

## Purpose of Religion

### Objectives

- Construct an argument on the usefulness of religion in society in preparation for a group discussion.

### Essential Questions

- How do institutions help or hurt society?

## Fishbowl Discussion: What is it?

In a Fishbowl discussion, students seated inside the “fishbowl” actively participate in a discussion by asking questions and sharing their opinions, while students standing outside listen carefully to the ideas presented. Students take turns in these roles, so that they practice being both contributors and listeners in a group discussion. This strategy is especially useful when you want to make sure all students participate in a discussion, when you want to help students reflect on what a good discussion looks like, and when you need a structure for discussing controversial or difficult topics. A Fishbowl discussion makes for an excellent pre-writing activity, often unearthing questions or ideas that students can explore more deeply in an independent assignment.

Directions: Use the anchor texts to help build your argument. First, determine the usefulness of institutions – what do they provide to society? Second, look at the 5 functions of religion.

## What are institutions?

Function	Good/helpful? Why?	Bad/Not helpful? Why?	Example
Is reproduced through routine actions			
Provides near certainty and predictability for everyday social, economic and political interactions			
Tends to last a long time but can change incrementally and, in rare instances, suddenly			
Often internalized and unconscious			
Shapes behavior and thus affect developmental outcomes			

## Why study religion?

Function	Good/helpful? Why	Bad/Not helpful? Why	Example
Gives meaning and purpose in life			
Reinforces social unity and stability			
An agent of social control			
Greater psychological and physical well-being			
Motivate people to work towards social change			

After organizing your thoughts using the readings, is religion a useful institution for society? Make sure you have reasoning/evidence to support your claim.

Day of Discussion		
My Claim/Answer	Reasoning	Example
<p align="center"><b>Observing</b> Record 3 things you saw/heard</p>		<p align="center"><b>Discussing</b> Record thoughts, ideas, questions</p>
<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>		<p>Place to jot notes</p>

Reflection on discussion you participated in	Reflection on partner's participation Partner's name _____
<p>Did the group come to a consensus?</p> <p>Did you speak up at least once?</p> <p>Was there a viewpoint that surprised you?</p> <p>What question do you have after the discussion?</p> <p>How can you improve for next time?</p>	<p>Did the group come to a consensus?</p> <p>Did they speak up at least once?</p> <p>Was there a viewpoint that surprised you?</p> <p>What question do you have after the discussion?</p> <p>How can you improve for next time?</p>