
Religious Terminology

According to the Pew Research Center, “Worldwide, more than eight in ten people identify with a religious group” (“The Global Religious Landscape”). It is important to remember that statistic when and if you choose a topic or write a paper on or including religious contexts. You should do so mindfully since writing is powerful, and we can use it to uplift and educate others.

Relevance and Inclusivity

First, ask yourself whether or not it is essential or relevant to talk about religion in the context in

Catholic - adjective

of the Roman Catholic faith/of or including all Christians.

Ex: It was interesting to see how they uphold their Catholic principles.

Islam:

Muslim - noun

a follower of the religion of Islam.

Ex: My sister is Muslim, and she loves chocolate.

Hinduism:

Hindu - noun

a follower of Hinduism.

Ex: Many Hindus travel a long way to see the Ganges or to wash in its waters. ([Cambridge Dictionary](#))

Buddhism:

Buddhist - noun

an adherent of the religion based on the teachings of Buddha.

Ex: He is Buddhist and rides his bike on the weekends.

Buddhist - adjective

relating to the religion based on the teachings of Buddha.

Ex: I have only seen that Buddhist custom once before.

Other Religions, Including Confucianism and Taoism:

Confucian - noun

an adherent of Confucianism.

Ex: The Confucian had high ethical standards for himself.

Confucian - adjective

relating to Confucius or Confucianism.

Ex: In the Confucian spirit, he was the respected elder.

Taoist - noun

an adherent of the Chinese philosophy of Taoism.

Ex: The Taoist on the balcony peered over the city.

Taoist - adjective

relating to the Chinese philosophy of Taoism.

Ex: He wore Taoist clothing.

Judaism:

Jew - noun

a member of the people and cultural community whose traditional religion is Judaism and who trace their origins through the ancient Hebrew people of Israel to Abraham.

Ex: Noah is a practicing Orthodox Jew.

Jewish - adjective

relating to, associated with, or denoting Jewish people or Judaism.

Ex: I have never observed a Jewish holiday before.

Atheism:

Atheist - noun

a person who disbelieves or lacks belief in the existence of God or gods.

Ex: Linda is a committed atheist.

The following websites provide more information about religions and inclusive language/terminology.

[Inclusive Writing: Religion, Faith and Belief](#)

[Religion By Country](#)

[Examples of What to Avoid When Using Religious Language](#)

[General Inclusive Language Guide](#)

[Differences Between Catholicism and Christianity](#)

Also be sure to check out other [cultural and/or religious clubs](#) on our San José State University campus.

Activity 1: Relevance

Using the information provided in this handout, choose the correct answer to each multiple-choice question.

1. If I am unsure whether or not I should include religious terminology in my writing, I should
 - a. do more research on my topic or context for writing.
 - b. include it because more information is always better.
 - c. consider how to make it inclusive.
 - d. both a and c.
2. Why can writing about other religions be important?
 - a. Around every 8 out of 10 people in the world are religious.
 - b. It can help educate people about things they do not know.
 - c. We should not write about it at all because it could hurt someone's feelings.
 - d. both a and b.

1. d. both a and c - Only include religious terminology if it is relevant to the context of your writing. When including it, do so carefully and mindfully to educate and uplift others.
2. d. both a and b - Most people in the world practice or follow a religion. It is important to recognize that and the fact that others may not know what religions exist around the world. As long as you use the power of writing (or any form of communication for that matter) when talking about them without the intention of harming and are inclusive, it can be very important.

Activity 2: Applying Religious Terminology

Using the information provided in this handout, choose the correct answer to each multiple-choice question.

1. Maria practices Christianity; she is _____.
 - a. Muslim
 - b. a Jew
 - c. Christian
 - d. Hindu
2. Laila is practicing Islam; she is _____.
 - a. Buddhist
 - b. Hindu
 - c. a Jew
 - d. Muslim
3. Andy is practicing Hinduism; he is _____.
 - a. Buddhist
 - b. Hindu
 - c. Muslim
 - d. Jewish
4. Jonathan is Buddhist which means he practices _____.
 - a. Islam
 - b. Judaism
 - c. Hinduism
 - d. Buddhism
5. Arthur is Confucian which means he practices _____.
 - a. Taoism
 - b. Islam
 - c. Confucianism
 - d. Hinduism

58/Lang (en-US) BDC q0.00000912 0 61.38 tMC /Spanene 0 612 792 re is ConfuLaila ihich means he p

