Church and State Relations

## Goals & Objectives

**Goals:** Students will learn to understand a person’s point of view from the Roman Empire, and argue on that historical characters behalf in a classroom discussion.

**Objectives:**

Students will support their discussion arguments with historical evidence.

Students will consider others opinions during the class discussion and work together to develop a compromise.

Students will organize the two distinct views on church-state relations in a graphic organizer.

## California State Content and Common Core Standards

**California State Standard: 7.1.3:** Describe the establishment by Constantine of the new capital in Constantinople and the development of the Byzantine Empire, with an emphasis on the consequences of the development of two distinct European civilizations, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic, and their two distinct views on church-state relations.

**Common Core Standards:**

**WHST. 6-8:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

**WHST. 6-8** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis reflection, and research.

### Lesson Introduction

The teacher will remind students of the previous lesson on the Byzantine Empire, or the Eastern Roman empire, and the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire.

The teacher will start with one side of the room and do a whip around activity. The teacher will give the first historical event “Constantine saw a vision of a cross before going into battle…” and the first student will give the next sentence “he had all of his soldiers put a cross on their shields”. The next student will give the next sentence (“he won the battle and believed it was because of the Christian god.”) and so on until each student has added a sentence referring to the previous lesson.

The teacher will remind the class that the East and West Empires did not always agree on everything, including an issue that many people still do not agree on today.

Reveal the following quotes on the white board:

“It is impossible to rightly govern a nation without God and the Bible.”

― [George Washington](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4356.George_Washington)

“Give to every other human being every right that you claim for yourself - that is my doctrine.”

― [Thomas Paine](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/57639.Thomas_Paine), [*The Age of Reason*](http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1018077)

“Almost any sect, cult, or religion will legislate its creed into law if it acquires the political power to do so.”

― [Robert A. Heinlein](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/205.Robert_A_Heinlein)

“Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged.”

― [Ronald Reagan](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/3543.Ronald_Reagan)

“The government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion.”

― [John Adams](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1480.John_Adams)

(Quotes from goodreads.com)

Give students a few minutes to discuss the quotes with their partner. What do they think the quotes are referring to? After 2-3 minutes, tell them we will be having a class discussion on the issue of Church State relations.

### Vocabulary

The terms for this lesson will have already been introduced to students in previous lessons on the Byzantine Empire and the Spread of Christianity. The terms below will be used in the readings for this lesson, and are expected to be used by students during the discussion.

* Caesaropapism
* Greek Orthodox Church
* Roman Catholic
* Pope
* Hierarchy
* Bishop
* Apostle
* Byzantine Empire

Important people:

* Constantine
* Peter
* Theodosius

### Content Delivery

Students will be learning how the West and East empires disagreed on the issue of Church State relations through a classroom “fish tank” discussion. In the previous lesson students will have read materials covering the development of the Byzantine Empire, the demise of the Western Roman Empire, and the expansion of Christianity. Readings from that lesson are below.

Before starting the “fish tank” discussion, students will be given a short amount of time to write their personal opinion on church state relations in their journals.

The teacher will give each student a character to play. Multiple students will “play” the same character, and they will all be in a group together. Each group will get a character profile card of their respective character.

Student Characters:

* Roman Catholic bishop (Pope)
* Romans in the Western Empire
* Romans in the Eastern (Byzantine empire)
* Greek Orthodox bishop
* Emperor in the Byzantine Empire (Theodosius)

### Student Engagement

Before the discussion, students will meet with their group (each character will have multiple actors, group members are all the same character). Students will write down their characters’ arguments together, compare and share background knowledge, and collect evidence to support their argument.

The discussion will be in a “fish bowl” setting. Five chairs will be set up in a circle in the middle of the classroom, one for each character. The other group members will sit behind their character chair in a larger circle. The five in the middle are “in the fish bowl”.

While in the “fish bowl”, students are expected to argue based on what their group believes the character they’re portraying would have felt towards the issue of church and state relations. Students will be marked down if they make arguments based on their own personal opinion and not the opinion of the character they were assigned.

Students sitting outside of the “fish bowl” are expected to listen to the discussion as they fill out the guided notes for the discussion. The guided notes will have boxes for students to organize questions they may think of, answers to questions being asked in the “fish bowl”, new argument points for their group, and points they thought to be especially impressive.

Students outside of the “fish bowl” are not allowed to talk! If they have something to add to the discussion (and their group member is done talking) they simply tap their group member and switch places.

The teacher will remind students of their discussion guidelines. If this is the first discussion of the year, the class will make a poster of guidelines and rules before the discussion. If not, they will reference the poster they’ve already made.

Students must be respectful of each other and use evidence to build their characters argument.

### Lesson Closure

The teacher will help guide the discussion towards a compromise between the groups.

In the next class, students will be able to review their original opinion (journal write) and their guided notes. They will be given time to reflect on their own and with their group on how the discussion went and what improvements could have been made.

As a group, students will work together to fill out a graphic organizer that distinguishes between the two opposing views on church state relations.

Students will reflect on their own in a 2 page journal write. They will be required to discuss if their personal opinion changed (and if so why), if they disagreed with their characters opinion (and why), and how they thought the discussion went (did you feel like you had enough time to talk? Did something bother you? What was it like to argue someone else’s opinion?).

### Assessment

**Formative:** Whip around activity at the beginning of the lesson. If students are not able to recall all of the important information needed for the discussion, take the time to re-teach the previous lesson.

**Progress Monitoring:** The teacher will use the confer app to make comments on students participation during the discussion.

**Summative:** The teacher will collect students’ guided notes from the discussion to grade. They will be returned to the students so they can reflect on how the discussion went.

The teacher will also collect students’ graphic organizers and journals to check for completion and understanding.

## Accommodations for English Learners, Striving Readers and Students with Special Needs

English Learners, striving readers, and students with special needs will receive an extra worksheet with the vocabulary terms, a definition, and a visual aid for each. English learners will be grouped with bilingual students if possible.

## Lesson Resources

http://www.goodreads.com