Numbers, Graphs and Encounters

- Student Resource: Religion by the Numbers
- Student Activity: Current and Future Issues
- Student Activity: News Related to Religious Freedom
- Student Activity: Religion, Freedom and Conflict Around the World
- Post Reprint: “Where Religion Stands Today”
Pope Francis is number 1 at Vatican City, the Holy See to 1.2 billion Roman Catholic believers. There are 70 million Americans who are Roman Catholic. Streets were lined with young and old seeking a glimpse and maybe a blessing from the 78-year-old pontiff who had the stamina of a much younger man. He was given gifts including the No. 10 D.C. United jersey.

Numbers are related directly or in the form of informational graphics. Whether a pie chart, bar graph or map, the varied graphics communicate information from surveys, polls and counts in a manner that is easy to digest and comprehend.

Activities in this resource guide give students practice in creating graphs and charts to convey the numbers related to religion. And to read about the number of religious conflicts and issues surrounding religious freedom. A Post reprint from January 1, 2000, can be used for background and comparison and contrast with recently released data.
Religion By the Numbers

When doing research or reporting on religious affiliation and attitudes, there are several sources for data. Among those that survey a broad spectrum of individuals and that focus on different aspects of faith and interfaith issues are:

- The U.S. census, includes questions regarding religious identification
- The Pew Research Center, surveys and demographic studies
- Public Religion Research Institute, surveys and studies

Assorted Graphs and Charts

Read “The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050” [http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/]. Note the use of varied informational graphics: map, line graphs, bar graph, information listing and bar chart. Discuss how each type of informational graphic serves to present information that can be easily digested.

Maps and Data


Quotation, Poll and Bar Graph

The Washington Post News Art Department utilized a question and data from a Pew Research Center poll of Americans to create an informational graphic. A quotation from Pope Francis stating his point of view completes the package. Two different topics support the breadth of the pontiff’s interest in issues and relationships.

Sources for Data

- http://www.census.gov/2010census/
- 2010 U.S. Census
- http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0075.pdf
- http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0076.pdf
- Table 76. Religious Bodies — Selected Data
- Table 77. Christian Church Adherents, 2000, and Jewish Population 2010 — States
- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/05/congress-religious-affiliation_n_6417074.html
- 114th Congress — Religious Affiliation
- Gallup, Religion and Social Trends
- http://www.pewresearch.org
- Pew Research Center
- http://publicreligion.org/research/
- PRRI Recent Published Research
Assignment

Create an informational graphic to relate the following data. What type of graphic will best communicate this information to other teens?

SURVEY 1
Source: Gallup Trend Line: Religious Identification
Based on 160,000 telephone interviews in 2014; Result of national survey:
- 52% non-Catholic Christian (Protestant, Mormon)
- 24% Roman Catholic
- 19% no religious identity (no religion, don’t know, didn’t want to tell)
- 2% Jewish
- 3% wide variety of non-Christian faith

SURVEY 2
Source: The First Amendment Center national phone survey of 1,002 individuals living in the contiguous 48 states, May 14-23, 2015, using a random-digit-dial process. They asked 15 questions. These are the results for #15:

Do you agree or disagree:
Cartoonists should be allowed to publish images of the prophet Muhammad even if those images are offensive to some religions.

The 2015 survey results:
- 36% strongly agree
- 24% mildly agree
- 12% mildly disagree
- 20% strongly disagree
- 8% don’t know

SURVEY 3
Select one of the 2010 U.S. census data files. Use the information to create an informational graphic. Be sure to provide the source of your data and size of the data pool.
Current and Future Issues

In September 2015, Pope Francis travelled to Cuba and the United States. The 78-year-old pontiff kept an arduous schedule that included visiting the White House, addressing Congress, and holding masses in three cities. When Pope Francis addressed a gathering of American bishops at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in D.C., he listed the church’s challenges in the future:

“The innocent victim of abortion, children who die of hunger or from bombings, immigrants who drown in search for a better tomorrow … the victims of terrorism, wars, violence and drug trafficking, the environment devastated by man’s predatory relationship with nature.”

1. Media coverage of the papal visit was extensive. There were reminders of his selection to be pope, recounting of his actions and airing of his speeches and spontaneous interaction with people. Pope Francis addressed many topics. On the line before the quotation, identify the issue that he is addressing.

___________ “I greet all of you with particular affection!” the pope said in Spanish. “Many of you have immigrated to this country at great personal cost, but in the hope of building a new life. Do not be discouraged by whatever challenges and hardships you face.”

___________ “The ecological crisis, and the large-scale destruction of biodiversity, can threaten the very existence of the human species,” Pope Francis said in his address to the U.N. General Assembly. “The baneful consequences of an irresponsible mismanagement of the global economy, guided only by ambition for wealth and power, must serve as a summons to a forthright reflection on man.”

___________ “This time in your life can only have one purpose: to give you a hand in getting back on the right road, to give you a hand to help you rejoin society,” he told them. “All of us are part of that effort, all of us are invited to encourage, help and enable your rehabilitation.” Such work, he noted, “benefits and elevates the morale of the entire community.”

___________ “Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society?” he asked members of Congress. “Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.”

___________ Difficulties “must not discourage us. Quite the opposite. Love is something we learn; love is something we live; love grows as it is ‘forged’ by the concrete situations which each particular family experiences. … This is a great legacy that we can give to our children, a very good lesson: We make mistakes, yes; we have problems, yes. But we know that that is not really what counts. We know that mistakes, problems and conflicts are an opportunity to draw closer to others, to draw closer to God.” … Take care of the children, Francis said in conclusion, and take care of the grandparents.
“Deafening anonymity” of those on society’s margins

On the first Holy Thursday after his election as pontiff, Francis washed the feet of inmates at a juvenile detention center in Rome, an act he repeated in April, entreaty of priests to spend more time in “the outskirts where there is suffering, bloodshed, blindness that longs for sight and prisoners in thrall to many evil masters.”

2. Although Pope Francis was addressing new immigrants to the United States, in what ways might the entreaty of the first Latin American pontiff apply to all Americans?

“Please do not be ashamed of your traditions,” he told the audience. “Do not forget the lessons you learned from your elders, which are something you can bring to enrich the life of this American land. I repeat, do not be ashamed of what is part of you, your lifeblood. You are called to be responsible citizens and to contribute, like others who with so much strength did before you … fruitfully to the life of the communities in which you live.”

3. Learn more about the issues that Pope Francis indicated as current and future concerns. Select one of the issues to conduct an e-Replica search. Review and summarize The Post articles that report on the issue. Make a list of actions by members of Congress and local officials, by religious organizations and by individuals. Discuss what you think you and other students in your school might do to ameliorate problems or improve situations.
News Related to Religious Freedom

Religious Freedom in the U.S.

The concept of religious liberty and separation of church and state is one deeply embedded in the founding documents of the United States. It was important enough to the founders that it was included in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Note that the amendment prevents the Congress from establishing a national religion — commonly referred to as the “establishment clause”— and it also prevents the government from making laws which prevent people from exercising their own religious freedoms.

ASSIGNMENT

Scan the headlines in today’s newspaper to find stories of individuals who claim that the government is in some way restricting their freedom to practice their religious beliefs.

Pay particular attention to cases currently being argued before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Don’t forget to scan the op-ed pages for The Washington Post editorial board’s take on these issues, letters from readers, and the viewpoint of columnists. Are there any letters to the editor or guest opinion columns written by religious leaders?

Religious Freedom in Your School

Do you go to a public, charter or private school? How do students’ rights differ according to the school you attend?

Does your school observe a “moment of silence” before the start of the school day? When do you recite the Pledge of Allegiance? Does the phrase “under God” in the pledge make it a prayer? Are either or both of these practices violations of the “establishment clause” of the First Amendment?

ASSIGNMENT

Research Supreme Court and court cases that involve reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools. Also, review your school system’s policy regarding observing the “moment of silence.”

Write an editorial or commentary to inform about or to take a stand on an issue of religious freedom at school — reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, observing the moment of silence or another area.
Religious Freedom and Conflict Around the World

In October of 1945, in the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations was formed. On December 10, 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 2 of The Declarations states:

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status…

Article 18 states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Freedom of Religion

Look through the news to find examples of a group or an individual who is being denied religious freedom in their countries or are being persecuted for their beliefs. Research the constitution and laws of that country to find out if there are guarantees of religious freedom.

Write a letter to the leader(s) of that country’s government, demanding religious freedom for their citizens. Be sure to cite in your letter the relevant passages either from that nation’s constitution or from The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Religious Conflict in the Headlines

You have been given an assignment as reporters to learn everything you can about religious-based conflicts around the world. Begin with current events.

• Which regions and cities are in the news?
• Are these same regions and cities often in the news due to religious conflict?
• What religions are involved? Is the conflict among sects within a particular religion, i.e., Protestant vs. Catholic, Sunni vs. Shia, or is it between different religions, i.e., Muslim vs. Hindu?

Use references and news sources to learn more about the nature and history of these conflicts. Are these conflicts really about religion or is religion being used as a “reason” or pretext for other issues like disputes over economics, political power or territorial disputes?

Case Study: Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem is a holy city to the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Use news, online and library resources to identify the sections of the city associated with each of these religions.

• What are the specific holy sites and why is each site of significance to each of the three religions?
• What role do religious leaders play in allowing access to holy sites to people of all faiths?
• How is Jerusalem governed? Is there a mayor and a locally elected government? What religion(s) are represented in the governing of the city?
• Jerusalem is a disputed city in the ongoing Palestinian/Israeli conflict? What is the position of the two sides on working, living and worshipping in Jerusalem? Use the print and e-Replica versions of The Washington Post to learn about current events taking place in and near Jerusalem.
Where Religion Stands Today

Faith Played a Major Role in Sweeping Political and Cultural Changes 1,000 Years Ago, Many of Which Still Resonate; Around Globe, Diverse Faiths Fuel a Search for Meaning

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

— Psalm 90:4

Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman Emperor, had a way with faith persuasion. “Be baptized or be killed,” he told the Saxons, whom he conquered around 800.

Conversion style aside, the Frankish ruler established a precedent that helped create Western Europe as we know it today. One after another, kings and warlords, including wild-haired Viking marauders from the North, looked upon Charlemagne’s Christian reign as “a model of settled kingship, a government they could imitate,” said Thomas Head, professor of history at Hunter College in New York.

Around the turn of the millennium, so many kings had copied Charlemagne’s style that virtually every kingdom in the West was at least nominally Christian or soon would be, Head said. Latin became the common language not only of religion, but of government and science as well. Christianity became a “glue for society” that brought stability to the region.

Similarly, Islam provided a common language — Arabic — among the nations it took over in the centuries after its founding in 630. The influence of Islam ranged from Spain to North Africa to the eastern rim of the Mediterranean, with Muslims and non-Muslims alike sharing trade routes and advancements in science, philosophy and art.

So it was that religion played a major role in sweeping political and cultural changes 1,000 years ago, many of which resonate today. But what was happening on the personal, individual level? What caused people a millennium ago to follow a particular belief — other than fear for their lives?

Chester Gillis, associate professor of theology at Georgetown University, believes he has the answer. People now, as then, “sense the need for an absolute or transcendent or divine presence in their lives. The vast majority of the world has that innate sense for the divine, a search for the ontological grounding of their own person.”

Gillis said that “every culture historically” has shown evidence of this search for transcendent meaning. “It has taken different expressions, been fractured into various religions and denominations. But it is still foundational.”

This constant is important to recognize today because some people contend that religious belief is declining, which simply isn’t so, he said. It’s true that particular groups, such as some mainline Protestant denominations, are experiencing drops in membership or attendance. But members who fall away often find a new religious community, whether it’s a more vibrant, Pentecostal megachurch or some private New Age spirituality.

Even when they stop identifying with organized religion, many people still consider themselves to be spiritual, with a belief in a higher being, Gillis said. “They would never say they are atheist or not religious.”

That spiritual constant also is at work globally, where the movement of people from country to country has created an unprecedented mix of religious faith and “true world religions,” he said. It’s not just
the case in such well-established cosmopolitan centers as Washington and Paris, but in many other cities as well.

Earlier this month, Gillis attended the third World’s Parliament of Religion, in Cape Town, South Africa. Thousands of people from numerous faiths gathered to hear Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama and other leaders ask for peace and reconciliation in 2000 and beyond.

But what impressed Gillis the most was the religious makeup of Cape Town itself, a city that offers its residents more than 20 faith options, from indigenous African religions to Zoroastrianism to Judaism, Catholicism and Protestantism. Such diversity is “something you think of immediately” with London or New York, but not Cape Town, he said.

In the United States, which is home to dozens of religions and hundreds of denominations, religious diversity has become “far more commonplace than the framers of the Constitution ever imagined,” said Diana L. Eck, professor of comparative religion at Harvard University and director of the school’s Pluralism Project, which tracks the country’s growing religious diversity.

“We’re still predominantly Christian, no doubt about it,” she said. But because of an “interfaith explosion” in the last decade, “America for the first time in our history is really, really challenged to make good on our promise of freedom of religion.”

Eck cited an incident in which a Sikh man, stopped for a traffic violation, was stripped of the Kirpan, or ceremonial sword, his religion requires him to carry. And Hindus, recently targeted for conversion by Southern Baptists, as Jews and Muslims also have been, “felt deeply insulted not because [the Baptists] might want to convert them, but because they held mistaken views of who they are.”

Eck and Gillis agree that followers of America’s “traditional” religions — Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism — need to open new paths of understanding to different cultures and faiths. No longer are Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and Jains living “on the other side of the world, but across the street.”

Eck believes accepting the beliefs of others “deepens faith” without endangering it. And increased understanding doesn’t mean “leaving your religion at the door or shedding it, but affirming a commitment to live together.”

On the other hand, the country’s — and world’s — increasing religious diversity might require adjustments in traditional ways of thinking and worshiping.

“My sense is that [America’s] faiths have never been static and will continue to change and breathe the air of the new times, or die,” Eck said.

Gillis agreed, adding that religions encountering new faiths often make adjustments not in belief, but in music, worship and other forms of expression. “Even religious claims are subject to a changing expression about the absolute.”

Valerie Grays receives Holy Communion from the Rev. William Norvel at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church.
2000 A breakdown of the world’s believers and non-believers today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adherents</th>
<th>World Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atheists</td>
<td>149,913,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahai’s</td>
<td>6,764,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhists</td>
<td>353,794,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>397,162,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>folk religionists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>1,943,038,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholics</td>
<td>1,026,501,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants</td>
<td>380,193,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>213,743,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christians</td>
<td>373,832,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confucianists</td>
<td>6,241,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic religionists</td>
<td>248,565,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>761,689,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jains</td>
<td>3,922,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>14,111,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mandeans</td>
<td>38,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>1,164,622,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neo-Religionists</td>
<td>100,144,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nonreligious</td>
<td>759,655,000</td>
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<td>Shintoists</td>
<td>2,789,000</td>
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<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>22,332,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritists</td>
<td>11,785,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoroastrians</td>
<td>274,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other religionists</td>
<td>1,001,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages of World Total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adherents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhists</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (including nonpractitioners)</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Population 5,929,839,000

1000 About 300 million people lived in the 11th century, when vast groups of people converted to Christianity and Islam while others practiced the older religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Confucianism. Some notable dates:

960 The Sung Dynasty is founded in China, bringing more than 300 years of prosperity and dominance in technology, commerce and industry. A revival of Confucianism provides a moral base.

1000 Icelanders convert to Christianity, after similar conversions of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Following Charlemagne’s model, newly Christianized Hungary consecrates a king.

1009 Muslims destroy the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, an act many Christians mistakenly attribute to Jews, fueling anti-Jewish sentiments that increase in coming generations.

1033 The anniversary of Jesus’s death inspires new pietistic movements that lead to the founding of mendicant orders and encourage Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

1054 Bishops of the Eastern and Western churches excommunicate one another over the issue of papal authority, a schism that will be completed in 1204, when Rome’s Crusaders sack Constantinople.

1066 William of Normandy conquers England, defeating King Harold II at the Battle of Hastings. The conquest is depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry, a 231-foot-long embroidery made about a decade later.

1098 Rome begins the first of several mostly ill-fated crusades to recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims.

SOURCE: 1999 Encyclopedia Britannica Book of the Year