



**Reading Purpose:** To understand the main ideas in an historical letter.

**A question I have about the text:**

What does Jefferson mean by the phrase "wall of separation between Church and State?"

**SEARCHING FOR DETAILS**

I read the text closely and mark words and phrases that help me answer my question.

**SELECTING DETAILS**

I select words or phrases from my search that I think are the most important for answering my question.

**Detail 1 (Ref.: lines 10-11 )**

"religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship"

**Detail 2 (Ref.: lines 11-12 )**

"the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions"

**Detail 3 (Ref.: lines 13-15 )**

"that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church & State."

**ANALYZING DETAILS**

I re-read parts of the text and think about the meaning of the details and what they tell me about my question.

**What I think about detail 1:**

Religion is one's personal belief and nobody else's business.

**What I think about detail 2:**

Government should only have power over people's actions, not their beliefs.

**What I think about detail 3:**

Americans do not want laws that support or prohibit religion.

**CONNECTING DETAILS**

I compare the details and explain the connections I see among them.

**How I connect the details:**

Jefferson says that Americans have a "wall" separating Church and State because the State (or government) cannot make laws supporting or prohibiting religious beliefs because it only has power over people's actions, not their beliefs.