

Curriculum Unit
Title

The Sociology of Religion – El Camino de Santiago: A Case
Study of the Sacred

Author

Barbara Prillaman

KEY LEARNING, ENDURING UNDERSTANDING, ETC.

Students will understand that **all religions have at least three essential characteristics: beliefs about the sacred and the profane, rituals, and a community of worshipers and the variety of religious experiences is endless, because people play a fundamental role in determining what is sacred and how they should act in its presence.**

ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S) for the UNIT

- (1) What is religion and what are its essential characteristics?
- (2) In regard to religion, what is the difference between the sacred and the profane? Who determines what is sacred and profane? What is the relationship between the two?
- (3) What is a pilgrimage and what are the reasons for participating on one?

CONCEPT A

The Sociology of Religion

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS A

What is religion and what are its essential characteristics?

VOCABULARY A

Religion, Max Weber, Karl Marx, Peter Berger, Emile Durkheim

CONCEPT B

Sacred and Profane

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS B

What is the difference between the sacred and the profane?
Who determines what is sacred and profane?
What is the relationship between the two?

VOCABULARY B

Sacred, Profane, Rituals, Church, Community of Worshipers, Pilgrimage

CONCEPT C

El Camino de Santiago

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS C

What is a pilgrimage and what are the reasons for participating on one?
What makes El Camino de Santiago so special as a pilgrimage?

VOCABULARY C

Camino, Santiago de Compostela, Credencial, The Way of St. James, Scallop Shell, Albergues (hostels)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/MATERIAL/TEXT/FILM/RESOURCES

Films: Sacred Journeys, The Way of Saint James, Camino de Santiago Documentary Film - The Way; Tres en el Camino; I'll Push You; Walking the Camino: Six Ways to Santiago; and Footprints: The Path of Your Life

Readings: Cousineau, Phil. *The art of pilgrimage: the seekers guide to making travel sacred.*; Dintaman, Anna, and David Landis. *A village to village guide to hiking the Camino de Santiago: Camino Frances: St Jean - Santiago – Finisterre*; Frey, Nancy Louise. *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago.*

Website: Sacred Journeys with Bruce Feiler. <https://why.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/sacredjourneys/#.WjcAW4UZLoU>