

Understanding Religious Freedom in Schools

**USE YOUR OWN NOTEBOOK PAPER. This is a class set.
You only need to turn in one sheet.**

In your groups, determine whether or not the Establishment Clause or Free Exercise Clause has been violated. Explain your answers thoroughly by properly applying the law.

1. Wanting all students to do well on the AP Government Civil Liberties Exam, Ms. Herrin requires her students to bow their heads and pray for "Divine guidance" just before taking the test.
2. Coach Herrmann joins as the captain of the football team leads the team in prayer just before kickoff.
3. To further understand ancient civilizations and cultures of the Middle East, Mr. Peek requires his World History class to read several chapters from the Old Testament of the Bible.
4. After much controversy in the community over the Biology Department's teaching of Darwin's Evolution Theory and the Big Bang Theory, the department agrees to also include a lesson on Creationism when covering these topics in the future.
5. Students in the Contemporary Issues class are assigned a paper on the issue of the right to die and assisted suicide. One of the questions to be answered in the paper is, "What position does your religion take on this issue?"
6. During a class discussion about a woman's right to choose, a student raises his hand and is called on. The student says, "Anyone who supports a woman's right to choose is a sinner and should be damned to Hell!" The student is disciplined for inappropriate conduct.
7. After the reading of the school announcements, the teacher asks if anyone has any other important announcements to make. A student rises and says that her church youth group will be holding a retreat at Six Flags Over Texas this weekend. Other students ask several questions about the trip. The teacher allows the details and explanations to continue.
8. In an effort to curb absenteeism from school as a result of the various religious holiday observances, the school arranges for clergymen from all types of religious affiliations to come directly to the school during the lunch period and provide religious services. School attendance rates climb significantly.
9. During the winter season, Bellaire Student Council decides that it will decorate the halls to make the school look more festive. In several of the hallways, nativity scenes and the star of David can be seen near Santa Claus, reindeer, and snowmen decorations.
10. Several students from a local church youth group decide to wear their religious t-shirts to school to celebrate their faith. On the shirt is a graphic picture of the crucifixion. The students are told to change their shirts or be suspended.