UNIT 1: World Belief Systems

Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

Textbook Chapter 1: From Human PreHistory to the Early Civilizations (pgs 7-19)
Textbook Chapter 2: Early Civilizations, 3500-600 BCE (pgs 21-39)
Textbook Chapter 3: The Classical Period, 600 BCE - 600 CE; Classical China pages 48-73.
Textbook Chapter 4: The Classical Period, 600 BCE - 600 CE; Classical India (pages 74-93)
Textbook Chapter 5: The Classical Period, 600 BCE - 600 CE; Classical Civilizations in the Middle East and Mediterranean (pages 94-115).
Textbook Chapter 7: The First Global Civilization: The Rise and Spread of Islam (pages 156-180)
Textbook Chapter 9: African Civilizations and the Spread of Islam (pages 204-223)

World Themes:
✓ Theme 1: Humans and the Environment
✓ Theme 2: Cultural Developments and Interactions
✓ Theme 3: Governance
✓ Theme 4: Economic Systems
✓ Theme 5: Social Interactions and Organizations
✓ Theme 6: Technology and Innovation

Historical Reasoning Skills targeted in Unit 1:
✓ Comparison
✓ Cause and Effect

SECTION 1: Chinese Philosophies

1. Analects: The collection of sayings and ideas attributed to the Chinese philosopher Confucius and his contemporaries, traditionally believed to have been written by Confucius’ followers.
2. Assimilation: The adoption of a conqueror’s culture by a conquered people.
3. Autocracy: A government in which the ruler has unlimited power and uses it in an arbitrary manner.
4. Bureaucracy: A system of departments and agencies formed to carry out the work of government.
5. Centralized Government: A government in which power is concentrated in a central authority to which local governments are subject.
6. Civil Service: The administrative departments of a government- especially those in which employees are hired on the basis of their scores on examinations.
7. Confucius: Major Chinese philosopher born in 6th century BCE; author of Analects; philosophy based on need for restoration of order through advice of superior men to be found among the shi (scholar-gentry class). He believed China society should be based around five basic relationships: (1) ruler and subject, (2) father and son, (3) husband and wife, (4) older brother and younger brothers, and (5) friend and friend.
8. Daoism: A philosophy based on the ideas of the Chinese thinker Laozi, who taught that people should be guided by a universal force called the Dao (Way); and the preservation of the balance of forces that exists in the universe.
9. Dynastic cycle: The historical pattern of the rise, decline, and replacement of dynasties.
10. Filial piety: Respect shown by children for their parents and elders.
11. Great Wall: Chinese defensive fortification intended to keep out the nomadic invaders from the north; initiated during Qin dynasty and reign of Shi Huangdi.
12. Han Dynasty: Chinese dynasty that succeeded the Qing in 202 BCE; ruled for the next 400 years.
13. Legalism: A Chinese political philosophy based on the idea that a highly efficient and powerful government is the key to social order.
14. Mandate of Heaven: In Chinese history, the divine approval thought to be the basis of royal authority.
15. Qin Dynasty: A short lived dynasty established in 221 BCE at the end of the Warring States period following the decline of the Zhou dynasty; fell in 207 BCE.
16. Secular: Attitudes, activities, ideas, or beliefs that have no religious or spiritual basis; not subject to or bound by religious rule.
17. Shang: First Chinese dynasty for which archeological evidence exists; flourished 1600 to 1046 BCE.
Shi Huangdi: Founder of the brief Qin dynasty in 221 BCE; unified China, and began construction of the Great Wall of China.

Silk Roads: A system of ancient caravan routes across Central Asia, along which traders carried silk and other trade goods.

Yin and yang: In Chinese thought, the two powers that govern the natural rhythms of life.

Zhou Dynasty: A Chinese dynasty that overthrew the Shang in 1027 BCE. The Zhou adopted much of the Shang culture, and justified their right to rule through a Mandate of Heaven; flourished 1122 to 256 BCE.

SECTION II: Hinduism and Buddhism

Ahimsa: Hindu belief in nonviolence.

Ashoka: Ruler of the Mauryan Empire (273-232 BCE); Grandson of Chandragupta Maurya; completed conquests of Indian subcontinent; converted to Buddhism and sponsored spread of Buddhism throughout his empire.

Brahma: A Hindu god considered the creator of the world.

Buddha: Creator of a major Indian and Asian religion; born Siddhartha Guatama in 6th century BCE as son of local ruler among Aryan tribes located near Himalayan’s; became an ascetic; found enlightenment under bodhi tree; taught that enlightenment could be achieved only by abandoning desires for all earthly things.

Buddhism: A religion indigenous to the Indian subcontinent, it is largely based on the teachings, traditions, practices and beliefs of Siddhartha Guatama.

Caste: In traditional Indian society, unchangeable social group into which a person is born.

Chandragupta Maurya: Founder of Maurya dynasty; established first empire in Indian subcontinent; first centralized government since Harappan civilization; ruled from 322-298 BCE).

Dharma: In Hinduism and Buddhism, an individual’s religious and moral duties. In Hinduism, the caste position and career determined by a person’s birth; Hindu culture required that one accept one’s social position and perform occupation to the best of one’s ability in order to have a better situation in the next life.

Eightfold Path: According to Buddha, the path to nirvana or enlightenment and consisting of Right View/Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.

Enlightenment: In Buddhism, a state of perfect wisdom in which one understands basic truths about the universe.

Four Nobel Truths: In Buddhism, the principles that are the essence of Buddha’s teachings: life is suffering; desires cause suffering; the annihilation of desires can relieve suffering; the way to do this is by following the Eightfold Path.

Gupta Dynasty: Succeeded the Kushans in the 3rd century CE; built empire that extended to all but the southern regions of Indian sub-continent; less centralized than Mauryan empire.

Gurus: Originally referred to as Brahmans who served as teachers for the princes of the imperial court of the Guptas.

Himalayas: Mountain region marking the northern border of the Indian subcontinent; site of the Aryan settlements that formed small kingdoms or warrior republics.

Hinduism: The predominate religion of the Indian subcontinent. It is currently the world’s 3rd largest religion.

Jainism: A religion founded in India in the sixth century BCE, whose members believe that everything in the universe has a soul and therefore should not be harmed.

Karma: In Hinduism and Buddhism, the totality of the good and bad deeds performed by a person, which is believed to determine his or her fate after rebirth.

Mahayana: A sect of Buddhism that offers salvation to all and allows popular worship.

Matriarchal: Relating to a social system in which the mother is head of the family.

Mauryan Dynasty: Established in Indian subcontinent in 4th century BCE following invasion by Alexander the Great from Greece.

Moksha: In Hinduism, freedom from the endless cycle of rebirth into a state of bliss, union with Brahman. This is the ultimate goal of life.

Monsoons: Seasonal winds crossing Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia; during summer bring rains.

Nirvana: In Buddhism, the state of enlightenment, a state of tranquility.

Patricia: Relating to a social system in which the father is head of the family.

Reincarnation: In Hinduism and Buddhism, the process by which a soul is reborn continuously until it achieves perfect understanding.

Religious toleration: A recognition of people’s right to hold differing religious beliefs.

Sanskrit: The sacred and classical Indian language.
49. **Shiva**: A Hindu god considered the destroyer of the world; worshipped as the personification of cosmic forces of change.
50. **Siddhartha Gautama**: The founder of Buddhism, known as Buddha (“awakened one”).
51. **Stupas**: Stone shrines built to house pieces of bone or hair and personal possessions said to be relics of the Buddha; preserved Buddhist architectural forms.
52. **Tamil**: A language of southern India, also, the people who speak that language.
53. **Theravada**: A sect of Buddhism focusing on the strict spiritual discipline originally advocated by the Buddha.
54. **Untouchables**: Low social caste in Hindu culture; performed tasks that were considered polluting - street sweeping, removal of human waste, and tanning.
55. **Varnas**: Clusters of caste groups in Aryan society; four social castes - Brahmins (priests), warriors, merchants, and peasants; beneath four Aryan castes were group of socially untouchable Dalits.
56. **Vishnu**: A Hindu god considered the preserver of the world; god of sacrifice; widely worshipped

**SECTION III: Zoroastrianism**

57. **Monotheism**: belief in one god
58. **Zoroastrianism**: Animate religion that saw material existence as battle between forces of good and evil; stressed the importance or moral choice; righteous lived on after death in “House of Song”; chief religion of Persian empire.

**SECTION IV: Judaism**

59. **Covenant**: A binding agreement.
60. **Diaspora**: The dispersal of the Jews from their homeland in Palestine - especially during the period of more than 1,800 years that followed the Romans’ destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE.
61. **Ten Commandments**: Set of Biblical laws relating to ethics and worship, which play a fundamental role in Judaism and Christianity.
62. **Prophet**: In a religion, an individual who claims to speak the word of god.

**SECTION V: Christianity**

63. **Christianity**: Worldwide monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of the prophet Jesus.
64. **Coptic**: Christian sect of Egypt; tended to support Islamic invasions of this area in preference to Byzantine rule.
65. **Golden Rule**: In the teachings of Jesus Nazareth, one should treat others, as one would like others to treat oneself.
66. **Hersy**: Religious belief that is contrary to the official teachings of the Church.
67. **Martyr**: Somebody who suffers persecution and death for refusing to renounce, or accept, a belief or cause, usually religious.
68. **Messiah**: Savor or liberator of a people in the Jewish, Christian or Islamic faiths.
69. **Pope**: The Bishop of Rome and the leader of the worldwide Catholic Church.

**SECTION VI: Islam**

70. **Abbasid**: Dynasty that succeeded the Umayyads as caliphs within Islam; came to power in 750 CE.
71. **Abu Bakr**: The first caliph or leader of the Muslim faithful elected after Muhammad’s death in 632. Renown for his knowledge of the nomadic tribes who then dominated the Islamic community.
72. **Ali**: Cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad; one of orthodox caliphs; focus of Shi’a Islam.
73. **Allah**: The Arab term for the high god in pre-Islamic Arabia that was adopted by the followers of Muhammad and the Islamic faith.
74. **Bağdad**: Capital of Abbasid dynasty located in Iraq near ancient Persian capital.
75. **Battuta, Ibn**: Born 1304; Arab traveler who described African societies and cultures in his travel records.
76. **Bedouin**: Nomadic pastoralists of the Arabian peninsula; culture based on camel and goat nomadism; early converts to Islam.
77. **Caliph**: The political and religious successor to Muhammad.
78. Damascus: Syrian city that was capital of Umayyad caliphate.
79. Dhimmi: Literally “people of the book”; applied as inclusive term to Jews and Christians in Islamic territories; later extended to Zoroastrians and even Hindus.
80. Dhows: Arab sailing vessels with triangular or lateen sails; strongly influenced European ship design.
81. Five Pillars: The obligatory religious duties of all Muslims; confession of faith, prayer, fasting during Ramadan, zakat, and hajj.
82. Hadith: Traditions of the prophet Muhammad.
83. Hijra: The migration or journey of the Islamic prophet Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina.
84. Islam: Monotheistic; second largest world religion.
85. Jizya: Tax paid by all nonbelievers in Islamic territories.
86. Ka’ba: Most revered religious shrine in pre-Islamic Arabia; located in Mecca; focus of obligatory annual truce among Bedouin tribes; later incorporated as important shrine in Islam; Muslims believe it was a house of worship built by Abraham and his son Ishmael.
87. Khadijah: First wife of the prophet Muhammad, who had worked for her as a trader.
88. Mecca: City located in mountainous region along the Red Sea in Arabian peninsula; founded by Umayyad clan; site of Ka’ba; original home of Muhammad; location of chief religious pilgrimage point in Islam.
89. Medina: Town located northeast of Mecca; grew date palms whose fruit was sold to Bedouin’s; became refugee for Muhammad following flight from Mecca.
90. Mosque: A place of worship for followers of Islam.
91. Muhammad: Prophet of Islam; born c. 570 to Banû Hashim clan of Quraysh tribe in Mecca; raised by father’s family; received revelations from Allah in 610 CE and thereafter; died in 632.
92. Muslim: Term for individuals who practice the Islamic Faith.
93. Qur’an (Koran): Recitations of revelations received by Muhammad; holy book of Islam.
94. Ramadan: Islamic month of religious observance requiring fasting from dawn to sunset.
95. Shi’ite: Also known as Shi’ites; political and theological division within Islam; followers of Ali.
96. Sunni: Political and theological division within Islam; supported the Umayyads.
97. Umayyad: Clan of Quraysh that dominated politics and commercial economy of Mecca; clan establish a dynasty under this title as rulers of Islam, 661 to 750.
98. Umma: Community of the faithful within Islam; transcended old tribal boundaries to create degree of political unity.
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

**Task:** After you learn about each belief system in class, first complete the relevant sections of the chart. Second, label the location of origin on your map. Third, shade or color the regions of the world where this belief system is the majority practiced today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Origins: When did it begin? Where did it begin? Who was the founder?</th>
<th>Core beliefs, ideas, and principles</th>
<th>What groups of people did it appeal to and why?</th>
<th>Reasons that it spread</th>
<th>Where is it found today?</th>
<th>Present day population and comparative rank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daoism/Taoism</td>
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<td>Ranked #9 Approximately 12 million followers</td>
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<td>Confucianism</td>
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<td>Legalism</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
<td>Origins: When did it begin? Where did it begin? Who was the founder?</td>
<td>Core beliefs, ideas, and principles</td>
<td>What groups of people did it appeal to and why?</td>
<td>Reasons that it spread</td>
<td>Where is it found today?</td>
<td>Present day population and comparative rank</td>
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<td>Hinduism</td>
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<td>15% of the world’s population</td>
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<td>Buddhism</td>
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<td>7% of the world’s population</td>
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<td>Zoroastrianism</td>
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<td>Approximately 2.6 million followers</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
<td>Origins: When did it begin? Where did it begin? Who was the founder?</td>
<td>Core beliefs, ideas, and principles</td>
<td>What groups of people did it appeal to and why?</td>
<td>Reasons that it spread</td>
<td>Where is it found today?</td>
<td>Present day population and comparative rank</td>
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<td>Judaism</td>
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<td>Approximately 14 million followers</td>
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<td>Islam</td>
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<td>23% of the world’s population</td>
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</table>
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?
Aim: How were the points of view of Taoism, Confucianism, and Legalism influenced by political and social unrest?

The Life and Teachings of Confucius

1. Life and Times of Confucius:

Confucius, who probably lived from 551 BCE-479 BCE, was most likely born in the state of Lu, now part of Shandong province, in China. According to legend, Confucius became a teacher and moral exemplar. Confucius lived during a critical time in Chinese history, called The Warring States Period, during the failing and collapse of the early Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BCE). During this time, several states fought against each other in an attempt to expand their influence over what is now China. While several important schools of thought emerged during this time, the ideas developed by Confucius had an especially long-lasting impact for China. After his death, various disciples contributed to the spread of the Confucian tradition. It is believed that his ideas were documented by his disciples in the “Analects.”

II. Confucian Teachings and Beliefs:

FIVE BASIC RELATIONSHIPS:

Relationship 1: Ruler and Subject
“To govern is to correct. If you set an example by being correct, who would dare to remain incorrect?”
The Master said about government, “Encourage the people to work hard by setting an example yourself. Do not allow your efforts to slacken.” 13:1

Relationship 2: Father and Son
“...Being good as a song and obedient as a young man is, perhaps, the root of a man’s character.” 1:2
“Everyone speaks up for his own son whether he is talented or not...” 11:8

Relationship 3: Elder Brother and Younger Brother
The Master said, “As a younger brother and son, be filial at home and deferential in the community; be cautious in what you say and then make good on your word; love the multitude broadly and be intimate with those who are authoritative in their conduct. If in so behaving you still have energy left, use it to improve yourself through study.” 1:6

Relationship 4: Husband and Wife
“In one’s household, it is the women and the small men that are difficult to deal with. If you let them get too close, they become disrespectful. If you keep them at a distance, they complain.” 17:25

Relationship 5: Friend to Friend
“Make it your guiding principle to do your best for others and to be trustworthy in what you say. Do not accept as friend anyone who is not as good as you. When you make a mistake do not be afraid of mending your ways.” 9:25

FILIAL PIETY:

“When your parents are alive, you should not go too far afield in your travels. If you do, your whereabouts should always be known.” 4:19
“A youth, when at home, should be devoted, and abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good.”

ON EDUCATION:

“To enrich your family, there is no need to buy good land: Books hold a thousand measures of grain. For an easy life, there is no need to build mansions: In books are found houses of gold...”
“Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.”

ON GOVERNMENT:

“If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishment, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good.”
"When the person in authority is beneficent without great expenditure; when he lays tasks on the people without their refining; when he pursues what he desires without being covetous; when he maintains a dignified ease without being proud; when he is majestic without being fierce."
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

**Aim:** How were the points of view of Taoism, Confucianism, and Legalism influenced by political and social unrest?

### Legalism - The Philosophy and Writings of Han Fei

**1. Han Fei**

Han Fei most lived from 280 to 233 BCE, during a critical time in Chinese history, known as the Warring States Period, during the failing and collapse of the early Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BCE). He was a member of the ruling aristocracy, where he developed a persuasive style of writing. Because Han Fei wrote so much about law and order, he became known as a “Legalist.” Han Fei and other legalist writers prided themselves on what they believed were real and practical approaches to political thought. Followers disdained Confucian virtues on human nature and governance, but Legalism never captured the widespread approval that Confucianism did.

### 11. Legalism Teaching and Beliefs

**ON HUMAN NATURE:**

“The nature of man is evil. His goodness is acquired.”

"Greed is the motive for most actions and the cause of most conflicts."

"People are submissive to power, and few of them can be influenced by a doctrine of righteousness."

**ON GOVERNMENT:**

"A ruler ...does not devote himself to virtue but to the law."

“It is dangerous for a ruler to trust others. He who trusts others can be manipulated by others.”

“What the emperor thinks is right, all shall think is right. What the emperor thinks to be wrong, all shall think to be wrong.”

“The law no more makes exceptions for men of high station than the plumb lines bends to accommodate a crooked place in the wood. What the law had decreed the wise man cannot dispute nor the brave man venture to contest. When faults are to be punished, the highest minister cannot escape; when good is to be rewarded, the lowest peasant must not be passed over.”

“Hence, the interests of the state and the individual are mutually at odds, and both cannot prevail at the same time.”

**ON EDUCATION:**

“Accordingly, in the country of an enlightened ruler there are no texts written in books and on bamboo strips, but the law is the teaching; there are no "speeches" ...but officials are the teachers”

“When one thousand people are engaged in agriculture and war, yet there is a single man among them engaged in Poems, Documents, argumentativeness and [scholarship], then one thousand people all will become remiss in agriculture and war. ... This is the doctrine of impoverishing the state and weakening the army,” – Shang Yang, Legalist philosopher of the Warring States Period.
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Daoism and the Spirituality of Laozi

Laozi probably lived in the 6th century BCE during the rule of the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BCE), before the period of the Warring States. According to traditional accounts, Laozi was a scholar who worked to keep archives for the royal court of Zhou. Laozi is believed to have written the Tao Te Ching, and The Way of Virtue, two of the fundamental texts of Daoism. Dao, which means “the way,” refers to an indescribable force in nature that maintains balance, and that if not recognized, leads to strife and unhappiness. Daoists emphasize the virtue of yielding and acceptance. The influence of Daoism spread widely throughout, and outside of East Asia.

II. Daoism Teaching and Beliefs:

Basic Beliefs:
"Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. Don’t resist them; that only creates sorrow. Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way they like.”

Daoists believe in the yin and yang. The yin stands for Earth, darkness, and female forces. The yang stands for heaven, light, and male forces. The peace and well-being of the universe depends on harmony between the yin and yang.

On Human Nature:
Daoism had no interest in bringing order to human affairs. Instead, they sought to live in harmony with nature.

“Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are. When you realize there is nothing lacking, the whole world belongs to you."

“He who is contented is rich.”

On Education:
“Knowing others is wisdom, knowing yourself is Enlightenment.”

“1 have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These are your greatest treasures.”

On Government:
"Governing a great nation is like cooking a small fish: too much handling will spoil it.”
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

**Aim:** How were the points of view of Taoism, Confucianism, and Legalism influenced by political and social unrest?

**Task:** Correctly pair each painting and description on the left, with the philosophy it best reflects: Daoism, Legalism, or Confucianism. **Support your responses** with reasonings for how you identified each philosophy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Philosophy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Painting" /></td>
<td>Daoism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This painting depicts Chinese students taking a civil service examination. These written tests were used to advance in government jobs. Although those born into the higher scholar-gentry class had more time to study for exams, theoretically anyone could score well on the exams providing opportunities for some to rise in society. Civil service exams laid the groundwork for the creation of a bureaucracy - a complex system of dividing government up into departments run by a trained civil service.</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Yin Yang" /></td>
<td>Legalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The yin stands for Earth, darkness, and female forces. The yang stands for heaven, light, and male forces. The peace and well-being of the universe depends on harmony between the yin and yang.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The painting above depicts Chinese officials burning books, events that were also believed to be paired with the burying of scholars and those critical of the government, from about 221-206 BCE.
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?
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Chinese Philosophies Summary Task:
Select any two of the scenarios below. For each scenario that you selected, address the prompt from the perspective of a Confucist, Legalist, and Taoist.

1) You know that you are failing a class. You know that you will be in trouble when your parents find out. How do you handle the situation?

2) Your older brother or sister is cheating on tests. How should you act?

3) You see an opportunity to take something that you have really wanted without being caught. How should you act?

4) Your friends started smoking and are trying to get you to start. How do you handle the situation?

5) While you are supposed to be watching your younger sibling, you are instead horsing around with friends in your house- friends who are not supposed to be over when your parents aren’t home. Your mother’s very expensive vase breaks while you are playing with friends. What do you tell your parents?
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

Aim: How did Hinduism create structure to Indian society?

**Manu: The First Human?**

According to Hindu tradition, Manu was the first man placed on earth. In Sanskrit, Manu translates to “human.”

**Vishnu,** referenced in the story is a widely worshipped Hindu god considered the preserver of the world.

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“Manu, the first human, saved a small fish from the jaws of a larger fish. After hearing the smaller one beg for protection, Manu kept the fish safe, transferring it to larger and larger containers as it grew, finally returning it to the ocean.

Because of this kindness, the Vishnu returned to warn Manu about an imminent flood and told him to build a boat, stocking it with the male and female of every species. After the flood waters rose, Manu tied a rope to the fish’s horn. The fish led him to a mountain and told Manu to fasten the ship’s rope to a tree so that it would not drift. He stayed on the mountain while the flood swept away all living creatures. Manu survived the flood.”
```

1) **Compare and Contrast** the story of Manu to a similar story or stories that you may be familiar with. **What is similar? What is different?**

__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

2) **Cause and Effect:** What do you think is the reason multiple belief systems share similar stories?

_______________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________________________________
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?
**Aim:** How did Hinduism create structure to Indian society?

**Aryans develop the Vedic belief system Hinduism and the Caste System**

**BACKGROUND:** The Aryans were nomadic people who in about 1500 B.C.E crossed the mountain passes of the Hindu Kush and arrived in northwest India, where the Indus River Valley Civilization was already established. By 900 BCE the Aryans developed their own form of writing, known as Sanskrit, and their own religion, Hinduism.

Within India, Aryans developed a rigid social hierarchy based on “castes.” Caste lines were strict and based on birth. The caste system, while seemingly unfair, helped give people a sense of identity and belonging. Each caste had its own set of jobs and leaders. While the castes were strictly separated, they depended on each other for survival. Over time, people of different castes were looked at as different species of people, and strict rules would come to govern the daily lives of the various castes.

For example, caste rules governed:

- Outcastes: Dalits, Untouchables

What is the difference between a slave and an untouchable?

- How could people move between castes?
- Reincarnation:
- Dharma and Karma:
- Moksha:
✓ How did the caste system create order in Indian society?
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

**Aim:** How did Hinduism create structure to Indian society?

**TASK:** Compare and contrast the social hierarchy of the Indian caste system (left), and the Confucian 5 Basic Relationships/Social Structure of dynastic China.

1. **Comparison:** Describe 1 similarity between the Indian caste system, and the social structure of dynastic China.

2. **Comparison:** Describe 1 difference between the Indian caste system and the social structure of dynastic China.

What is the **reason** for this difference?
3. Evaluate: Based on the social hierarchies, what did the Indians value? How did this compare to what the Chinese valued?
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?  
**Aim:** How did Hinduism create structure to Indian society?

## The Sacred Books of Hinduism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rigveda</th>
<th>The Upanishads</th>
<th>Mahabharata and Bhagavad Gita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Image</strong></td>
<td>Rig Veda in Sanskrit on paper, India, early 19th c. <a href="#">Source</a></td>
<td>Cover of a modern publication of the Upanishads.</td>
<td>Illustration of Krishna and Arjun on the chariot, Mahabharata, 18th-19th century, India. <a href="#">Source</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Vedas are the most sacred texts in Hinduism. The **Rigveda** is the oldest of the Vedas. It was written in Sanskrit at least 6,000 years ago. Vedic hymns (religious songs written in a Veda) praise god, gods, and goddesses and describe a powerful and spiritual people, their clans, kings and emperors, fights, battles, and way of life. Originally, these thousands of hymns were not written down but were memorized. Even today there are Brahmin priests who can chant from memory as many as 10,500 verses which takes 50 hours.

The **Upanishads** are sections of the Vedas that deal with philosophy, medication, and the nature of God; they form the core spiritual thought of Vedantic Hinduism. They are a compilation of dialogs, monologues and anecdotes composed by multiple authors, which contain the foundations for most of the later philosophies and religions of India. According to tradition, there are over two hundred Upanishads.

The **Mahabharata** is the world’s longest epic. It is about a massive war in ancient India between cousins fighting for the throne of a great kingdom. A central episode called **Bhagavad Gita** remains one of the most widespread scriptures in the world with its dominant message of justice. Hindu sacred music, dance, drama, and the arts draw heavily on these two literary epics.

1. Hinduism, as one of the oldest religions in history, has no central founder. How then, were the religion’s beliefs formed over time?

2. What do you think the impact of no central founder, and the characteristics of the above sacred texts, has had on the religion?
3. The Rigveda, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, and sacred texts from many other belief systems, tell stories about gods and their interactions with each other and with humans. Why do you think this is the case?

Task: Read the notes below and answer the questions that follow.

**Hindu Concept of God(s)**

- Hinduism is considered a polytheistic religion, but it is more complex than that.
- It is estimated that some versions of Hinduism includes more than 33,000 deities (gods).
- Each god has its own story, personality, and responsibilities.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brahma</th>
<th>Vishnu</th>
<th>Shiva</th>
<th>Ganesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Creator</td>
<td>The Preserver or Protector</td>
<td>The Destroyer</td>
<td>The God of Good Fortune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahma sits on top of the lotus flower.</td>
<td>Closeup of Vishnu, seated in the lotus position on a lotus.</td>
<td>Shiva as the Lord of Dance</td>
<td>Four-armed Ganesh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though there are many gods, some Hindus believe that they are just different forms of the same god, called the “ultimate reality,” or Brahma. Because of this, some people consider Hinduism to be a monotheistic religion.

Statue of the God Vishnu showing his “universal form” in the Bhagavad Gita, demonstrating that Hinduism can be viewed as both polytheistic and monotheistic.

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Avatars_of_Vishnu.jpg

1. Why do some consider Hinduism a polytheistic belief system, while others consider it to be a monotheistic belief system?
2. What does this tell us about Hinduism?
3. Why do you think Hindus believe that conduct is more important than belief?

Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?
Aim: What are the origins of Buddhism?

The Story of Buddha

Siddhartha Gautama was born into the Kshatriya caste about 553 BCE and began his life as a prince in a kingdom in ancient India. According to tradition his mother had a dream that a radiant white elephant descended to her from heaven. Because of this dream and other signs, a prophet predicted that the young boy would become either a great ruler, or a great teacher. His father, the king, wanted Siddhartha to succeed him a ruler. For this reason, Siddhartha’s father tried to prevent him from seeing or experiencing anything sad, which might cause him to become religious and teach others. He kept Siddhartha inside the city walls, and made sure he was always surrounded by comfort and luxury. He had the finest clothes, many servants to wait on him, and a different palace for each season of the year. Prince Siddhartha enjoyed a happy life. He married a beautiful woman and had a son who filled his hours with joy.

Then one day, Siddhartha rode beyond the palace gardens. He saw for the first time a sick person, an old person, and a dead body. This new awareness of human suffering deeply disturbed him. Late that night, he whispered farewell to his sleeping wife and child and left the palace, never to return. He set out to discover “The realm of life where there is neither suffering nor death.”

Siddhartha wandered for 6 years, unsuccessfully seeking answers from Hindu scholars and holy men on how to find a way to end suffering. One day, he sat down to meditate under a giant bodhi tree, determined to stay there until he understood the mystery of life. For 48 days, evil spirits tempted him to give up his meditations. Then,
suddenly, an understanding came to him. This understanding was a way to end suffering and sorrow. When he rose, he was Siddhartha no longer, but “Buddha,” the “Awakened One,” or the one who knows the truth.

In order to share the truths he found with others, the Buddha became a teacher. There are two main beliefs that Buddha taught to his followers. One is the “Four Noble Truths,” which the Buddha discovered when he meditated beneath the Bodhi Tree. The truths are:

1. Life is full of suffering from birth to death.
2. People suffer because they desire things that do not last, for example, money and possessions.
3. The way to end suffering to stop desiring.
4. The way to get rid of desires is to follow the “Eightfold Path.”

According to Buddhism, the “Eightfold Path” means to lead a good life. People who follow this path are freed from suggesting and gain happiness. These steps are like a recipe. They are:

1. Right thought: think thoughts that are pure and good.
2. Right speech: speak words that are truthful and not harmful.
3. Right action: treat people well, as you would like to be treated.
4. Right work: do not harm others as you earn a living.
5. Right effort: keep trying to become a better person; stop bad habits.
6. Right mindfulness: be aware of what you are doing and what is going on around you.
7. Right meditation: meditate correctly each day to clear your mind of desires and be able to find peace and truth.

The Buddha’s teachings began to identify with people who felt the stratification of the caste system, especially when Buddha taught that anyone could achieve “nirvana,” the state of tranquility and enlightenment, and the end to the cycle of birth and rebirth. In addition, during periods of political upheaval, when people were searching for answers to why there is suffering, the teachings of the Buddha proved to be attractive.
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?
Aim: What are the origins of Buddhism?

The Story of Buddha

Task: Use the boxes below to create a story-board about Siddhartha Gautama’s transformation into Buddha. Use the Story of Buddha to evaluate what you believe to be the six most significant elements to the Story of Buddha. Create images for these in the numbered boxes. Underneath, give a brief description of your drawing.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

Aim: How did Buddhism impact social order in Asia?

Buddhism's spread across the Silk Roads trade network

Reincarnation, Enlightenment, and Nirvana

Buddhism emphasizes one’s own spiritual journey, guided by his or her own determination and by his or her teacher.

Like Hindus, Buddhists believe that there is escape from the cycle of reincarnation. For Buddhists, the goal of spiritual life is to reach nirvana after death. It is similar to the idea of moksha that Hindus strive for. Nirvana is the state of a still and empty mind. This can be accomplished by reaching a state of enlightenment, like Buddha did through intense meditation, in order to become one with the universe. However, Buddha taught that anyone, regardless of their place in society, could achieve enlightenment if they accepted the Four Noble Truths and followed the Eightfold Path.

1. Compare and Contrast three similarities and one difference that exist between Hinduism and Buddhism.

   Hinduism and Buddhism are similar in that both:

   a)

   b)

   c)

   however, are different in that:

2. Based on the map, and the similarities and differences that you analyzed, why do you think Buddhism was able to spread more easily than Hinduism throughout Asia during the Classical period of India?
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?
Aim: What characteristics does Zoroastrianism share with Judeo-Christian beliefs?

Two Religions of the Classical Mediterranean and Middle East:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoroastrianism's Creation Story</th>
<th>Genesis 1:1-2:3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“In the beginning, there was nothing in the world except Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord, who lived in the Endless Light. And the Evil Spirit, Ahriman, who lived in the Absolute Darkness. Between them lay only emptiness. One day, Ahura Mazda decided to make different creations. First He shaped the sky made of metal, shinning and bright. Second, He made the pure water. Third, the Wise Lord created the Earth, flat and round with no mountains and valleys. Fourth, He made the plants, moist and sweet with no bark or thorn. Fifth, he created the animals, big and small. Then he created the First Man, Gayomard, bright, tall, and handsome. And lastly, he created Fire and distributed it within the whole creation. The Wise Lord ordered Fire to serve the mankind in preparing food and overcoming cold.”</td>
<td>The opening chapter of the Old Testament begins with these words: In the beginning there was no earth or sky or sea or animals. And then God spoke in the darkness: “Let there be light!” And right away there was light, scattering the darkness and showing the infinite space. “That’s good!” said God. “From now on, when it’s dark it will be “night” and when it’s light, it will be ‘day’.” This summarizes what was about to unfold. We learn from the text that the earth was formless, empty, and dark, and God’s Spirit moved over the waters preparing to perform God’s creative Word. And then God began to speak into existence his creation. Day 1 - God created light and separated the light from the darkness, calling light &quot;day&quot; and darkness &quot;night.&quot; Day 2 - God created an expanse to separate the waters and called it &quot;sky.&quot; Day 3 - God created the dry ground and gathered the waters, calling the dry ground &quot;land,&quot; and the gathered waters &quot;seas.&quot; On day three, God also created vegetation (plants and trees). Day 4 - God created the sun, moon, and the stars to give light to the earth and to govern and separate the day and the night. These would also serve as signs to mark seasons, days, and years. Day 5 - God created every living creature of the seas and every winged bird, blessing them to multiply and fill the waters and the sky with life. Day 6 - God created the animals to fill the earth. On day six, God also created man and woman (Adam and Eve) in his own image to commune with him. He blessed them and gave them every creature and the whole earth to rule over, care for, and cultivate. Day 7 - God had finished his work of creation and so he rested on the seventh day, blessing it and making it holy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Compare and contrast** 1 similarity and 1 difference that exist in the Zoroastrianism’s creation story and the Old Testament creation story.

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. **Hypothesize** why these similarities could exist:
## Zoroastrianism

### History
- The earliest Persian religion centered on venerations of elements and geographic features such as the sun, moon, water, and especially fire.

### Founded by:
- Prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra) in ancient Persia approximately 1,500 BCE. Zoroaster is a prophet—someone to him god has spoken to, and who himself spreads the word of god. Zoroaster himself is not a god, but through his teachings, man can become closer to god.

### Beliefs
- Zoroastrians believe there is one supreme god called Ahura Mazda (Wise Lord) and he created the world. He is supreme, all powerful, is everywhere, knows everything, the creator of life, the source of all goodness and happiness, and impossible for human conceive. Everything he created is pure and should be treated with love and respect, especially the natural environment.
- Zoroaster also recognized 6 divine attributes of god: (1) good mind and purpose; (2) truth and righteousness; (3) holy devotion, serenity, and loving kindness; (4) power and just rule; (5) wholeness and health; (6) long life and immortality.
- Zoroastrians believe that the elements are pure and that fire represents God's light or wisdom.
- Ahura Mazda revealed the truth through the Prophet, Zoroaster.
- Zoroastrians traditionally pray several times a day.

### Sacred Text
- The Zoroastrian book of Holy Scriptures is called The Avesta.
- The Avesta can be roughly split into two main sections:
  - The Avesta is the oldest and core part of the scriptures, which contains the Gathas. The Gathas are seventeen hymns thought to be composed by Zoroaster himself.
  - The Younger Avesta - commentaries to the older Avestan written in later years. It also contains myths, stories and details of ritual observances.

### Popularity
- Zoroaster’s teachings attracted large numbers of followers by the 6th century B.C.E.
- The Achaemenid era 550–330 BCE saw the emergence of religious rituals, a religious calendar, Zoroastrian values and Zoroastrian doctrine.
- Ruler Darius the Great, ordered monuments devoted to Ahura Mazda, although he tolerated other established faiths in his empire.

### Alexander the Great
- Alexander the Great of Macedon burned many Zoroastrian temples and did not respect the faith when he conquered Persia. Instead, he tried to spread the worship of the many Greek deities.

### Revival
- During the Sassanid dynasty Zoroastrianism experienced a revival. The Sassanids, were not religiously tolerant, and aggressively promoted the building of Zoroastrian temples.

### Influence
- The teachings of Zoroastrianism have influenced Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
- It is now one of the world’s smallest religions. In 2006 the New York Times reported that there were probably less than 190,000 followers worldwide at that time.
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

**Aim:** What characteristics does Zoroastrianism share with Judeo-Christian beliefs?

**TASK:** Compare Zoroastrianism with another any other belief system of your choice. It could be one covered in class, or one that you have your own outside knowledge of. Provide several bullets for the similarities and differences of each.

When comparing these belief systems, are they more similar or more different? As you explain your answer, address the reasoning for the similarities or the differences.
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?  
Aim: How did the formation and spread of Christianity effect the Roman Empire?

**Christianity in First Century Rome**

Christianity began as part of a Jewish reform movement during the first century CE, during a time of political and religious fervor in the Roman province of Judea. Initially there seems to have been no interest to found a new religion. After Jesus’ crucifixion by the Romans circa 33 CE, his disciples expected his imminent return and with it the end of the world. Only gradually, when the Second Coming did not happen, did the disciples begin to fan out and, through preaching, pick up supporters in various parts of the Roman empire.

Tradition says that Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, near the city of Jerusalem. Jesus’ parents had traveled to Jerusalem to take part in a census ordered by the Roman government. Rome had taken control of the Jewish kingdom in 6 CE (during the Pax Romana), and incorporated it into the province of Judea on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Because this land bordered important coastal sea routes to the large wheat supplies in Egypt, the Romans had little tolerance for any uprisings in the region. At first, the Jewish religion was tolerated in these eastern Roman provinces, but after a few small rebellions in the region, the Romans began to exert a much stricter and direct rule over Jerusalem. It was during this turmoil engulfing Judea, that Jesus’ teachings were formed.

Much of what we know about Jesus of Nazareth, whose life and teachings established the Christian religion, is based on accounts found in the New Testament of the Christian Bible. The Christian Bible is made up of two parts: The Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is based on the Hebrew Bible, and is the history of the law and prophets of the ancient Hebrews. The New Testament is made up of stories of Jesus’ life, (who Christians believe is the descendent of the Jewish King David), and stories about early Christians.

The message of Jesus and his disciples seemed clear. There was a single God who loved humankind despite earthly sin. A virtuous life should be dedicated to the worship of God, and fellowship with other believers. Worldly concerns were secondary, and a life of poverty might be most conducive to holiness. God sent Jesus of Nazareth, called Christ (“God’s anointed”), to preach his holy word and, through his sacrifice, to prepare for the possibility of an afterlife of heavenly communion with God. Jesus, a Jew, followed Jewish law and stressed the principles of the Ten Commandments, the importance of God’s personal relationship to each human being, and the importance of people’s love for God. He preached that all who believed in Him would be granted eternal life in heaven. At this point, the Christian Bible provides many stories of Jesus’ travels and the miracles he performed. The accounts of Jesus’ miracles, such as giving a blind man sight, raising a man from the dead, and calming a storm at sea, were recorded in the Gospels, the first four books of the New Testament.

Jesus’ message especially identified with the poor, as he ignored wealth, status, and gender when preaching or performing these miracles. Jesus’ growing popularity concerned both Jewish and Roman leaders. Jewish leaders were concerned that an uprising could result in the loss of religious independence that the Romans so carefully monitored. The Romans believed Jesus was a revolutionary who would challenge Roman authority. When Jesus visited Jerusalem in about 33 CE, the week before his death, large crowds greeted him as “The Messiah,” or “king” - the one whom the Bible had said would come to rescue the Jews. These greetings were seen as a direct challenge to Roman authority.
Roman official sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion—a common Roman punishment of being nailed to a large wooden cross to be left as a public display. After his death, Jesus’ body was placed in a tomb. According to the Gospels, three days later Jesus had risen from the dead, and began appearing to his followers before ascending to heaven. It was from this belief that Jesus came to be referred to as “The Christ.” Under this new idea, early Christian converts began to see themselves as part of a new religion rather than a Jewish reform movement.

This new message spread at an opportune time. The official religion of the Greeks and Romans had long seemed rather sterile, particularly to the poor. The Christian emphasis on God’s love for the poor, and the spiritual equality of all people, plus the fervor of the early Christians, gained growing attention. The wide reach of the Roman Empire made it easy for Christian missionaries to travel through Europe and the Middle East and spread this new message. As conditions began to deteriorate in the Roman Empire, the religion won even more converts.

Early Christians welcomed converts from any religion, status, or gender. Indeed, women converted in particularly large numbers, identifying with the importance of key women in the life of Jesus, and in the ability to worship alongside men. Despite this, during the first three centuries after Jesus’ death, Christianity did not advance entirely smoothly. The new religion faced waves of large-scale persecution from the imperial government. Even so, by the time Roman emperor Constantine converted to the religion, Christianity had won perhaps 10 percent of the empire’s population. One convert was Constantine’s mother, who visited the Holy Land and founded many churches there. With official government backing, it became much easier to spread Christianity, which refused to put the government and loyalty to the empire above loyalty to Christ. Christianity also worked against other classical institutions, such as slavery, and the aristocracy. By doing so, Christianity promoted a new culture among its converts that differed from the culture of the Classical World.

Based on the reading:

1) Compare a specific characteristic of Christianity to two other world religions present at during this time period. For each comparison, state what was similar and what was different.

2) According to the article, analyze how the formation and spread of Christianity affected the Roman Empire...

...before Jesus’ death?
...after Jesus’ death?
PURPOSE:

In this article, Bridgette Byrd O’Connor provides a sense of how our own cultural and social background shapes our view of history. The study of religions in world history and geography courses is a basic requirement in every state’s academic standards, just as it is a major feature of the National Standards for World History. The importance of studying the origins, beliefs, practices, and spread of religion is a matter of consensus because this subject has contemporary relevance. Also, religious movements have been enormously significant in human history. Religious beliefs and practices have brought forth traditions and institutions that have shaped urban and rural life, built empires, and contributed to trade, literacy, and scientific development. Religious movements have influenced conflict and cooperation on many levels, and stimulated migration and travel.
As a student of history in the Western hemisphere, we often learn about historical events from the perspective of what is familiar to us. For example, the history of America focuses on not only American political culture but also on values and morals that were established during the colonial period and beyond, and those teachings come from a Christian background, for the most part. Therefore, we often view the history of other countries and cultures as being something that is “other”. Consequently, we know very little about the actual beliefs and practices of other faiths, which can be problematic, especially when what we do learn tends to be portrayed as something it is not.

Since September 11, 2001, many Americans have been in both fear of Islam and ignorant of its actual practices since the beliefs of a small portion of Muslims labeled as radicals are the focus of media coverage, both mainstream and social media. Islam did not exist prior to the 7th century CE. It was at the start of this century when Muhammad, a caravan operator from Mecca, was visited by the angel Gabriel. During these visits Gabriel revealed the final teachings of Allah (God) to him. Muhammad then began spreading Allah’s message to the people of Mecca and some of them accepted his teachings while others felt threatened by his message.

Prior to the spread of Islam, the Arabian people were polytheistic and they were organized into a variety of different tribes. The Arabs also consisted of a combination of settled farmers and tradespeople as well as nomads. The tribes of the Arabian Peninsula helped protect each other and were based upon both family line and occupation. During this time many Arab tribes had become quite wealthy from carrying goods through the desert from Asia to Europe and vice versa. The Silk Road trade routes had been used for centuries to exchange goods and ideas from the East to the West and back again. As the Arabs sat in the middle of this exchange, had local knowledge of the area, and domesticated camels to carry these goods then they became kind of like the ancient FedEx of the region. Muhammad was a part of this trade as he carried goods between the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea and became well known for his reliability and honesty. These qualities attracted the attention of a wealthy merchant named Khadija, a widow who was also almost 20 years his senior, and she hired him to carry her merchandise. Muhammad and Khadija eventually married and had six children, four of whom lived to adulthood.

Islam literally means submission or surrender and is derived from the Arabic word for peace. In a religious context the term means that one should surrender him or herself peacefully to God, or Allah in Arabic. What confuses many is that Allah is no different from the Christian or Jewish God, in fact it is the exact same God and the teachings of the prophets of each of these faiths build upon each other. For example, Muslims (the word used for the followers of Islam) believe that Muhammad was the last prophet of God and the Quran, holy book of Islam, holds the final teachings of Allah. While the Quran is the main holy scripture of Islam, there are also other sacred writings including the Sunnah, or the teachings and practices of Muhammad. The Hadith make up the final sacred texts of Islam and these are quotes from the prophet that have been written and combined to form the basis of Islamic law (Shari’ah or Sharia). This may seem odd to those unfamiliar with Islam and familiar with American history and government, which views faith and government or laws as mutually exclusive (you know, that whole separation of church and state that kind of exists and kind of doesn’t). However, from its beginnings, Islam has been both a religion and a way of life in that the religious leaders of the faith were also the political leaders; therefore, the two are intertwined.

Islam is also welcoming of people from other religions who wish to convert, as it is a universal faith. The essential practices for any Muslim are the Five Pillars (kind of like the Ten Commandments but a little more about doing rather than what not to do). The first of these is the shahadah, which is the belief in one God and his prophet Muhammad, which means you must also renounce all other gods. The second is the salah, which are the five daily prayers one must perform. These prayers are done in the morning, around noon, in the afternoon, at sunset,
and at night. Since the time is determined by the position of the Sun, prayer times change slightly depending on the season. These changes in the time of prayer along with the requirement that all followers must pray in the direction of Mecca would help foster innovations in science and technology, but more on that later. The third pillar is siyam or fasting during the holy month of Ramadan. Fasting is a part of the three main monotheistic faiths with the goal being to deprive oneself of food and drink in order to realize how blessed you are in comparison with others who do not have as much and to rid yourself of temptation. By doing this you become closer to Allah and purify both the body and mind. Fasting is not just about giving up sustenance for your body but also about getting rid of things that might tempt the mind and soul. The month of Ramadan varies every year due to changes in the Islamic lunar calendar; therefore, fasting can be in the winter months when days are shorter and fasting is easier and in the summer when days are much longer with temperatures soaring into the triple digits. Ramadan is also about coming together as a community and sharing your experiences as a follower of Islam, with many Muslims gathering with their extended family or at their mosque for the evening meal. The fourth pillar is zakah, which is giving a portion of your wealth back to the community. In general, Muslims are required to give 2.5% of their yearly savings to charity but there are exceptions to this if you are poor or cannot work and, of course, you can always give more than the required amount. The final pillar is the hajj, or the pilgrimage to Mecca, that all Muslims, if able, must make at least once in their lifetime. Muslims who complete the hajj are in essence walking in the shoes of Abraham, his wife Hajar, and son Isma’il in that the pilgrims should remember the sacrifices Abraham was willing to make to Allah to honor his command.

While practicing the Five Pillars is largely comprised of individual duties, the Islamic faith has had a much broader influence. Islam is not only about a person’s commitment to Allah but also people’s commitment to the larger Muslim community. While daily prayer may be done on one’s own, most Muslims visit their local mosque (masjid) for worship. Mosques have more subdued decoration than a typical Christian church and have little to no furniture but rather an open space for rugs or mats where people stand shoulder to shoulder and pray. Men congregate in one area with women lining up in rows behind them so as not to accidentally touch during prayer. The pillar of charity also places the focus away from the individual to helping the entire community, especially those in greater need than oneself. The community also shares evening meals during the month of Ramadan, with Muslims often gathering at their local mosque to share in their experience with others. Finally, members of the Muslim community help those who are traveling to Mecca for the hajj by providing food and shelter to pilgrims. The growth and spread of Islam from its founding in the 7th century to the present has encouraged Muslims to identify with a worldwide community of followers and has also contributed to advances in the sciences and arts. The building of mosques, much like the building of cathedrals during the Middle Ages in Europe, allowed Muslims to design mosques to suit local needs and to fit local architectural customs. The construction of mosques as well as the manufacture of prayer rugs supplied local carpenters, architects, and artisans with employment while also generating revenue for the town. The requirement of pilgrimage to Mecca encouraged Muslims to travel outside of their local area, which led to an increase in travel related businesses such as inns and restaurants. While people of the Arab world had long been merchants and the carriers of goods through the desert, pilgrims added another dimension to these exchanges as goods, ideas, and the religion itself spread throughout the Middle East and beyond. While Islam eventually spread through the Middle East to North Africa and into Spain, it took a long time. Muslim rulers began conquering vast amounts of territory not long after the death of Muhammad but many leaders chose not to force conversion on the conquered people. This is spelled out in the Quran and many leaders followed the example set by Muhammad, who allowed non-believers to convert to Islam when and if they chose to do so willingly. As the empire grew, however, Muslim rulers did encourage the spread of learning and trade. New inventions and technological innovations like the triangle-shaped sail, improved maps, and the domestication of the camel improved and extended trade. A common language and
currency also facilitated trade and an increase in the exchange of goods and ideas. Muslim scholarship encouraged the preservation of ancient texts, which were then “rediscovered” by Europeans during the Crusades and therefore led to a rebirth of classical learning that was known as the Renaissance. While the Renaissance began in Italy, the rest of Europe would have to wait a couple hundred years before it emerged from the “Dark Ages.”

Complete the questions below:

1. What are three shared beliefs between Judaism, Christianity and Islam?

   A. ____________________________________________________________

   B. ____________________________________________________________

   C. ____________________________________________________________

2. Based on the article state two ways that Islam spread:

   A: ____________________________________________________________
   This was [similar/different] to ________________________________________,
   because ________________________________________________________.
B: ___________________________________________. This was [similar/different] to ___________________________________________, because ___________________________________________.

3. How do you think O’Connor’s article attempts to dispel a Western bias towards Islam? Cite specific context from the article to support your response.

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
**Unit Essential Question:** How do belief systems impact the development of culture?

**Aim:** How did Islam impact the societies and culture of the Middle East?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Islam’s Sacred Text:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Islam</strong> means “submission to the will of God”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Muslims</strong> are “people who submit to the will of God.”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Started in the Middle East:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The 5 Pillars of Islam</td>
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<tr>
<th>Laws: The 5 Pillars of Islam</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Allah:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Muhammad:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>The Life of Muhammad</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“<strong>Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of God and the last of the prophets.</strong>” - Quran 33:40</td>
</tr>
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</table>

According to Muslim beliefs, Muhammad is the last of a long chain of prophets that also includes Jesus, Moses, and Abraham. His sayings and doings provide a model for Muslims so that they can follow his example in life.

Muhammad was born in Mecca, in the Arabian Peninsula in 570 CE. He was orphaned at an early age and originally worked as a shepherd. Later, he became a trader, a profession that brought him into contact with many peoples and faiths, especially the religious currents of Judaism and Christianity, and the growing dissatisfaction with the old gods that had been venerated by the Bedouins - camel and goat nomadic herdsmen.

Muhammad was concerned with the lack of generosity and kindness that he witnessed around him. The growth of towns and trade had enriched some clan families and left others behind, often in poverty. Some clans grew rich on the profits of commerce (trade/business). One day, he went to a cave to meditate when the angel Gabriel appeared to him, the same angel who is said to have appeared to Jesus’ mother Mary. According to Muslim tradition, the angel Gabriel spoke the words of Allah (God) to Muhammad.

The Qur'an (Koran) contains these revelations that God made to Muhammad, and include many of the ideas from the history and law of the ancient Hebrews and their prophets, and the story of Jesus’ life. Persecuted for his teachings, Muhammad fled to the city of Medina in 622 CE, in what is known as the **hijra**. This marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. Stories are told of a herd of sheep covering his tracks to protect him. Eventually Muhammad returned to Mecca, and his followers began to flourish throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Comparison: What connections do you see between the beginnings of Islam and the beginnings of other monotheistic faiths?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Comparison: Muslims acknowledge other prophets from Judaism and Christianity. How is Muhammad viewed differently?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit Essential Question: How do belief systems impact the development of culture?
Aim: How did Islam impact the societies and culture of the Middle East?

BIG Ideas:
✓ The rise and spread of Islam profoundly affected large parts of Afro-Eurasia.
✓ The spread of Islam is a distinct phenomenon that historians relate to repaid advances in urbanization, the growth of trade networks in Afro-Eurasia, and a series of migrations.
✓ Islam gradually spread as a faith and way of life among the populations of a region extending from the Iberian Peninsula to the borders of China. Not until about four centuries after the conquests of Southwest Asia, North Africa, and parts of Inner Eurasia did Islam become the majority faith of the population in those regions.

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM
In the century after Muhammad’s death, Muslims conquered territory “from the Atlantic to borders to China.” Many students reading this often wrongly imagine that this huge region instantly became “Islamic,” meaning that most of the people living in those lands quickly became Muslims. To the contrary, the spread of Islam in these vast territories took centuries, and Muslims made up a small minority of the population for a long time. In other words, the expansion of territory under Muslim rule happened very rapidly, but the spread of Islam in those lands was a much slower process.

“Let there be no compulsion in religion.”

The Qur’an specifics, “Let there be no compulsion in religion” (2:256). This verse states that no person can ever be forced to accept religion
against his or her will. It tells Muslims that they cannot force people to convert to Islam. Muhammad set a precedent as the leader of Medina. Under his leadership, the Muslims practiced tolerance towards those of other religions. They were signers of the Constitution of Medina and of treaties with the non-Muslim groups. According to tradition, Muhammad often discussed religious ideas with the Jews, Christians, and polytheist (believers in many gods), and he heard their questions about his teachings. The Qur'an records some of the questions that people put to Muhammad, and his replies. Muslim leaders after Muhammad were required to be tolerant, based on the authority of both the Qur'an (in this and many other verses), and the sura, that is, custom practiced by Muhammad or by early members of the Muslim community. With some exceptions, Muslim leaders have adhered to this precedent over time.

One major type of evidence for tolerance by Muslim political leadership is the persistence of many religious minorities in the lands Muslims have ruled. Spain is one example, where Christians and Jews lived and worshipped under Muslim rule and contributed to society in many ways. The writings of well-known Jewish and Christian scholars, physicians, scientists, and artisans still exist.

After the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain following the conquests of Ferdinand and Isabella (the same two monarchs who funded Columbus), Jews settled in North Africa under Muslim rule. They were also invited by the sultan (sovereign) of the Ottoman Empire to settle in Istanbul. Some of these communities still exist today. In Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey, for example, Christians and Jewish groups that pre-date the coming of Islam still exist, as do the Christians in Egypt, after 1400 years of Muslim rule there.

**Becoming Muslim**

Muhammad preached Islam at Mecca and Medina in Arabia for about twenty-three years, while he received revelation of the Qur’an, according to Islamic teachings. For the first ten years (612 to 622 CE), he preached publicly at Mecca. After the migration to Medina he preached for ten years, until his death in 632, only in his own house—the first mosque—to people who came to hear him. Preaching in houses or in the mosque became the pattern in Islam.

To accept Islam, a person only has to make the profession of faith in front of two or more witnesses. Even after a person has accepted Islam, he or she may take a long time to learn and apply its practices, going through many different stages or levels of understanding and practice over time. As Islam spread among large populations, this process was multiplied.

Different individuals and social classes may have had different understandings of Islam at the same time. Also, many local variations and pre-Islamic customs remained, even after societies had majority Muslim populations for a long time. These differences have been a source of diversity among Muslim societies and regions.

**Growth of Muslim population**

It is quite easy to map the large territory ruled by different Muslim political groups, or to illustrate the expansion of an empire. We can shade in areas of a map, and we can track the dates of Muslim rulers and dynasties from the time of Muhammad to the present day. It is more difficult, however, to understand why historians speak of a geographic area as a “Muslim region,” “Muslim society,” “Muslim civilization,” or even “the Islamic world.” At a minimum, such terms must mean that most of the people who lived in those places considered themselves to be Muslims, that is, people who believed in the religion called Islam. By what point in time did the majority of people in those places accept Islam, and how rapid was its spread? What effect did the gradual or rapid spread of Islam have on language, customs, art, and politics? How did the fact that many people were converting to Islam relate to the development of Muslim culture and civilization? We know, of course, that substantial numbers of people in those regions continued to practice the faiths they had belonged to before Islam, including Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Hindus and others. The social contributions of people of these religions continued under Muslim rule. As these former majorities became minorities, how were they affected? How did the presence of a large region in which the majority of its inhabitants were Muslim affect adjoining regions where the majority accepted other faiths?

**The process of conversion**

In the decades after Muhammad’s death, nearly all of the inhabitants of Arabia accepted Islam, except Christian and Jewish communities,
where they were allowed to continue practicing their faiths. As Muslim rule extended into regions beyond the Arabian tribal system, however, caliphs, that is, the successors of the Prophet as leaders of the Muslim community, did not encourage conversion to Islam among the populations of newly conquered areas.

Nevertheless, during the early caliphate (632-750) non-Arabs began to accept Islam. Conversion took place at first among the lowest classes of people. Men and women migrated to Muslim garrison cities to look for jobs and to offer their services to the ruling group. Learning about Islam in these centers, some converted and expanded the Muslim population. These migrants became associates, or mawali, of Arab tribes, a traditional method of integrating outsiders. Some migrant Arab and mawali converts founded families that later made important contributions in preserving and spreading Islamic knowledge. They became scholars of Islamic law, history, literature, and the sciences. In this way, Islam spread in spite of the policies of political rulers, not became of them.

During the years of the Umayyad Caliphate from 661-750 CE, the overwhelming majority of non-Arab populations of the empire, which stretched from Morocco to Inner Eurasia, did not practice Islam. Toward the end of that time, the North African Berbers became the first major non-Arab group to accept the faith. Within a few centuries, Christianity disappeared almost completely in North Africa (today’s Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco), though Christian groups persisted in many other Muslim regions. Jews remained as a small minority, with many living in Muslim Spain. The spread of Islam among Iranians and other peoples of Persia was the second major movement, beginning about 720 CE. Both of these early groups of converts caused problems for the central government. In North Africa, Berbers set up an independent caliphate, breaking up the political unity of Islam. In Persia, the revolution arose that replaced the Umayyad with the Abbasid dynasty in 750, though only a small proportion of the population of Iraq (ancient Mesopotamia, centered on the Tigris-Euphrates valley) had at that time accepted Islam. From then, however, Islam was no longer the religion of a single ethnic of ruling group, and the rates of conversion climbed more rapidly in lands under Muslim rule.

For example, Arab Muslim forces conquered Egypt in 642, but by 700 few Egyptians had become Muslims. By 900 CE about fifty percent of the population was probably Muslim, and by 1200, more than 90 percent. In Syria, Islam spread even more slowly. There, the 50 percent mark was not reached until 1200, nearly six hundred years after the arrival of Islam. Iraq and Iran probably reached a Muslim majority by around 900 CE, like Egypt. In much of Spain and Portugal, Islam became established in the 500 years following the initial conquests of 711 CE, though it may never have become the majority faith. After Spanish Catholic armies completed the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in 1492, many Muslims and Jews were either expelled from Spain or converted to Christianity. Islam continued to exist, however, until after 1600. As in Spain and Portugal, Islam withered away in Sicily, the Mediterranean island that Muslims had conquered in the ninth century.

In Persia, Inner Eurasia, and India, Muslim law treated Zoroastrians, Buddhists, and Hindus just as it treated Jews and Christians. Muslim rulers offered adherents of these religions protection of life, property, and freedom of religious practice in exchange for the payment of a tax, as an alternative to military service. In Sind (northern eastern India), the Buddhist population seems to have embraced Islam in the eighth and ninth centuries. Buddhism disappeared entirely in that region. Hinduism, however, declined there more slowly than Buddhism did.

All of the lands described above had Muslim rulers. After the decline of the unified Muslim empire- from about 750- Islam gradually spread to lands outside the boundaries of Muslim rule. After 1071, Anatolia (or Asia Minor), which makes up most of modern Turkey, came under the rule of Turkish animal-herding groups that had become Muslims. Islam spread gradually for centuries after that, and when the Ottoman Turkish empire enfolded much of southeastern Europe in the mid-fourteenth century, most Albanians and Bosnians, as well as some Bulgarians, became Muslim.

**Continuing Spread**
Beginning in 1192, other Muslim Turkish military groups conquered parts of India, including most of the north all the way to present-day Bangladesh, which borders the Bay of Bengal. The number of Muslims in India gradually increased from that time. The people of Bangladesh had been Buddhist, but beginning about 1300, they rapidly embraced Islam. Elsewhere in India, except for Punjab and Kashmir in the far northwest, Hinduism remained the religion of the majority.

In South India and Sri Lanka, both merchants and Sufi preachers, that is, followers of mystical Islam, spread the faith. By 1300, traders and Sufis also introduced it to Southeast Asia. Over the next two centuries, Islam spread from Malaysia to the great archipelago that is today Indonesia. Entering a region where Buddhism, Hinduism, and local polytheist religions existed, Islam required several centuries to become well established.

In Inner Eurasia beginning in the eight century, Islam gradually spread to the original homelands of the Turkic-speaking peoples until it became the main religion of nearly all of them. Islam also spread into Xinjiang, the western part of China, where it was tolerated by the Chinese empire. Islam entered southern China through seaports, such as Guangzhou, the city where the earliest mosque exists.

**Africa**

Before 1000, Islam spread widely in sub-Saharan Africa. Before 1000 CE, the first major town south of the Sahara that became majority Muslim was Gao, a commercial center located on the Niger River in Mali. Over the centuries, many other rulers and parts of their populations followed this pattern. By 1040, groups in Senegal had become Muslims. From there, Islam spread to the region of today’s Mali and Guinea. Muslims established the kingdom of Mali in the thirteenth century and the Songhai empire in 1465 to 1600. Father east, Kane-Bornu near Lake Chad became Muslim after 1100. In West Africa, like Turkestan, India, and Indonesia, traders and Sufis introduced Islam. When rulers accepted the faith, numerous Muslim scholars, lawyers, teachers, and artist and migrated into the region to help build Muslim administration and cultural life. African Muslim scholars became established in major towns in Timbuktu, where they taught and practiced Islamic law as judges. By 1500, Islam was established in West Africa in a wide east-west belt south of the Sahara. Local polytheist religions remained strong, however, and Islam did not become the majority faith in this region until the nineteenth century.

In East Africa, traders spread Islam along the coast beginning at least by the tenth century. By the fourteenth century, the numerous commercial city-states along the coast from today’s Somalia to Tanzania were predominantly Muslim. In the Sudan, south of Egypt, the population of Nubia gradually became Muslim during the fourteenth century, though immigrations of Muslim Arab pastoral groups and because Christian rule became weak in that region.

**Strong Governments and the Spread of Islam**

By understanding that the expansion of Muslim rule was different form the spread of Islam, we can see an interesting trend. Ironically, Islam has spread most widely and rapidly among populations at times when Muslim rule was weaker and less unified. When Muslim political regimes were decentralized, disunited or completely absent, Islam as a religion flourished and often spread to non-Muslims. Influence by traders and Sufis and influence of Muslim scholars, lawyers, and artisans in the cities aided the spread of Islam to new areas. On the other hand, the Ottoman empire in southeastern Europe, or the Sultanate of Delhi, and the later Mogul empire of India had little success in spreading Islam, though they did gain territory. Non-Muslim populations seem to have viewed these powerful, tax-gathering Muslim rulers negatively, and so they resisted conversion to Islam. Whoever did embrace Islam in such circumstance, if not for material gain, usually did so because of the efforts of merchants, teachers, and traveling Sufi preachers, who were not part of the government.

**Source**

Cohen, Sharon and Susan Douglass. “Afroeurasia and the Rise of Islam 600-1000 CE” World History For Us All. PDF File.
Questions:

1) **What is the author's central thesis?** Cite specific evidence that supports this.

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2) **Throughout our studies of world history, what conditions have influenced conversions from any one faith to another?**

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3) **What influences played a role in the conversion specifically to Islam?**

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
4) **What groups of people played the most influential roles in spreading Islam to new regions?**
When Muhammad died in 632 CE, the Muslim community faced a crisis. Muslims, inspired by the message of Allah, believed they had a responsibility to carry his word to the world. The first caliph, Abu Bakr, made efforts to reunify the Arabs under Islam. Armies conquered parts of the Byzantine and Persian empires, Egypt, and North Africa. Islam spread all the way to Spain in the west to China and Indonesia in the East!

**Why did Islam have such success?**

**Document 1**

. . . Merchants were carriers of Islam rather than agents of Islamization. They opened routes and exposed isolated societies to external influences, but they were not themselves engaged in the propagation [spread] of Islam, which was the work of religious leaders. The leaders became integrated into African societies by playing religious, social, and political roles similar to those of traditional priests. Like traditional priests, Muslim men of religion were peacemakers, who pleaded for those who broke the king's laws. Mosques, like traditional shrines, were considered sanctuaries.


**Document 2**
Another important reason for success was the common faith Muhammad had established. Under the first four caliphs, Muslims knitted a patchwork of competing tribes into a unified state. Belief in Islam and the desire to glorify the new religion spurred the Muslim armies to victory.

Source: Prentice Hall World History, p 312