

One Region, Three Religions

OBJECTIVES

Students will...

- Understand the factors that led to the present day Middle Eastern crisis, and...
- Compare the beliefs of the major religious factions in the Middle East

AGENDA

- Thursday News Review
- One Region, Three Religions
- Sunni v. Shiite Comparison

Journal 7

What conflicts are going on in the Middle East? What are some of the motivating factors behind those conflicts? What can we do to help resolve these conflicts?

Religion & Conflict

In groups of 3-4 discuss the answers to the following questions, and write your responses in the appropriate section of your note sheet...

1. How has religion played a role in violent conflict, throughout history?
2. What religious groups are fighting in the Middle East, and what do they want?
3. Why are people so willing to go to (violent) extremes to defend or promote their religion?

Judaism

Abraham - Considered the first Jew, was promised an inheritance of *land* and *posterity* by God

- Had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac

Settled in Jerusalem (the Holy Land) and the surrounding area

73 C.E. – The Roman Empire disperses the Jews, kicking them out of Israel

Diaspora – The time period where the Jews lived around the world in different communities, as minorities

- This leads to a lot of Jewish sub-cultures

1948 C.E. – The state of Israel (containing Jerusalem) is created and Jews from around the world return to the Middle East

Secular v. Orthodox Judaism

Secular – Of or pertaining to the world

- “Secular Jews” are of Jewish descent, but may not practice Jewish law

Orthodox - Traditional

- “Orthodox Jews” believe that the laws and customs of Jewish tradition are unchanging and mandatory
- Orthodox Judaism holds a lot of power over Israeli government and culture

Christianity

Began as an off-shoot of Judaism

Believes that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and prophesied Messiah

- Believe that Christ's gospel superseded the Mosaic laws

324 C.E. – Roman emperor Constantine converts to Christianity and the Roman Empire became the Holy Roman Empire

1054 C.E. – The Orthodox Church splits from the Roman Catholics

16th century – Martin Luther begins a movement that leads to Protestantism

Islam

Follow the teachings of a prophet after Christ (Muhammad) as contained in the Quran.

Believe that Abraham's chosen lineage is through Ishmael, not Isaac.

570 C.E. – Muhammad is born in Mecca (dies in 632)

After Muhammad died, there were disagreements about who should be his successor, dividing Islam into two sects – Sunni and Shia

Article Reading

In partnerships, read the article **“What Is the Difference Between Sunni and Shiite Muslims--and Why Does It Matter?”** Then...

1. Fill out the Venn Diagram on the back of your notes, comparing and contrasting the Sunni and Shiite faiths.
2. Write one thing from each of the 3 categories on the board



Islamic Factions

The Difference between Sunni and Shiite Muslims:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Klvjs7Yrtw>

Imam – The term for a *Shiite* head of state

Caliph – The term for a *Sunni* head of state

Who are the Kurds?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Klvjs7Yrtw>



History of Conflict

70 C.E. – Jews are scattered by the Romans (Diaspora)

313 C.E. – Roman empire becomes Christian with Constantine

639 C.E. – Muslim Arab armies capture Jerusalem

1069 C.E. – Pope sends armies to retake the Holy Land (Crusades)

Modern history – Palestinian state



Where did you put Syria?
What about Iraq?

Possible Extra Fun Time Slide

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/02/politics/hillary-clinton-coin-flip-iowa-bernie-sanders/>