

**Benchmark: 2a**

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Percent of US Population</b>
Christian	76.5%
Nonreligious/Secular	13.2%
Judaism	1.3%
Islam	0.5%
Buddhism	0.5%
Hindu	0.4%

**Brief Constructed Response Prompt:** If a majority of people follow one religion, why might the United States government not be permitted to pass a law that restricts the rights of people with other religious beliefs? Use an example to illustrate your answer.

**Possible Response(s):** Students may offer a variety of plausible responses.

The government would be acting unconstitutionally and in violation of national principles by restricting the rights of people who hold other religious beliefs. The 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment to the Constitution protects our freedom of religion by giving us the ability to worship, within reasonable limits, any way we choose.

Students might also argue that the principle of majority rule is limited in the United States by constitutional amendments such as Amendment 1 and by Court rulings that apply or extent minority protections. In 1925 the Supreme Court struck down a law that required all students in Oregon to attend public school (an attempt to eliminate Catholic schools).

**Rubric**

- 2** = This response gives a valid answer with an accurate and relevant explanation.
- 1** = This response gives a valid answer with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no explanation.
- 0** = inaccurate or no response