, varied vocabulary. Logical essay and paragraph structure, correct mechanics and spelling.	Appropriate written expression. Basic paragraph structure, mechanics. Few spelling and /or grammar errors.	Writing is difficult to follow. Style may be inappropriate or too casual. Some spelling errors.	Written expression is confusing and difficult to understand. Serious errors in mechanics, structure and spelling.