

03008

ERA 3: REVOLUTION AND THE NEW NATION (1754–1820S)  
ERA 10: CONTEMPORARY UNITED STATES (1968 - PRESENT)  
THEMES: AMERICAN IDENTITY, POLITICS AND  
CITIZENSHIP, RELIGION

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Cleveland third-graders at morning prayer in St. Adalberts's Parish School

## Guiding Question

How does an individual's right to freely exercise religion impact the educational choices available to the person?

How involved should the state be in providing for educational opportunities at religious/parochial schools?

How does society balance the need for an educated citizenry with the ability of parents to make educational choices for their children when those choices involve religious schools and the expenditure of tax dollars?

## Question Focus Example for Task 24

Religion has no place in public schools.

## Teacher-to-Teacher

The issue of religion in American society and the role of government has been long debated and discussed. In addition, there are very few areas in which religion has been more hotly contested than in the area of education. Within this collection, students are provided the opportunity to read some background information about religious education from Baker's article. Once students read his article, they are then able to read Jefferson's product, The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom before beginning in the reading of case law that deals specifically with religious schools, prayer in schools and tax vouchers for religious/parochial schools. Students have the opportunity to read and learn about the precarious balance that must be struck between religion and government involvement, while also asking how the educational requirements a state creates can be met by attending a religious school. Students then wrestle with whether or not government tax vouchers are an effective means of support and to what extent the vouchers should be offered.

## Contents

- ❖ **Religious Education (article)**
- ❖ **The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (document)**
- ❖ **Pierce v. Society of Sisters Summary (document)**
- ❖ **Engel v. Vitale Summary (document)**
- ❖ **Zelman v. Simmons-Harris Summary (document)**
- ❖ **The Evolving Federal Role in Education: An Introductory Essay (excerpt) (document)**

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## Recommended Instructional Strategies

**Task 2:** One Sentence Summaries

**Task 19:** Comparative Analysis

**Task 23:** Identifying Claim/Evidence

**Task 24:** QFT  
(Question Formulation Technique)

**Task 25:** Document Analysis/Sourcing