

Neighboring Faith Communities Rubric
For parents and teachers

	Good World Citizen <i>Compares/contrasts:</i> The highly competent individual remembers past visits, and is able to compare and contrast them to the current visit.	Regular Participant <i>Accurately describes:</i> The regular participant can accurately describe the most recent visit in some detail.	Casual Participant <i>Follows instructions, knows basic facts:</i> The casual participant follows instructions on behavior, and knows that faith communities differ from one another.
Experience of other religions	Participates in 3 or more field trips in one year, is able to observe non-judgmentally, and think critically.	Participates in 3 or more field trips in one year.	Participates in at least 1 one 3-week field trip cycle to another faith community in one year.
Emotional response to other religions	Describes their own emotional response to another faith community, and tells how their response might differ from someone who is part of that faith community.	After each visit, describes their own emotional response to another faith community.	States that different individuals may have different emotional responses to religious services or ceremonies.
Knowing material culture of other religions	Can tell about artworks, objects, or pieces of music they witnessed, how the music or art objects are used, and compare/contrast to other faith communities.	After each visit, can tell about an artwork, object, or piece of music they witnessed, and say whether they liked it or not.	States that different faith communities may use art, objects of beauty, and/or music in their services.
Awareness of social dimension of other religions	Knows about the social structure and organization of a faith community, and can compare/contrast to other faith communities.	After each visit: Can identify who the worship leaders are; knows who is in charge of the faith community; observes social interactions.	States that different faith communities have different ideas about who is in charge, and who gets to lead worship.
Awareness of religious etiquette	Can describe the social norms of a faith community, and compare/contrast to other faith communities.	Can describe the social norms of the faith communities they visit.	Listens to and follows instructions on proper dress and behavior for field trips.

(See other side for explanation)

About the Neighboring Faith Communities Rubric

In the Neighboring Faith Communities class, young people become better citizens by learning about other faith communities, through field trips to those faith communities. This rubric is designed to help parents and guardians know how much their children have learned.

In the Neighboring Faith Communities class, we do not focus on beliefs or proper practice (the doctrinal and legal/ethical dimensions of religion). Probably the best place for young people to learn about these dimensions of religion is at school (in history and social studies classes), or through books or online learning. Instead, we focus on three other important dimensions of religion:

- the *emotional* dimension of religion
- the *material* dimension of religion
- the *social* dimension of religion

The best way to learn about these dimensions of religion are through *experience*, and that's what we do in this course—we have young people experience the worship services of other faith communities.

The first two categories on the rubric cover the emotional dimension of religion. The next category covers the material dimension of religion (we include music in the material dimension), and the fourth category covers the social dimension. Finally, the last category in the rubric helps us measure progress towards our goal of producing good citizens in a multi-religious world.

How To Get the Most from This Course

We usually take three weeks to learn about a faith community. In the first week, we learn a little bit about the faith community we're going to visit, and learn what to wear and the basics of how to behave. The second week, we go on the field trip together. And on the third week, we talk about the field trip: what did we see and hear? how did we each feel? who was there and what were they doing?

Someone who participates in one or two three-week field trip cycles should be able to achieve the lowest level of learning, "Casual Participant."

By participating in three or more field trip cycles, filling out the Participant Checklist each time, and contributing to the discussions after each trip, a participant can reach the "Regular Participant" level. "Regular Participants" are prepared to be good citizens, because they are aware that different religions

The "Good World Citizen" level of learning is a challenge aimed at 8th graders, particularly those who are in the class for a second year. "Good World Citizens" have visited a number of different faith communities, they know how to observe and listen non-judgmentally, they remember details about those faith communities, and they can compare and contrast those faith communities with each other—and with the participant's own faith community.

Resources for families:

For religious etiquette: Stuart M. Matlins and Arthur J. Magida, editors, *How to Be A Perfect Stranger (6th Edition): The Essential Religious Etiquette Handbook* (Woodstock, Vermont: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2015).

For reliable, objective facts about religions, see: Harvard University, The Pluralism Project Web site, <http://pluralism.org/>

Checklist for faith community visits

We visited: _____ Date: _____

My name: _____

1. How I felt about this visit:

_____ Peaceful _____ Hopeful _____ Cheerful _____ Comfortable
_____ Excited _____ Worried _____ Sad _____ Uncomfortable

Other feelings: _____

2. Music and art at this faith community:

What kind of music did they use, and did you like it? _____

Describe a work of art or an object that was part of the service. Did you like it? _____

3. Social norms:

Who were the important people in the service? _____

Who was in charge of this faith community? _____

Who was friends with whom? _____

4. What did they consider polite and impolite?

How did most people dress? _____

How did people behave during the service? _____

Other observations about what was polite and impolite? _____
