

Wisconsin v Yoder: Lesson Plan

Topic	
<p><i>Wisconsin v Yoder</i> (1972) decides that the Amish community in Wisconsin is exempted from Wisconsin's compulsory education law as the law violates the free exercise of the Amish community. The state interest of education is overrode.</p>	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History • Civics • Social Studies 	30-45 minutes
Video link:	
https://academy4sc.org/topic/wisconsin-v-yoder-1972/	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
<p>By the end of this lesson, students will be able too:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. • Explain the Court's decision to give more deference to free exercise over the state interest of compulsory education. 	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
<p>Liberalism, Secularism, Church and State, Social Welfare, Moral Majority, Respondents</p>	
Materials Needed	
<p>Internet Access to learn about the Amish community</p>	
Before you watch	
<p>Quick research: Write down what you know about the Amish community. Then research the community for five minutes, writing down what you learn. Share with a partner your prior knowledge and what you learned through your quick research.</p>	

While you watch

Complete the Worksheet.

After you watch/discussion questions

- Do you think that since the Amish people were considered good citizens and not burdens to the welfare system they should get special exemptions to state schooling requirements?
- What other laws are you aware of that have religious exemptions?
- Do you believe you learned “worldly” education prior to 8th grade? If so, what do you make of the distinction of 8th grade?

Activity Ideas

- Discuss with your previous partner from the ‘Before You Watch’ activity if you think from what you learned about the Amish community that they should be exempted from Wisconsin’s compulsory education law.
- Debate in class if students find the majority opinion or Douglas’ dissent more convincing.

Sources/places to learn more

1. Gillman, Howard. American Constitutionalism, Second Edition. Volume II Rights and Liberties. [Virtual Source Bookshelf]. 504-507.
2. “*Wisconsin v Yoder*, 406 U.S. 205 (1972).” Justia.
<https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/406/205/#tab-opinion-1949690>
3. Foster, James C. “*Wisconsin v Yoder* (1972)” The First Amendment Encyclopedia.
<https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/676/wisconsin-v-yoder>
4. “Freedom of Religion, Speech, Press, Assembly, and Petition.” Interactive Constitution. National Constitution Center.
<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendment/amendment-i>