

SS6G11 The student will describe the cultural characteristics of Europe.

b. Describe the major religions in Europe; include Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

### MAJOR RELIGIONS IN EUROPE: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

Europe is home to many religions. There are three main religions, however. These are Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These religions have some similarities and even a common history. They are also different in their beliefs about God and man. Sometimes these beliefs cause disagreements between people. Disagreements can even happen between people of the same religious group.

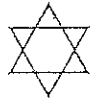


Religion has been very important in the history of Europe. Wars have been fought, and government leaders have been changed, because of religious issues. Today, most Europeans have the legal freedom to choose their religion. Most Europeans recognize and respect the rights of others to choose their own religion. Study the following table to learn about the three main religious groups of Europe.

131

- \_\_\_\_\_ 338. Which is the oldest of the three main religions of Europe?
- A. Islam
  - B. Judaism
  - C. Christianity
  - D. Roman Catholic
- \_\_\_\_\_ 339. Which religion is growing at the fastest rate?
- A. Islam
  - B. Sunni
  - C. Judaism
  - D. Christianity
- \_\_\_\_\_ 340. How are the three religions alike?
- A. They each worship several gods.
  - B. They each worship only one god.
  - C. Each of the three religions is getting smaller.
  - D. They each use a sacred text known as the five books of Moses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 341. Which pairing of sacred text and religion is correct?
- A. Protestant - Bible
  - B. Christianity - Talmud
  - C. Shiite Muslim - Torah
  - D. Orthodox Judaism - Koran

Use the table to answer questions 338-341.

Comparing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

	Judaism	Christianity	Islam
Founder	Abraham (about 2000 BC)	Jesus Christ (about 30 AD)	Muhammad (about 610 AD)
Holy book	Torah	Bible	Koran
Followers called	Jews 	Christians 	Muslims 
Number of followers	about 15 million	about 2.1 billion	about 1.3 billion
Additional facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torah is the first five books of the writings of Moses, believed to be given to Moses by God at Mt. Sinai</li> <li>• Talmud is the written version of the Oral Law</li> <li>• belief is in the laws of one God and the words of his prophets</li> <li>• actions and following the laws are important</li> <li>• three main types of Judaism are: Orthodox (most traditional), Conservative, and Reform (least traditional)</li> <li>• Jews in Europe were nearly wiped out by Hitler and Nazi Germany</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the five books of Moses make up the first five books of the Bible</li> <li>• beliefs are based on the teachings of Jesus: love of God and neighbor, a regard for justice, a belief that Jesus is the Son of God</li> <li>• Christianity is divided into 3 major groups: Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant</li> <li>• Protestants include Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and other non-Catholic, and non-Orthodox Christians</li> <li>• Christianity is in most parts of the world today</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muslims believe that Muhammad was the last of the prophets, which included Abraham and Jesus</li> <li>• the main duties of Muslims (called the Five Pillars) are prayer, giving to charity, belief in and submission to one God (Allah), fasting during the month of Ramadan, and a trip to Mecca once in a lifetime</li> <li>• the two largest groups of Muslims are the Sunnis and the Shiites; the Sunnis account for 90% of the world's Muslims</li> <li>• it is the main religion of the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia</li> <li>• number of followers is rapidly growing</li> </ul>