

Religious Studies Project: Sikhism

This week we will be looking at religious studies for our project. We will be learning about the Sikhism religion and considering any similarities to your own beliefs or religion.

Knowledge Building Activity 1: Guru Nanak

Watch: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00w5lnd>

Who Founded Sikhism and Where?

Sikhism was founded by **Guru Nanak** in the 15th Century in India.



Hinduism
2000BC



Judaism
1500-1350 BC



Buddhism
563-483 BC



Christianity
AD 1 - 33



Islam
AD 570 - 632



Sikhism
AD 1469 - 1538

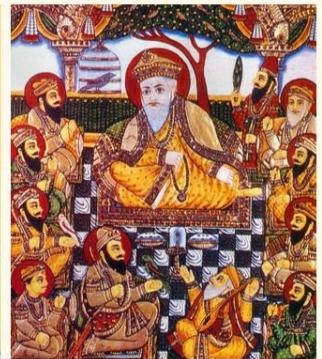
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The First Guru

Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak was the first Sikh Guru. He came from a small town called Talwandi, in India, about 40 miles from Lahore (now in Pakistan), 500 years ago.

Sikh traditions teach that his birth and early years were marked with many events that showed he was special.



The First Guru

Childhood

Guru Nanak was born into a merchant Hindu family from the Vedic Kshatriya caste.

He grew up in a village where both Hindus and Muslims lived.

He was sent to a village school to learn the Sanskrit language (an older language than the current ones spoken in India), maths and study the Vedas (sacred Hindu texts).

He then attended a local Madrassa (Arabic word for an educational institution) where he learnt Persian and Arabic, as well as reading Islamic literature of the time.

Even at an early age, he was inquisitive about the meaning of life and what God meant to him.



The First Guru

Growing Up



As Nanak grew and became a man, he thought about God all the time. People thought he was a dreamer who was not interested in working. One day, his father gave him 20 Rupees and told him to go to the city, buy something and then re-sell it to make a profit. When he arrived in the city he saw some monks who looked pale and ill. They told Nanak they had not eaten for three days. Nanak bought food for the monks and took it back to them.

When his Father found out he was very angry, but Nanak told him that feeding the hungry was a better way to spend the money. Nanak's sister could see how angry her father was and asked if Nanak could live with her and her husband instead. Nanak's father agreed.

The First Guru

Nanak the Shopkeeper

Nanak's first job was as a shopkeeper at Sultanpur. He would often explain his ideas about how to love and follow God to people who gathered in the village. Some began to call him a 'Guru', which means 'teacher'.



The First Guru

Nanak Disappears

One morning, when Nanak was 28 years old, he got up before dawn and went to the river to bathe and say his prayers; but he disappeared and all that was left were his clothes. The villagers searched everywhere for him, but could not find him and thought he had died.



The First Guru

God's Message

Three days later, Nanak suddenly appeared and remained silent for a whole day. When he spoke, he said that he had been with God and had been told to tell the people how they could also become closer to God. He said that all people were equal in God's eyes, "There is only God's path and I shall follow God's path."

There is only
God's path and
I shall follow
God's path.



The First Guru

Guru Nanak the Teacher



From that point onwards, Nanak's life changed. He treated Hindus and Muslims the same but didn't belong to or follow either religion.

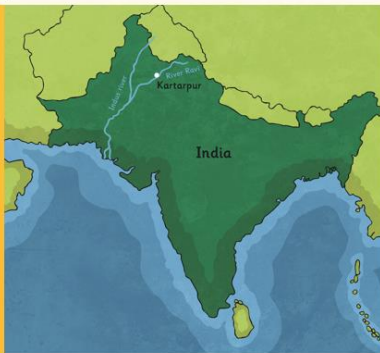
He travelled around different parts of India, learning about and teaching God's message.

The people who listened to him were known as 'Sikhs', a word which means 'learner'. Nanak became known as Guru Nanak, God's teacher.

The First Guru

Kartarpur and the River Ravi

Guru Nanak spent twenty years making four long journeys and sharing his messages. He finally settled in the village of Kartarpur, on the banks of the River Ravi (pictured below), where people would gather and pray together. In the evening, everyone would cook and eat together, no matter if they were rich or poor.



The First Guru

A New Guru



One day, near the end of his life, Guru Nanak called a disciple to him, whose name was Lahna. He placed five coins and a coconut in front of him. These were a symbol of respect. Guru Nanak said, "From today, you are the Guru of the Sikhs and I name you Angad (meaning part of my body)." The people were amazed and all the followers were told to follow him now.

The First Guru







Guru Nanak's Death



Days later, Guru Nanak died and his body was covered with a sheet. After his death, the Hindu and Muslim people argued about who should arrange the funeral service. The Hindus wanted him cremated, but the Muslims wanted him buried. A wise man appeared and told them to look under the sheet. They did as he said and discovered there was no body, just a few flowers. They realised that Nanak himself was telling them not to argue. The flowers and the sheet were split into two halves, so the Hindus cremated their half whilst the Muslims buried theirs.



Activity:

Match the pictures and sentences - there is more than one sentence that matches with each picture. Stick the pictures and sentence in the correct order.

	
<p>After many journeys outside India, Guru Nanak settled in Kartarpur on the banks of the River Ravi.</p>	<p>Everyone feared he had died while bathing in the river.</p>
<p>He lived in a village with his father.</p>	<p>Nanak's first job was as a shopkeeper at Sultanpur.</p>
<p>Guru Nanak travelled to different parts of India to teach about God's message.</p>	<p>They realised it was Guru Nanak's way of ensuring they would not argue.</p>
<p>When Nanak was 28 years old, he disappeared for three days.</p>	<p>Hindus and Muslims he had known argued about his funeral. They looked under the sheet and found flowers instead of the body.</p>
<p>He was curious about God at a young age.</p>	<p>He had angered his father by buying food for a group of monks instead of buying and reselling something for a profit.</p>
<p>When he died, Guru Nanak's body was covered with a sheet.</p>	<p>Nanak reappeared saying he had been with God.</p>
<p>Nanak went to live with his sister.</p>	<p>Nanak was born a Hindu.</p>
<p>Nanak said he would be following God's path from now on.</p>	<p>People who listened to him were known as 'Sikhs' (learners).</p>

Knowledge Building Activity 2: Sikhism Beliefs

Watch: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-ten-gurus/zvkvrj6>

Concept of God in Sikhism

Sikhs believe that:

- There is **only one God**.
- God **can not** be described as either male or female.
- God is both **sargun** (everywhere and in everything) and **nirgun** (above and beyond creation).
- God created the world and created people to know the difference between **right and wrong**.
- Sikhs **do not have images of God** and are forbidden to worship any images created of God.

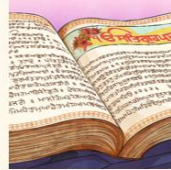


God is referred to by many names including:

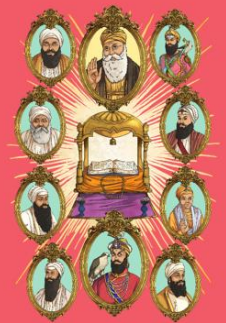
- **Waheguru** (Wonderful teacher)
- **Sath Nam** (Eternal Reality)
- **Akal Purakh** (Eternal One)

The Ten Gurus

In Sikhism, there are ten Gurus (spiritual teachers). Sikhs believe that these Gurus were at one with God. They were the link between God and humans. The Gurus were chosen to deliver God's messages. All Gurus lived their lives as an example to all Sikhs.

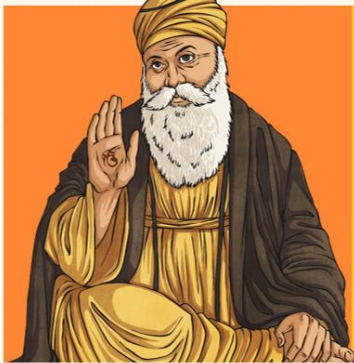


The ten Gurus were in human form but the eleventh and final Guru is considered to be the holy book - the Guru Granth Sahib (which contains the messages of all the Gurus).



The Ten Gurus

Guru Nanak



He taught that there was **only one God**.

He argued against social injustice and the caste system.

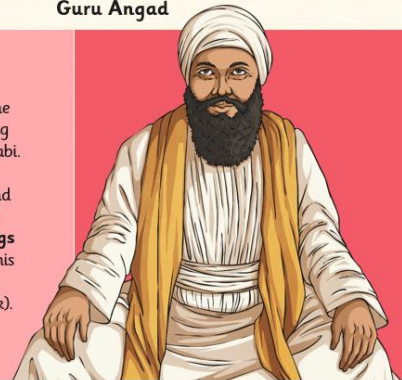
He introduced the system of distributing food to all and communal dining.

The Ten Gurus

Guru Angad

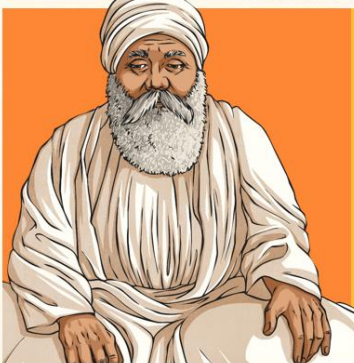
He promoted **education** and the teaching of reading and writing in Punjabi.

He wrote down and **compiled Guru Nanak's teachings** as well as adding his own, in the **Adi Granth** (holy book).



The Ten Gurus

Guru Amar Das



He extended the free communal kitchen called the **langar**, where all were given food and ate together regardless of who they were.

Food was served all day and all night.

He argued for the idea of **women's equality** at a time when women did not have many rights in India.

The Ten Gurus

Guru Ram Das

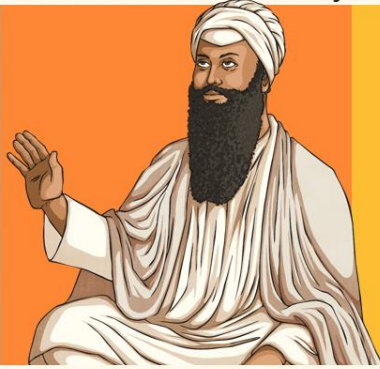
He created the standard Sikh marriage ceremony known as **Anand Karaj**.

He stressed the importance of kirtan (hymn singing) as part of worship.



The Ten Gurus

Guru Arjan



He built the **Golden Temple (Harmandir Sahib)**. This is considered the holiest of Sikh temples in the world.

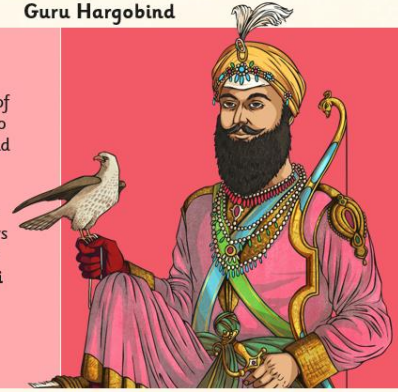
He wrote the prayer for peace called the **Sukhmani Sahib Bani**.

The Ten Gurus

Guru Hargobind

He introduced the use of **Sikh martial arts** so that Sikhs could defend themselves.

Sikhs celebrate his - and 52 other prisoners - release from prison during Diwali (**Bandi Chhor Divas**).



The Ten Gurus

Guru Har Rai



He **taught** and gave **lectures on Sikhism** and the number of Sikhs grew during his time as the Guru.

He **refused to change** the words of Guru Nanak in the **Adi Granth** as requested by the Emperor of India at the time.

The Ten Gurus

Guru Harkrishan

He was the **youngest Guru** (aged 5 when he took over from Guru Har Rai).

He helped to **heal people with smallpox** but caught the disease and died from it at the age of 8.



The Ten Gurus

Guru Tegh Bahadur



He believed in and protected the '**right to freedom of religion**' for all - not just Sikhs.

He emphasised the importance of **honest work** and **charity**.

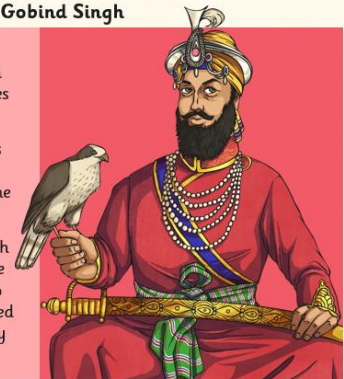
The Ten Gurus

Guru Gobind Singh

He created the **Khalsa**, which consisted of Sikhs who had been baptised and dedicated themselves to Sikhism.

He instructed that all Sikh males should use the last name **Singh** (lion) and all females the last name **Kaur** (princess).

He finalised the **Adi Granth** (which contained the teachings of all the Gurus), and changed its name to the **Guru Granth Sahib**. He declared that it would be the last and only Guru after him.



Duties of a Sikh

The three duties that a Sikh must carry out: **Pray, Work, Give**.

Nam Japna

Keeping God in mind at all times.



Kirt Karna

Earning an honest living. Sikhs avoid crime, gambling and begging.

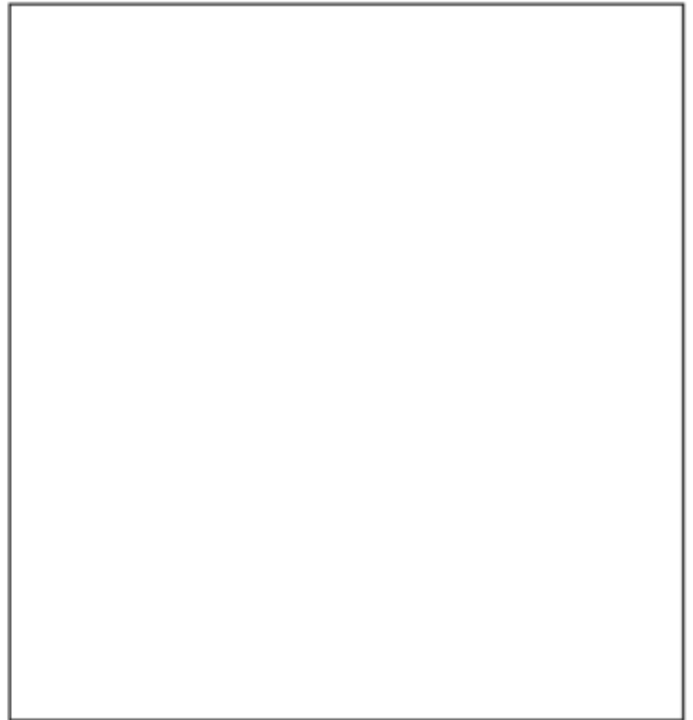
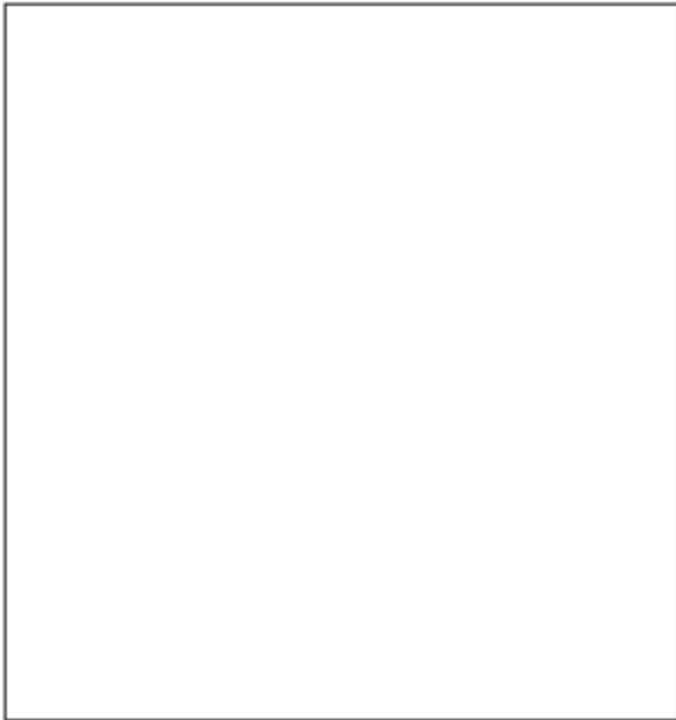
Vand Chhakna

Giving to charity and caring for others.

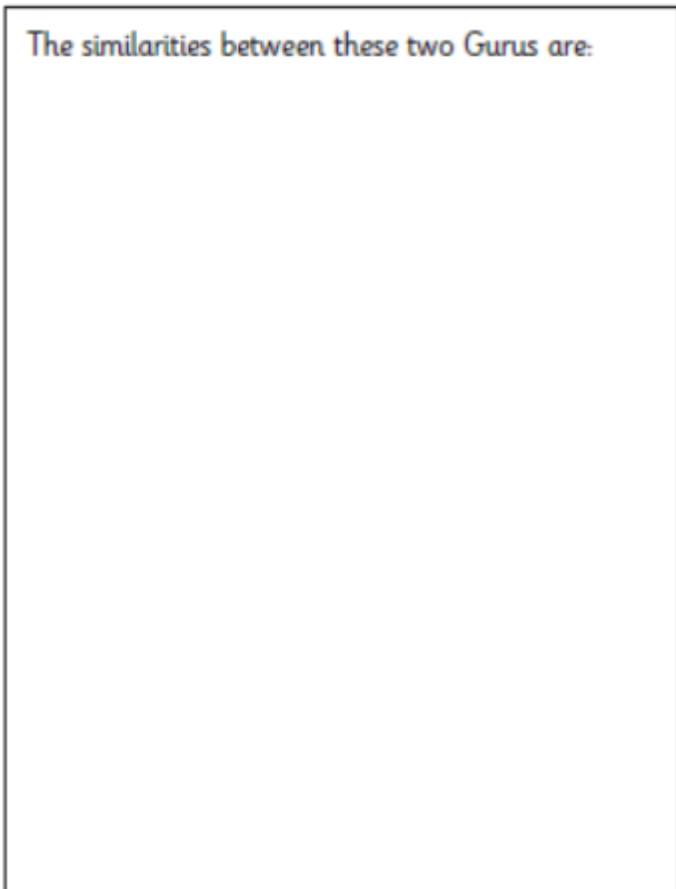


Activity:

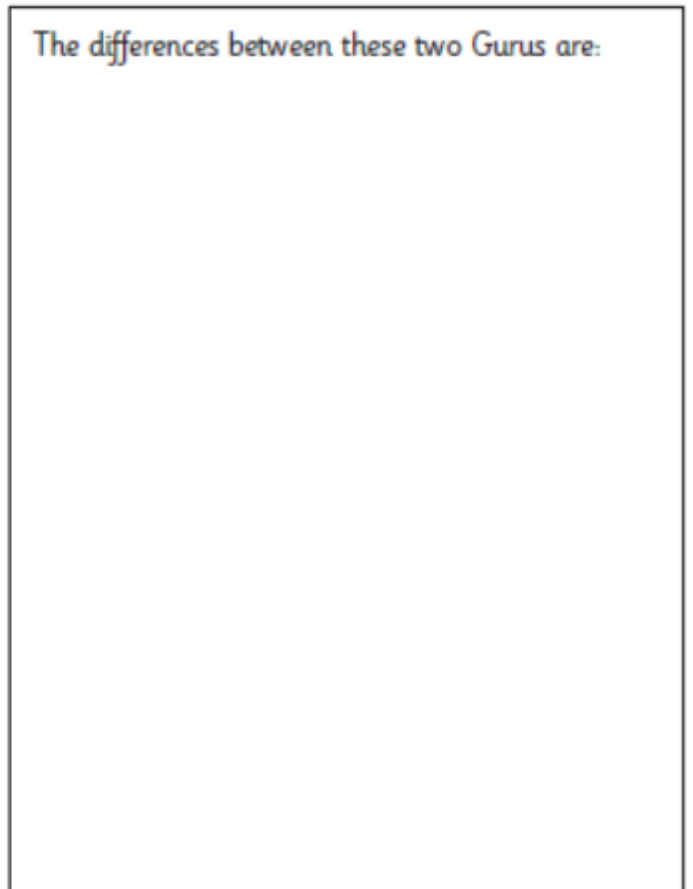
Choose 2 Sikh Gurus to compare. Draw or stick a picture of one in each box below. Be sure to label the pictures with the names of the Guru.



The similarities between these two Gurus are:









The differences between these two Gurus are:



Knowledge Building Activity 3: Special Places

Places of Worship

Match the places of worship with the religion:

Christianity	Judaism	Sikhism	Hinduism	Buddhism	Islam
					
					

pagoda

mosque

mandir

synagogue

church

Gurdwara

Sikhism and Worship

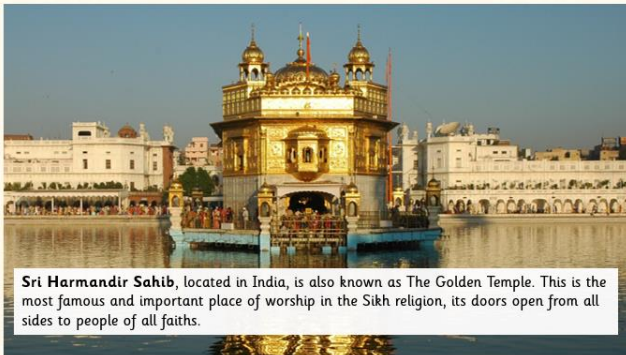
Sikhs worship both in public, at the Gurdwara, and in private, at home. The word Gurdwara means door or gateway to the Guru.

At home, Sikhs have pictures of the Gurus that they would pray to and burn incense sticks while doing so.



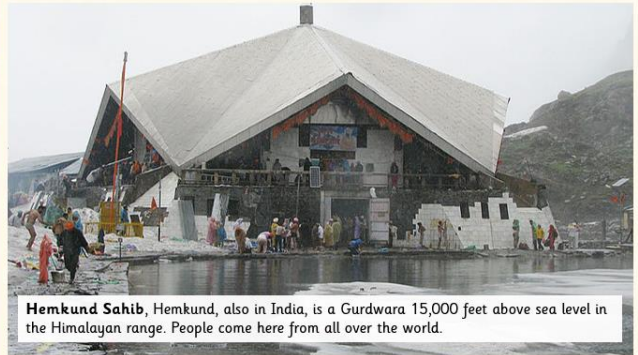
There are many things related to a Gurdwara that end with the word 'sahib' – e.g. Nishan Sahib, Manji Sahib. The word 'sahib' is an Arabic word which means 'master'. It is used to signify respect.

Gurdwara: Gurdwaras Around the World



Sri Harmandir Sahib, located in India, is also known as The Golden Temple. This is the most famous and important place of worship in the Sikh religion, its doors open from all sides to people of all faiths.

Gurdwara: Gurdwaras Around the World



Hemkund Sahib, Hemkund, also in India, is a Gurdwara 15,000 feet above sea level in the Himalayan range. People come here from all over the world.

Gurdwara: Gurdwaras Around the World



Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha is thought to be the biggest in London.

Gurdwara: Outside



Nishan Sahib

Gurdwaras fly this flag outside to show that it is a special place of worship. The flag contains the Sikh symbol called the 'Khanda'.



The Four Doors

There are four doors into the Gurdwara to show that people from the north, east, south and west are welcome.

Gurdwara: Inside

Entrance: When you enter a Gurdwara you are expected to do three things before you go to the main prayer hall to worship.



Shoe Rack

Shoes are removed and placed on a shoe rack.



Head Covering

Hair must be covered as a sign of respect.



Hand Washing

Visitors should wash their hands after touching their shoes and before entering the main prayer hall.

Gurdwara: Inside

Darbar Sahib (Main Hall)

This is where people sit and worship. The hall is split into two with men and women sitting on separate sides, all facing the Guru Granth Sahib (the holy book). Children are not expected to observe this rule and can sit with either of their parents.

Everyone sits cross-legged on the floor. They must not have their feet facing the holy book, as that is seen as disrespectful. You must also not sit with your back to the holy book.



Gurdwara: Inside

Takht: The place where the Guru Granth Sahib is kept during the day is called the Takht (which means throne). It consists of three parts:

Chanani

This is the canopy which is made of highly decorative cloth. It covers the holy book.

Palki Sahib

This is the four-postered structure that houses the **Manji Sahib**. It is usually made of wood.



Manji Sahib

The word manji means bed in Punjabi. The Manji Sahib is a raised platform covered with cloth, on which the holy book is placed during the day.

Golak

This is the donations box placed in front of the Takht but is not part of it. Worshippers donate what they can and this is used to pay for the 'langar'.

Gurdwara: Inside

Guru Granth Sahib

This is the Sikh holy book. It is treated like a person. During the day it is placed on the Manji Sahib. In the evening, any Sikhs present at the Gurdwara form a procession to carry the holy book to a special 'bedroom' where it is kept on, sometimes, a real bed or a raised platform.



Chaur

A fan which is waved over the Guru Granth Sahib as a sign of respect. It is made from yak's hair.



Rumala

A special cloth that is placed on the Guru Granth Sahib when it is not being read.

These are usually made of silk and embroidered. They are sometimes given as a gift to the Gurdwara.

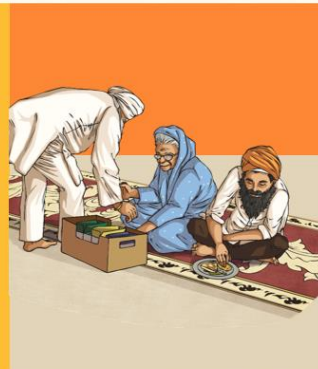
Gurdwara: Inside

Langar

This is a free kitchen where food is served without charge during the whole day and evening until the temple is closed for the night. The food is paid for by donations to the Gurdwara. Usually it is Sikhs who make use of this service but it is for everyone.

Everyone is expected to eat together. People usually sit on a carpeted floor or stand at a table, although there are chairs for those who can't manage this because, for example, they are elderly.

Eating together is another way of demonstrating that all people are considered equal.



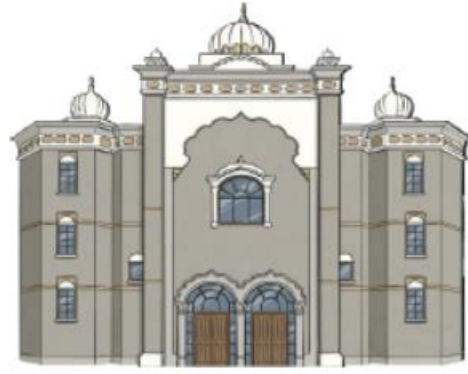
Watch: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/the-gurdwara/z4qc8xs>

Activity:

Cut and match the labelled pictures with their corresponding fact.



Nishan Sahib



Four Doors



Shoe Rack



Head Covering



Manji Sahib

Manji Sahib



Golak

Golak



Chaur



Palki Sahib



Langar



Darbar Sahib



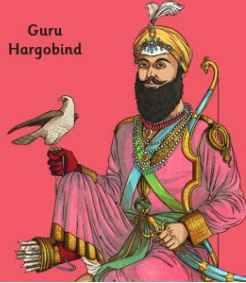
Chanani

This is a raised platform.	It has the Sikh symbol called the 'Khanda' on it.
This is a free communal kitchen.	It contains the Manji Sahib.
Wearing shoes in the prayer hall is considered disrespectful.	The canopy is made of decorated cloth.
This is a fan waved over the holy book.	Hair must be covered before entering the Darbar Sahib (prayer hall).
You cannot have your feet facing the holy book or turn your back to it while in this room.	It has four posters.
This is where the Guru Granth Sahib is placed during the day.	There are four to represent north, east, south and west.
These show that all people are welcome.	It is where worshippers donate money to the temple.
Shoes are placed here.	This is a flag that shows the Gurdwara is a place of worship.
It is made from yak's hair.	Everyone is expected to sit together and eat to show they are all equal.
It covers the Guru Granth Sahib from above.	This is placed at the front of the Manji Sahib.
It is normal to cover one's head with a scarf, turban, patka or bandana.	This hall contains the Takht where the Guru Granth Sahib is placed during the day.

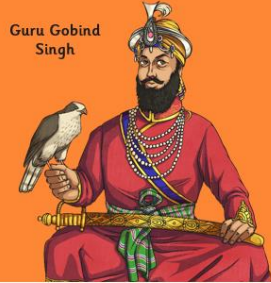
Knowledge Building Activity 4: Special Festivals

Sikh Festivals

Bandi Chhor Divas
(Sikh Diwali)



Vaisakhi
(also written as Baisakhi)



Bandi Chhor Divas (Sikh Diwali)

Sikhs, like Hindus, celebrate the festival of Diwali in October or November.



However, they do so for a different reason.



Sikhs celebrate the story of **Guru Hargobind's** (the sixth Guru) release from prison in **Gwalior** in AD 1619. **Bandi Chhor Divas** means 'prisoner release day' in Punjabi.

Bandi Chhor Divas (Sikh Diwali)

During the time of the sixth Guru, Sikhism was becoming a fast growing religion.



This worried some people and they told Emperor Jahangir that Guru Hargobind was plotting against him.

Bandi Chhor Divas (Sikh Diwali)

Emperor Jahangir had Guru Hargobind imprisoned in the Gwalior Fort.

When Guru Hargobind reached the fort, he wasn't alone. He found Emperor Jahangir had also imprisoned 52 Rajas (kings/princes) there. They were also being kept in the fort as the Emperor feared they would act against him.



Guru Hargobind found that the 52 Rajas weren't being very well looked after. He helped the prisoners and gave them hope. He spoke to the governor of the fort and improved the living conditions of the prisoners.

Bandi Chhor Divas (Sikh Diwali)

A great friend of Guru Hargobind, a Sufi Muslim named Mian Mir, went to the Emperor. He convinced him that the Guru should be released and that rumours of his plotting were untrue.

Eventually, Emperor Jahangir ordered Guru Hargobind's release. However, when told of the news by Mir, the sixth Guru refused to leave, unless the other 52 prisoners would also be freed.



Bandi Chhor Divas (Sikh Diwali)

Mir took this request back to the Emperor. Thinking he was being clever, Emperor Jahangir decided to release each prisoner who could hold on to the Guru's clothes, figuring that it would only be a handful of prisoners who would be able to do so.

Guru Hargobind had a special cloak made. It had 52 long, tasselled strips attached.



Each prisoner held a strip and so, all 52 Rajas walked free from the prison!

Bandi Chhor Divas (Sikh Diwali)

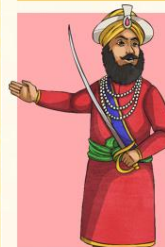
On the day Guru Hargobind safely returned to the city of Amritsar, Hindus were celebrating Diwali. When he arrived in the city, Sikhs lit candles and lamps to celebrate his safe return.

Bandi Chhor Divas and Diwali are two separate festivals and are actually a few days apart, although today they often are celebrated at the same time or on the same day.



Vaisakhi

Vaisakhi is the Sikh New Year and is celebrated on the 13th or 14th of April. It was originally a Spring Harvest Festival, whose celebration was first introduced by Guru Amar Das.



It now marks a significant historical event for Sikhs, as it is the date of the founding of the Sikh community – the 'Khalsa'.



Watch: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zs6sb9q>

The story of Vaisakhi

Sikhs had been persecuted (harassed/mistreated) by their Mughal rulers during the reign of the ninth Guru - Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Guru Tegh Bahadur asked for the persecution to stop but was instead imprisoned and killed.

During the Spring Harvest Festival of Vaisakhi, crowds gathered to listen to the new Guru - Guru Gobind Singh.

The Guru emerged from the tent with his sword aloft and asked who would be prepared to die for their beliefs.

People in the crowd couldn't quite believe what they had heard and, as they were frightened, no one volunteered.

The Guru asked again 3 times but those gathered were too afraid.

Eventually, one man volunteered and entered the tent with the Guru

The Guru emerged with a bloodied sword and asked who else would volunteer to die for their beliefs.

A second man plucked up the courage to go to the Guru. Again they entered the tent together and the Guru exited shortly after by himself and with blood on his sword.

The Guru repeated this another three times with three more volunteers.

The crowd had grown steadily more scared each time the Guru emerged and were on the verge of running away.

The Guru then emerged with all 5 men. They were alive! They were dressed in the same way. The Guru announced that these 5 men would be known as the Panj Pyare (pronounced p-a-n-j p-i-y-ar-i) and that their bravery should be an example to all Sikhs.

Guru Gobind Singh then took an iron bowl, in which he poured water and mixed sugar crystals with his sword. This mixture was considered holy and called 'Amrit'.

He sprinkled the Amrit on the head and eyes of the Panj Pyare, as a form of baptism, for them to enter the 'Khalsa', a new community of Sikhs who would be willing to defend their faith and others who were vulnerable.



He gave the bowl to the Panj Pyare to drink Amrit from.

They shared the same bowl as a sign that they were all equal in Sikhism.

One of the Panj Pyare then baptised Guru Gobind Singh into the Khalsa. This was again to highlight that all Sikhs were equal.

The Guru asked the Sikhs present to undertake the Amrit ceremony and join the Khalsa. In doing so, they would follow the rules (including the 5 Ks of Sikhism) and also change their existing surnames to Singh (lion) if they were male and Kaur (princess) if they were female.

Activity:
Complete the following table comparing Sikh Festivals:

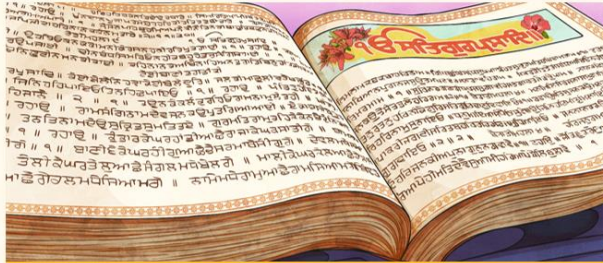
	Bandi Chhor Divas	Vaisakhi
		
Which Guru features in the story?		
What is the problem in the story?		
What does the Guru do to solve the problem?		

Which story did you prefer and why?

Knowledge Building Activity 5: Holy Book

Guru Granth Sahib

The Guru Granth Sahib is the Sikh holy book.



Some of the holy book is composed to ragas, which are melodies from classical Indian music. It contains 5,867 shabads (sacred hymns)

Guru Granth Sahib

It contains the teachings of six of the ten Gurus. The shabads written by the Gurus are known as Gurbani (word of the Gurus) or Bani.

Guru	Shabads (Hymns)
Guru Nanak	974
Guru Angad	63
Guru Amar Das	907
Guru Ram Das	679
Guru Arjan	2218
Guru Tegh Bahadar	116
Guru Gobind Singh	1

Guru Granth Sahib

It is also unique because it was **compiled by the Gurus themselves** rather than the followers of the religion.



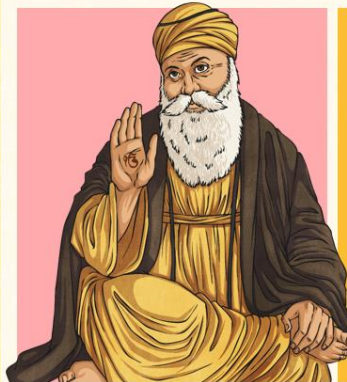
It was the fifth Guru, **Guru Arjan**, who collected and compiled the first version called the **Adi Granth**.

The tenth Guru, **Guru Gobind Singh**, finalised the Adi Granth.

He declared that it was now a Guru and renamed it the **Guru Granth Sahib**.



Guru Granth Sahib: Guru Nanak



The introduction of the Guru Granth Sahib contains sections written by Guru Nanak.

These include:

Mool Mantar

The Mool Mantar contains all the important Sikh beliefs. It is the first part of the Bani Japji Sahib.

Japji Sahib

The Japji Sahib expands on the Mool Mantar and is itself considered to be the essence of the whole Guru Granth Sahib.

Guru Granth Sahib: Mool Mantar

The Mool Mantar is the first part of the Guru Granth Sahib that a Sikh learns. It is said each day by devout Sikhs.

	Meaning in English
Ik Onkar	There is only one God
Sat Nam	Eternal truth is God's name
Karta Purakh	God is the creator
Nir Bhau	God is without fear
Nir Vair	God is without hate
Akal Murat	Beyond time and the cycle of birth and death
Ajuni	God is formless and everywhere
Saibhang	God is the enlightener
Gur Prasaad	God can be reached through the mercy and grace of the true Guru

Guru Granth Sahib

Practising Sikhs would usually read the following parts of the Guru Granth Sahib each day:

Morning Nitnem (<i>n-i-th-n-ee-m - means prayer</i>)	Contains hymns by:
Japji Sahib (<i>j-ap-ji s-a-h-i-b</i>)	Guru Nanak
Jaap Sahib (<i>j-ap-p s-a-h-i-b</i>)	Guru Gobind Singh
Tav Prasad Swaie (<i>th-av pr-ah-s-ah-d s-w-ai-i</i>)	Guru Gobind Singh
Beynti Chaopai (<i>b-ee-n-th-ee ch-or-p-ai</i>)	Guru Gobind Singh
Anand Sahib (<i>a-n-a-n-d s-a-h-i-b</i>)	Guru Amar Das
Evening Nitnem	
Rehira (<i>r-e-r-ah-s</i>)	Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan
Night time Nitnem	
Kirtan Sohila (<i>k-i-r-th-en s-o-h-i-l-a</i>)	Guru Nanak, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan

Guru Granth Sahib

Sukhmani Sahib (s-u-k-m-a-n-ee s-a-h-i-b)

The Sukhmani Sahib is known as the prayer for peace. It is a set of 24 hymns written by Guru Arjan. It can be said at any time during the day or evening. It includes the following lines:



- One Universal Creator God.
- Worry and anguish shall be dispelled from your body.
- Remembering God, one is not touched by fear.
- Remembering God, one does not suffer sorrow.
- In the remembrance of God, there is no fear of death.
- In the remembrance of God, hopes are fulfilled.
- Those who remember God dwell in peace.
- Those who remember God generously help others.
- He has no form, no shape, no colour; God is beyond the three qualities.
- The True Name of God is the Giver of peace.
- True in the beginning, True throughout the ages.
- God created the creation, with its many ways and various species.

Watch : <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/the-guru-granth-sahib-the-sikh-holy-book/zms2+39>

Activity:

Match the sentences from the prayers that have the same meaning.

Read through sentences from both prayers carefully and then cut out and match the sentences that have the same meaning.

To help you, once you have cut the sentences, there are the initials of the prayers after each sentence.

MM – Mool Mantar SS – Sukhmani Sahib

Mool Mantar	Sukhmani Sahib
God is the creator. (MM)	Remembering God, one is not touched by fear. (SS)
There is only one God. (MM)	True in the beginning, True throughout the ages. (SS)
Beyond time and the cycle of birth and death. (MM)	He has no form, no shape, no colour; God is beyond the three qualities. (SS)
God is without hate. (MM)	One Universal Creator God. (SS)
God is formless and everywhere. (MM)	God created the creation, with its many ways and various species. (SS)
God is without fear. (MM)	Those who remember God dwell in peace. (SS)

Knowledge Building Activity 6: Symbols and Meanings

Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: Ik Onkar



Ik means one. **Onkar** means supreme reality or being.

Translated into English it is equivalent to: **There is only one God.**

It is the first line of the Mool Mantar Prayer.

Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: Khanda

This is the main symbol of Sikhism.

The two curved swords are **Kirpans** and represent the concepts of:

Miri – Temporal Authority – power humans exercise on Earth.

Piri – Spiritual Authority – power God exercises which is eternal.

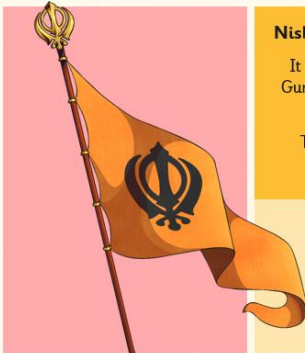
The ideas of Meeri and Peeri were introduced by **Guru Hargobind**.



The circle around the Khanda is the **Chakar**. The **Chakar** is without beginning or end and symbolises that **God is eternal**.

The double edged sword (also called Khanda) in the middle represents **divine knowledge**.

Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: Nishan Sahib



Nishan means sign. **Sahib** means master.

It is a flag which is placed outside every Gurdwara. It is triangular, saffron coloured and includes the Khanda.

The use of the Nishan Sahib was first introduced by **Guru Hargobind**.



Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: The 5 Ks

Guru Gobind Singh founded the **Khalsa**.

All men and women who belong to the Khalsa must wear five symbols which shows they are Sikh.

They are called the five Ks because in Punjabi their names all begin with the letter 'K'.

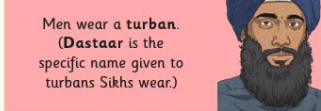


Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: The 5 Ks - Kesh

Kesh means hair. Sikhs make a promise to not cut their hair but let it grow as a symbol of their faith. They believe this demonstrates their obedience to God. Sikhs' hair gets very long during their life and they have to keep it tidy.



Young boys wear a **patka**.



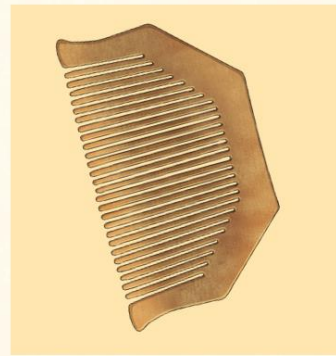
Men wear a **turban**. (**Dastaar** is the specific name given to turbans Sikhs wear.)



Traditionally, girls and women have their hair tied back or in a bun and cover it with a scarf called a **chunni**.

However, some Sikh women choose to wear a **turban**.

Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: Kangha



The Kangha is a small wooden comb.

Sikhs use this to keep their hair in place and it is a symbol of cleanliness.

Combing their hair reminds Sikhs that their lives should be tidy and organised.

Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: Kara

The Kara is a steel bangle worn on the arm of Sikhs.

It is a continuous circle with no beginning and no end.

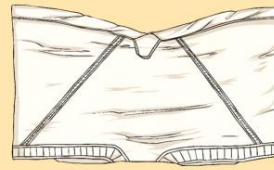
It reminds Sikhs to behave well, follow their faith and restrain from doing wrong.



Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: Kachera

The Kachera are short trousers worn as underwear. These are more practical than the long loose clothes most people in India wore at the time of Guru Gobind Singh.

They are a symbol of leaving old ideas behind and following new better ones.



Sikh Symbols and Their Meanings: Kirpan

The Kirpan is a warrior sword. These days, a very tiny one is worn as a symbol of dignity and self respect.

It reminds Sikhs that they must fight a spiritual battle, defending what is right and upholding the truth.



Activity:

Match the symbols with their names



Kara		Kachera	
Nishan Sahib		Kangha	
Khanda		Kesh	
Kirpan		Ik Onkar	

Project Task:

This week your project is to look at the Sikhism religion and consider the similarities and differences to your own religion or your own beliefs.

You will need to create a poster displaying a Venn diagram illustrating the similarities and differences you find.

Venn Diagram

