Introducing the High School Lesson Plans for the Georgia 3Rs Project

Our team of scholars and teachers is excited to make available five lesson plans that show how the academic study of biblical and other ancient texts can be appropriately included into public high school courses. These lesson plans incorporate the insights of recent scholarship in ways that foster religious literacy while safeguarding religious liberty. Students will learn something about the ancient world, the historical development of religion, and our own modern contexts — all in the context of lessons designed to encourage critical thinking and analysis of fascinating but often challenging texts.

Four of these lesson plans are for World History classes. They explore the development of legal thinking in the Ancient Near East, the evolution of monotheism, the understanding of Jesus within his own first-century context, and the experiences of Christian women in the Roman world. These lessons provide opportunities to analyze and compare different primary sources from the ancient world and to discuss how religious ideas, practices and identities have changed over time.

The fifth lesson is for high school English Language Arts. It examines the famous story of Joseph in the book of Genesis as literature, tracing both character and plot development. In particular, it asks students to consider how narrative features like repetition and gaps in the plot impact interpretation of the story.

All of these lessons provide opportunities to see how different readers reach different conclusions. Students will not only learn how to do close and careful analysis of complex texts; they will not only be strengthening their religious literacy and cultural literacy. They'll also be practicing the art of recognizing and respecting different points of view — the core civic value that underlies this project.

Monotheism, Henotheism and Polytheism

The Bible, Hammurabi's Code and Law in the Ancient Near East

Jesus and His Teachings

Women in Early Christianity

Joseph

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CENTER
FREEDOM FORUM INSTITUTE

SBL
SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE