

TEACHER'S ANSWERS FOR FACT SHEET: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM

	<i>Origins</i>	<i>Basic Ideas</i>	<i>Basic History</i>
Judaism	Origins in God telling Abraham to seek out the Promised Land in Canaan. First monotheistic faith. Moses as the greatest of prophets: God gave him the Ten Commandments and the Torah—the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. Later thought and religion influenced by Hellenistic culture from 3 rd century BCE.	Monotheistic. God is one and unique. Prayer directed to God alone. Relationship between God and humankind paramount. God knows what people think and do. He rewards the good and punishes the wicked. A Messiah will come and the dead will be resurrected. Ritual focus on daily life such as the proper preparation of food. Strict prohibition of idols in worship.	Biblical exodus from Egypt, conquest of the land of Canaan. Kingdom of Judah conquered by the Babylonians in 587 BCE: the Babylonian exile. Many Jews returned to homeland after Persians conquered Babylonia. Later, Roman rule, revolt, destruction of the Temple 70 CE. Diaspora: Jews living throughout Central Asia, West Asia, Europe. Jewish population in Arabia influences Islam.
Christianity	Founded by followers of Jesus of Nazareth 1 st century CE. Grows from a Jewish sect to spread throughout Middle East. Becomes state religion of Roman Empire in 380. Europe becomes Christian during the Middle Ages; many local traditions are absorbed by the church in Rome. Church divides into eastern and western branches in 1054.	Monotheistic. Acceptance and worship of Jesus of Nazareth as Son of God and universal savior—the Messiah. Jesus resurrected from the dead. Belief in original sin, Day of Judgment. After death people are either given eternal life or eternal damnation. Bible—Old and New Testaments—is inspired by God, but is not His literal speech.	Constantine became first Christian Roman emperor 313 CE. Separation of Roman Catholic and Eastern orthodox churches 1054 CE. Early 16 th century: birth of Protestantism questions Catholic doctrine.
Islam	Roots in the mercantile culture of Arabia. God (Allah) reveals Qur'an to Muhammad from 610 to 632 CE). In Muhammad's lifetime unification of Arabian peninsula and its tribal society. Arab language attained exalted status as voice of Allah and language of the Qur'an. Muhammad died without appointing a successor. The first four Sunni caliphs ("successors") were in-laws of Muhammad.	Monotheistic. Muhammad as last of the prophets. Belief in Day of Judgment. Noah, Abraham, Jesus honored as prophets. Prayer five times a day facing Mecca, charity, fasting during Ramadan, pilgrimage to Mecca. Qur'an the center of teachings. Major doctrinal division between Sunni (majority of Muslims) and Shi'ite (mainly Iran). Strict prohibition of human figures in religious art and architecture.	Less than two centuries after Muhammad's death the Islamic empire stretched from the Iberian peninsula to the western borders of China—a vast multicultural empire. Islam's preservation of Greek science, medicine, and philosophy deeply influenced the West. The last Islamic empire, the Ottomans, lasted until 1923.