

Lesson Description

Teacher: Elizabeth Humphries

Lesson: Was the Hindu caste system justified?

Course: 6th grade Ancient Civilizations

Unit: Empires and Ideas

Objectives:

1. Academic learning objectives

Students will be able to describe five major beliefs of Hinduism

Students will be able to diagram the caste system and explain how it reflects Hindu religious beliefs

Students will be able to argue whether or not Hindus should support the caste system

2. Social/moral development objectives (specify domain and developmental objectives)

Students will consider what should happen when one set of beliefs (religious law) conflicts with ideas of morality (equal/fair treatment)

Lesson Summary

This lesson includes an introduction to the basic beliefs of Hinduism, including the caste system. It asks students to consider whether this system is justifiable based on religious beliefs by examining scenarios in small discussion groups.

Procedure – Day 1

1. (5 mins) Do Now: What religions do you know about in the world today? How old do you think these religions are?
2. (2 mins) Mindful Minute (a social-emotional exercise we do each day)
3. (5 mins) Intro to major world religions over time (map graphic - <http://www.mapsofwar.com/ind/history-of-religion.html>). Connection questions – How could the spread of these religions be related to “empire?” (BIG IDEA – religions were spread through empires) Where did the religion of Hinduism develop? Where is it still practiced today?
4. (5 mins) An introduction to Hinduism with the Hindu creation story (video)
5. (15 mins) Stations – the 5 major beliefs of Hinduism using descriptions and chart
6. (5 mins) Review the major beliefs as a class using fill-in-the-blank activity
7. (8 mins) Follow-up in pairs – reflection questions
8. (5 mins) Class share-out of answers to the reflection questions
9. (5 mins) Exit Question: List 3 beliefs of Hinduism and give a short definition for each
10. Homework: Read the background reading on the caste system and answer questions 1-7 on the back of Handout 8.

Procedure – Day 2

1. (5 mins) Do Now:
2. (2 mins) Mindful Minute (a social-emotional exercise we do each day)
3. (8 mins) Introduction to the caste system – Review the caste system guiding questions and caste diagram
4. (15 mins) Scenario discussion – in small groups, students examine 2 scenarios involving the caste system and decide if the caste system was fair in that situation.
5. (10 mins) Scenario share-out – each group reports their scenario and discussion to the class
6. (10 mins) Thrash-out: Should Hindus support the caste system or not?

7. (5 mins) Exit Question: Write the claim you will use for your homework paragraph.
8. Homework: Write a CL-EV-R paragraph arguing whether or not Hindus should support the caste system. Use examples from the scenarios or from Handout 8 as your evidence.

Managing learning Environment

Students are seated in pairs, facing the front of the room. Stamp sheets are passed to students at the beginning of class, used for the Do Now and Exit Question, and collected at the end of the period. All other materials (numbered handouts) are kept in student binders for the duration of the unit. A volume meter and expectations flip chart located at the front of the room indicates when students are expected to be silent/raise hands to speak and when they can speak at a partner voice (such as during pair-shares or small group discussions)

For step 4 on day 2, students will rotate their desks into groups of 4.

In the thrash-out, students stand in 2 lines facing one another.

Instructional Materials

Describe or attach materials employed in the lesson:

Day 1:

Graphics/videos: map of world religions over time, Hindu creation story

Student handouts: Descriptions of Hindu beliefs, 5 major beliefs of Hinduism chart, fill-in-the-blank reading and reflection questions, homework reading on the caste system

Day 2:

Student handouts: Reading on the caste system (from day 1 homework), caste system scenarios

Questions used by the teacher to guide discussion could be added in here:

*See caste system scenario handout

*Thrash-out – Should Hindus support the caste system or not?