

WORKPLACE AND SCHOOL-BASED BARRIERS FOR RELIGIOUS MINORITIES
(ALSO ADAPTED FROM TDSJ2 APPENDIX 11U)

The facilitator hands out copies of the participant worksheet below. Small groups or the whole class offer examples to fill in the columns for each of the 3 scenarios:

- In this situation, what are the institutional barriers?
- In this situation, what are the social and cultural barriers?
- Are there parallel situations in which a Christian would not experience these barriers?

Facilitator's note: A sample answer sheet is included below the participant worksheet.

When the participant worksheet has been completed and all of the columns have been filled, facilitators can examine the further question: How might we imagine changes in schools and workplaces in which these barriers would no longer exist? What changes would be needed – at the individual, at the institutional, and at the societal/cultural levels?

Participant Worksheet: Workplace and School-based barriers

Scenario	Institutional Barriers	Societal/Cultural Barriers	Christian Advantages denies to Non-Christians
<i>A Muslim student, who is religious, needs to fast during Ramadan</i>			
<i>A elementary student is a Jehovah's witness and will not for religious reasons participate in celebrations</i>			
<i>A Hindu student takes an excused absence from school to celebrate Diwali with her family</i>			

Facilitator: Worksheet with Sample Answers

Scenario	Institutional Barriers	Societal/Cultural Barriers	Christian Advantages denied to non-Christians
<p><i>A Muslim student, who is religious, fasts during Ramadan.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student has to sit in cafeteria even though s/he won't be eating • the student has to participate in Physical Education courses • College dining halls are not necessarily open for students to break the fast at sundown – or open to eat before sunrise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of fasting is often misunderstood and is viewed as extreme • People are not familiar with the holiday and don't know how to recognize it in an appropriate manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendar/schedules take into account major Christian holidays so it is easy to celebrate and be with loved ones. • People understand the social and theological significance of Christian holidays
<p><i>An elementary student is a Jehovah's witness and will not for religious reasons participate in any celebrations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom activities often involve themes of celebration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reasons for not celebrating are not generally understood . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom activities are not disrespectful of mainstream Christian religious obligations.
<p><i>A Hindu student takes an excused absence from school to celebrate Diwali with her family</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are still obligated to complete the day's assignments • Teachers and school administrators are not aware of the holiday and might schedule Student's • Extracurricular activities may be affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are not familiar with the holiday and don't know how to recognize it in an appropriate manner • The religious and cultural significance is not recognized or understood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians don't miss academic information or exercises. • People understand the social and theological significance of Christian holidays • Major academic and extracurricular activities are scheduled around Christian holidays