

# Social Hierarchies: Church vs. State



This activity pairs well with Part One of *Henry V* at pause point 00:06:15.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Recognize the relationship between church and state in *Henry V*
- Identify moments in *Henry V* that exemplify the relationship between church and state
- Analyze and interpret stage action
- Compare and contrast the world of *Henry V* and our own
- Organize ideas into a coherent visual medium

## INTRODUCTION

In the early moments of the play, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely, two religious officials, use their power to influence King Henry to go to war so the church doesn't lose any of its wealth. In this scene, we see the influence of the church on the state.

## INSTRUCTIONS

**Part One - In the Play:** Discuss as a class or in groups with the following prompts.

- How is the relationship between church and state represented in this play?
- How are the religious officials represented versus the royals?
- Go back to the text to find specific quotes that exemplify the relationship between the religious officials and the royals. What do you think the play might be saying about the relationship between church and state?

**Part Two - In the Film:** If you watched the film, discuss the following prompts as a class or in groups.

- What does the movement, stage position or costuming reveal about these characters and their position in society?
- What do you think the Guthrie's production might be saying about the relationship between church and state in Henry's world? Is it different from what you thought the play was saying?

## Part Three - Organize and Visualize

Once students have collected observations about the church and the state, have them create a Venn diagram, labeling one side "Church" and the other side "State." Have the students populate the two sides of the diagram. If there is any overlap, they should place those observations in the center of the diagram.