



## Lesson Plan: *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)

**Learning Objectives:** The students will...

1. Answer comprehension questions while watching the video of *Wisconsin v. Yoder*.
2. Express personal opinions about key facts, the arguments, decision, and impact of *Wisconsin v. Yoder* on American history.

**TEKS:** US.20A

**Materials Needed:** Oyez video on *Wisconsin v. Yoder* ([www.texasbar.com/civics](http://www.texasbar.com/civics)), copies of student viewing guide, copy of teacher notes.

### Teaching Strategy:

1. Explain to the students that they are going to view a video on the 1972 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Wisconsin v. Yoder*. Set the case up by explaining its significance in U.S. history—it illustrates the differences of opinion present in the United States concerning the meaning of the free exercise clause of the First Amendment. The case will also review the beliefs of the Amish and the role they have played in American society.
2. Pair the students up and distribute a viewing guide to each student. Have the students preview the guide with a partner and predict what they think the answers might be. After they have discussed their ideas on the guide, explain that they will be watching the video and answering the questions individually.
3. Play the video, stopping at the designated time on the guide for the students to individually answer the comprehension questions as well as complete the “Stop and Think” section. If there is time, ask for volunteers to share their thoughts before going to the next section of the video. Continue this process until the video has come to an end.
4. Explain that the last question of the guide contains an opinion question that will ask them to use the *Yoder* decision to determine if exemptions to the Texas compulsory attendance law should be given to other religious groups. Instruct them to explain their decision and provide the reasoning for that decision before turning in the video guide.

### Extension Idea:

Pair up the students to research other U.S. Supreme Court cases involving the free exercise clause of the First Amendment in schools. Assign one student to complete a case study of *Minersville School District, et al. v. Walter Gobitis, etc.* (1940), and the other to complete a case study of *West Virginia State Board of Education, et al. v. Barnette, et al.* (1943). When they have completed the individual case studies, have them share the two cases and find both the similarities and differences between the two cases. Together, the pair should then use these decisions to find the differences between these two cases and the *Yoder* case to reinforce their understanding of the reason *Yoder* is considered a “narrow holding.”