

Religion

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

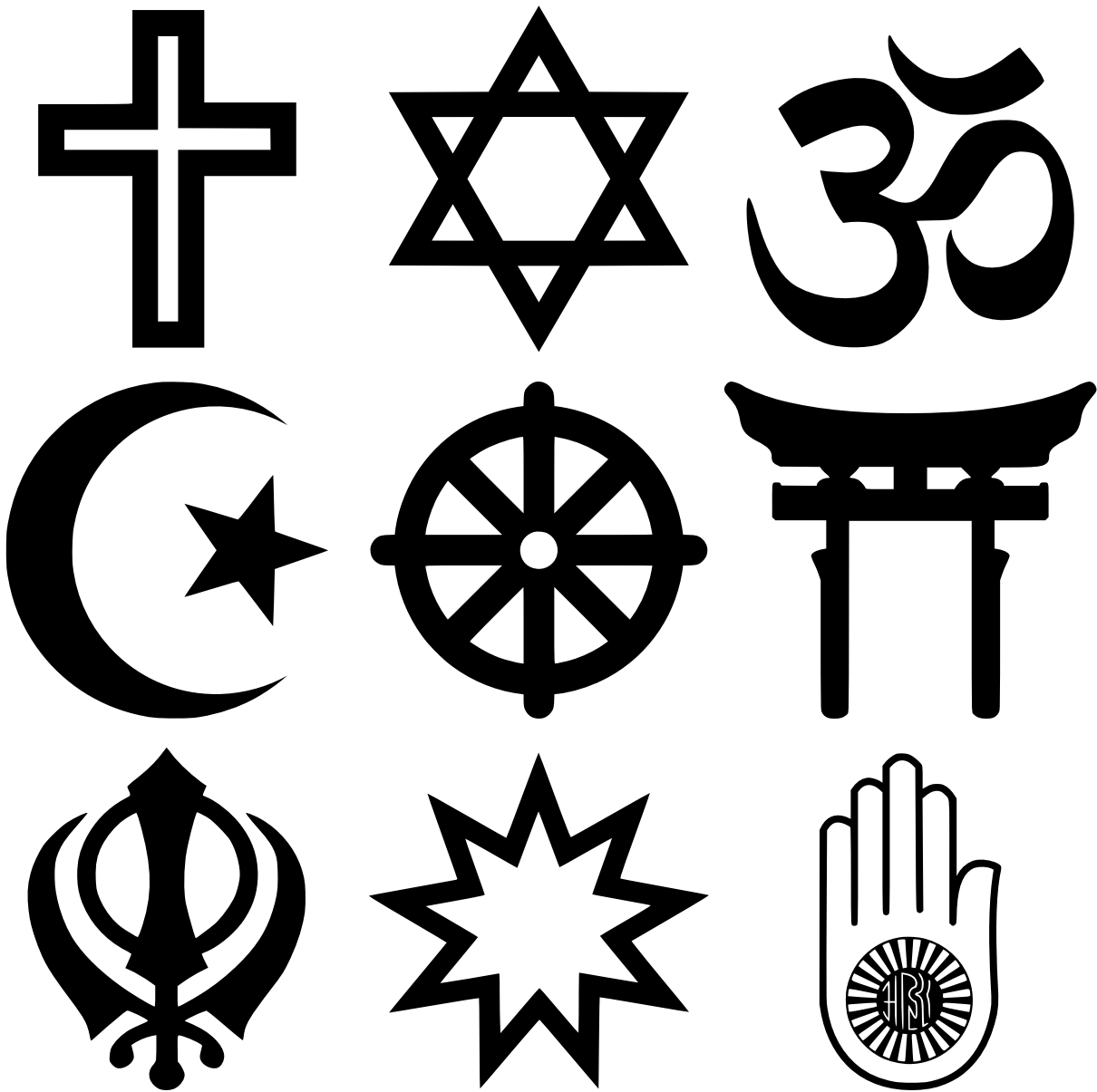
In this lesson, you will learn about a particular audience characteristic. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Religion
2. Tips for the Speaker

1. Religion

Individuals who practice a **religion** have belief systems and worldviews that relate humanity to spirituality and moral values. According to some estimates, there are roughly 4,200 religions in the world. The members of your audience could be followers of any of those religions.

Religions may involve the worship of a god or gods or a spiritual force. Many religions have days of observance, narratives, symbols, traditions, and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life or a preferred lifestyle from their ideas about the cosmos and human nature.



The five largest religious groups by population, estimated to account for between 5 and 7 billion people, are Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Chinese folk religion.

Five largest religions	Adherents in 2000	% of world population
Christianity	2.0 billion	33%
Islam	1.2 billion	19.6%
Hinduism	811 million	13.4%
Chinese Folk religion	385 million	6.4%
Buddhism	360 million	5.9%

Additionally, there are may be atheist and agnostics in your audience. The terms "atheist" (lack of belief in any gods) and "agnostic" (belief in the unknowability of the existence of gods), though specifically contrary to theistic (e.g. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim) religious teachings, do not by definition mean the opposite of "religious."

There are religions (including Buddhism and Taoism) that classify some of their followers as agnostic,

atheistic, or nontheistic. The true opposite of "religious" is "**irreligious**."

Since the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees the separation of church and state, the U.S. has no dominant state religion. People with different beliefs are free to practice their religion in the U.S. or to practice no religion.



BIG IDEA

Because of the existence of **religious pluralism** in the U.S., you are likely to encounter audience members of different religions.



TERMS TO KNOW

Irreligious

Irreligious describes an absence of any religion; where as anti-religion describes an active opposition or aversion toward religions in general.

Religious Pluralism

The peaceful coexistence of multiple religions in a community.

2. Tips for the Speaker

Unless you are speaking to a particular religious group, you are likely to encounter audience members from several of the world's religions in your audience.

Understanding the religions in your audience will help you relate better to members of the audience and avoid excluding members who may not observe the same practices as you do. It is important to avoid subtle religious discrimination when speaking to a general audience.

Often it will be necessary for you to put aside your own belief system to understand the religion of the members of the audience. Of course, you not required to accept or embrace other religions but simply to be aware of and sensitive to them.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that Individuals who practice a **religion** have belief systems and world views that relate humanity to spirituality and moral values. There are roughly 4,200 religions in the world. The five largest religious groups by population are Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Chinese folk religion. An important **tip for speakers** is to remember that understanding the religions in your audience will help you relate to members of the audience more directly and avoid excluding members who may not observe the same practices as you do.

Source: Source: Boundless. "Religion." Boundless Communications Boundless, 3 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 1 Jul. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/analyzing-the-audience-7/demographic-factors-to-consider-38/religion-168-8008/>



TERMS TO KNOW

Irreligious

Irreligious describes an absence of any religion; where as anti-religion describes an active opposition or aversion toward religions in general.

Religion

Religion is a collection of belief systems, cultural systems, and worldviews that relate humanity to spirituality and, sometimes, to moral values.

Religious Pluralism

The peaceful coexistence of multiple religions in a community.