

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview.
Build a Free Society (10-15 Minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Goal

Students apply Penn's ideas about liberty of conscience (religious freedom) and civil peace.

Instructions

1. Put students in pairs or small groups.
2. Tell students: "You are founding a new colony. You must write three laws about religion. Each law must follow William Penn's principles: (a) no coercion of belief, (b) protection of persons and property, and (c) peaceful coexistence."
3. Give pairs/groups 5-7 minutes to write these down.
4. Have pairs/groups share their answers with the class.
5. Ask students these questions:
 - "Would your laws allow people you disagree with to live freely?"
Answers should be "Yes"!
 - "What were Penn's main ideas in his "Charter of Privileges"?"
No forced worship, no punishment for beliefs, a government that protects the safety of residents.

Debrief/Wrap-Up

Ask students:

- "Was it hard to allow beliefs you disagree with?"
- "What keeps society stable if beliefs are different?"
- "How do the Bible's standards on proper government functions compare with Penn's beliefs as expressed in the Charter of Privileges?"
- "How are the verses you've learned summing up what the Bible says are government's proper functions totally reasonable and helpful to a well-functioning society?"