



RELIGION AND SOUTH AMERICA

Grade 7 Geography of World Regions

South Carolina Social Studies College- and Career-Ready Standards

ACTIVITY Explore how changes in South America's contemporary religious profile may impact local social and political relations.

RESOURCES Internet; Google Sheets software; *Atlas of South Carolina* (2013)

INDICATORS 7.6.1.PR Identify select South American physical systems (e.g., landforms and bodies of water), and human characteristics of places (e.g., countries and cities).
7.6.4.HS Compare and contrast the dynamic physical and human conditions that lead to the creation of ethnic, gender, language, and religious landscapes of South American societies.

SKILLS Mapping; Conditions, Connections, and Regions; Scale

OUTCOMES Students learn that religion is an expression of cultural diversity and that migrants typically retain their religion, thereby influencing the religious landscapes of their new homes.

TASK 1

- ? What are the primary religions of the world? [*Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, others*]
- ? What variations on these religions exist? [*Roman Catholic, Protestant, Sunni, Shia, other denominations or sects*]
- ? What are the primary religions practiced in South America? [*Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, none*]
- Investigate *The World Factbook* (Central Intelligence Agency) by visiting:
<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>
- Select "Argentina" from the drop-down menu "Please select a country to view."
- Click on the tab "People and Society" and scroll down to "Religions."
- ? What are the predominant faiths in Argentina? [*Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Other*]
- Select the table icon in the Religion tab. This will open a new webpage that shows the religious data for every country.
- ? What are the predominant faiths in other South American countries? [*Answers will vary*]

TASK 2

- Create a spreadsheet of South American religious data by entering data from the CIA's *World Factbook* into Google Sheets. Each row should be a separate country; each column should be a separate religious category.
- When complete, highlight (select) two columns: "Country" and "Roman Catholic." From the menu bar, select "Insert" and choose "Chart."
- ? Which South American country is the most Roman Catholic? Which is the least? [*Venezuela; Guyana*]
- Select the drop-down menu under "Chart type" and choose "Map – Geo Chart."

→ Select “Customize” under “Chart editor.” Select “Geo” and then select “South America” from the drop-down menu under “Region.”

? What explains the distribution of the percentage of Roman Catholics across South America?
[Colonization; migration]

TASK 3

→ Replicate the Roman Catholic map for both Hindu and Muslim faiths.

? What explains the distribution of the percentage of Hindus and/or Muslims across South America?
[Higher in Suriname and Guyana; indentured servants from India, Indonesia, South Asia brought by Dutch and British]

? How do these distributions vary by scale? *[This is country-level data; smaller populations and concentrated populations are masked at this scale]*

TASK 4

→ Read the article “Photo Essay: Dialogue of Civilizations at Coquimbo Mosque”:
<http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/358097>

? Why do you think a mosque was built in heavily Catholic Chile? *[Migrants and converts needed worship space; Islam is a proselytizing faith]*

? What places are now connected by the construction of this religious building? *[Chile, Morocco]*

→ Read the article “The temple that welcomes all religions, or none at all”:
<https://www.cnn.com/style/article/bahai-temple-chile/index.html>

? What is the Baha’i faith? Where are its temples located? Why? *[See reading for answers]*

? How did the architects of this temple attempt to respect both the cultural and physical aspects of its location? *[See reading for answers]*

TASK 5

→ Investigate the distribution of various religious groups in South Carolina using the *Atlas of South Carolina*.

? What explains the church/synagogue/temple/mosque patterns shown across South Carolina? *[See reading for answers]*

? Are there features visible in South Carolina’s cultural landscape that express various faiths differently? How might these features change over time? (Compare to South America examples just explored).
[Answers will vary]

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