

Sikhism

About the topic

In this topic pupils will learn about their Sikh sisters and brothers, how they live as a family and how they worship

Where this topic fits in

This topic will be taught discretely but will follow two of the *CHURCH* topics: domestic ↔ family, and either local ↔ community or universal ↔ world

Key words

Khalsa, amrit, kangha, kirpan, kara, kach, kesh, Balsakh, Nisham Sahib, Khalsa, Amritsar, Golden Temple, Mool Mantra, Waheguru, Sadh Sangat, Divali, guru, Harogobind

Learning outcomes

	Look	Learn	Understand & Respect
One	Welcome and sharing are important	Sikhs make people welcome. They worship in a Gurdwara	Sikhs welcome everyone
Two	(a) Special place of worship	Inside the Gurdwara	Worship in the Gurdwara
Two	(b) Important things we believe	Parents bring up their children in the Sikh faith. Three dimensions: 1 remember God 2 earn your living 3 share with the poor	Aspects of the Sikh faith
Three	(a) Faith changes your life	The story of Guru Nanak, his call; journeys; teaching stories; keeping God in mind constantly; prayer that changes daily living and outlook	Implications of God's call for Sikhs
Three	(b) Commitment in life	Integrating God's own attributes into one's life; earn your living, a moral duty and duty to God; service in bringing up a family; sharing – even giving up one's own needs; practical and spiritual commitment	Implications of faith commitment for Sikhs
Four	(a) Some symbols and their meanings	The Khalsa and the 5Ks; story of the founding of Kalsa. Meaning of the symbols; New Year	Outward signs demonstrate inward belief and commitment
Four	(b) Special places	The Gurdwara – designed to symbolise the oneness/wholeness of God. Amritsar – golden temple. Community at worship and individual prayer	Special places of worship for Sikhs

Key words: Khalsa, Amrit

<i>Learning intentions</i>	<i>Possible teaching activities</i>
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Look

Some symbols and their meaning

Learn

The Khalsa and the 5Ks; story of the founding of Khalsa. Meaning of the symbols. Basiakhi – New Year

How do you pick out a traffic warden in the street? ...a policeman ...bus conductor, etc.

There is an exciting story about the beginning of the Khalsa.

At the time when Sikhs were being persecuted by the Mogul emperors, Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last guru, founded the group called the Khalsa, which means ‘good and pure human beings’. It also signified a strong sense of belonging to the community. The group would be brave and strong, ready to defend the Sikh faith. This is how Gobind Singh chose them.

When a crowd had gathered to listen to the teaching of the guru, Gobind Singh said, “Is there anyone here who will offer his head as sacrifice for our religion?” People looked at his shining curved sword and were afraid. One young man came forward. “Guru,” he said, “take my head. I will give up my life for you.” The guru led the young man into his tent where some goats had been tied up. When Gobind Singh came out, his sword was dripping with blood. He said to the crowd, “My sword needs another head. Who else will offer this sacrifice?” Another Sikh volunteered. From the tent came a thump, and again the guru came out with a blood-stained sword. Three more brave Sikhs went into the tent in turn. After the last time, the guru came out with the 5 men. Now they were dressed in saffron coloured uniforms like his, and they too carried swords.

Gobind Singh asked for a steel bowl filled with water. His wife put some sugar into it, and the guru stirred it with a double-edged sword. The five first members of the Khalsa all drank from the same bowl (this is called amrit).

This showed they were all equal. From now on, they would wear the five K’s. They promised never to harm the weak, to try to think of God day and night, and treat all human beings as belonging to one family.

Women too can belong to the Khalsa, and even wear the 5 K’s. The 5 K’s – Sikhs know that when Guru Gobind Singh first founded the Khalsa, he gave them some rules. He also gave them 5 signs which would show they belonged. Sikhs still wear these things:

- 1 Uncut hair – (Kesh) (this is usually covered with a turban)
 - 2 A sword with curved blade (Kirpan)
 - 3 A comb – (Kangha)
 - 4 A steel bangle on the right wrist (Kara)
 - 5 Shorts – worn underneath everything (Kach)
- These are called the 5 K’s.

- What do you think happened in the tent?
- What do you think of the brave Sikhs?
- Act the story in groups

Understand & Respect

Outward signs demonstrate inward belief and commitment

Know and appreciate the place of the Khalsa in Sikhism

Key words: Kangha, Kirpan, Kara, Kach, Kesh

<i>Learning intentions</i>	<i>Possible teaching activities</i>
<p>Look Some symbols and their meaning</p>	<p>Recall the last lesson. The 5 K's. The story of the foundation of Khalsa. Draw your school badge and explain its meaning, or design your own coat of arms which has a symbol of you or your family in it.</p>
<p>Learn The Khalsa and the 5Ks; story of the founding of Khalsa. Meaning of the symbols. Basiakhi – New Year</p>	<p>In 5 groups research one of the symbols of the khalsa and its meaning – use the internet or an encyclopaedia – CD Rom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report your findings to the rest of the class • Make a display
<p>Understand & Respect Outward signs demonstrate inward belief and commitment</p>	<p>Know and appreciate the meaning of the symbols of the Khalsa.</p>

Key words: Baisakh, Nisham Sahib, Khalsa

<i>Learning intentions</i>	<i>Possible teaching activities</i>
<p>Look Some symbols and their meaning</p>	<p>When do we celebrate New Year’s Day? How do we celebrate New Year’s Day?</p>
<p>Learn The Khalsa and the 5Ks; story of the founding of Khalsa. Meaning of the symbols. Baisakhi – New Year</p>	<p>Sikhs celebrate New Year’s Day as Baisakhi, on April 13th or 14th. They are celebrating the foundation of the Khalsa and Guru Gobind Singh. Baisakhi celebrates the founding of the Khalsa, the special group of people who promise to pray 3 times a day, have love and confidence in God, wear special symbols and give a good example of being a Sikh. Baisakhi is a time of fun and celebration. It is an occasion when Sikhs rededicate themselves to the ideals of the Sikh faith. They renew the flag outside the Gurdwara, wash it the flag pole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a letter to a friend describing what happens at Basakhi and explain what it means to Sikhs. • Draw the Nisham Sahib (the flag) on a sheet of paper.
<p>Understand & Respect Outward signs demonstrate inward belief and commitment</p>	<p>Festivals are important to Sikhs; they help them to remember events in their faith.</p>

Key words: Amaistsar, golden temple, Kirpans

<i>Learning intentions</i>	<i>Possible teaching activities</i>
<p>Look Special place</p>	<p>Where is your special place? Why is it special?</p>
<p>Learn The Gurdwara – designed to symbolise the oneness/wholeness of God. Amritsar, golden temple</p>	<p>We remember the Gurdwara – where Sikhs worship God. They express togetherness and equality – (how?) Sharing a meal – langar. The Sikhs think of the Gurdwara as God’s royal court.</p> <p>The flag on a high pole outside the Gurdwara bears the symbol</p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The Khanda – Sword which is the sign of belief in the One, True God; it represents freedom and justice. 2 The Chakra – a circle with no beginning and no end. It symbolises belief on the One, Infinite God and also the need for Sikhs to remain in God’s rule. 3 The Kirpans: two curved swords symbolise God’s spiritual and worldly power. They remind Sikhs to serve God by teaching the truth and defending justice. <p>Sikh communities have their local Gurdwara, but one place in India is very special for them. This is the famous golden temple at Amritsar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out about it. • Draw the Sikh flag. • Research the story of Amritsar.
<p>Understand & Respect Sikhs have holy places which we respect</p>	<p>Understand that Sikhs have holy places; we respect each other.</p>

Key words: Mool Mantra, Waheguru, Sadh Sangat

<i>Learning intentions</i>	<i>Possible teaching activities</i>
<p>Look Special places</p>	<p>Recall the last lesson about the Gurdwara and the Amritsar – a place of worship, now consider an aspect of worship in the life of the Sikhs. As Christians, we learn some prayers – what prayers do you know? How did you learn them? Who taught them to you?</p>
<p>Learn The Gurdwara – designed to symbolise the oneness/wholeness of God. Amritsar, golden temple. Community at worship and individual prayer</p>	<p>Sikhs pray to Waheguru: God, Wonderful Lord. A young Sikh explained how he learnt some prayers: “I was very young when I started. When I was 4, I could say the Mool Mantra for morning or evening prayers. My mum taught me that. When I was nine I had managed to say the whole of the Anand Sahib by heart. They taught me this at the Gurdwara. Sometimes we have competitions for children who are learning pieces of the Granth. I really like being able to join in when everyone says the Anand Sahib. I feel like a real Sikh, part of the Sangat, the Community.” Mool Mantar describes the Sikh belief in God as the One, Truth, creator, without fear. Sikhs believe God is beyond anything we can understand, but is found everywhere and in everyone’s soul. Sikhs believe that the purpose of life is to become one with God, live by the teaching of the Gurus, respect the oneness of people, peace, justice, tolerance and service to others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children to make sure the class display contains all important items from their study of Sikhism. Practise explaining everything to visitors, e.g. from another class, who may not know anything about the Sikhs. • What do you like best about the Sikhs belief? What difference would it make to the world if their values were followed?
<p>Understand & Respect Special places of worship for Sikhs</p>	<p>What Sikhs believe about God</p>

Key words: Divali, Amritsar, Guru, Hargobind

<i>Learning intentions</i>	<i>Possible teaching activities</i>
<p>Look Special times</p>	<p>Recall the last lessons. How do you celebrate special occasions in your life, e.g. Christmas? How do you recognise it is being celebrated? Why do we celebrate it?</p>
<p>Learn The Gurdwara – designed to symbolise the oneness/wholeness of God. Amritsar, golden temple. Community at worship and individual prayer</p>	<p>On Divali day Sikhs celebrate the arrival in Amritsar of Guru Hargobind after he was released from prison. Every year there are firework displays and the whole of the Golden Temple area is lit up. Jit says: “At Divali we all take boxes of sweets and candles to the Gurdwara to share with our friends. There are candles everywhere both inside and outside the Gurdwara. It looks very beautiful. Everyone tries to bring the biggest candle. We send cards to each other with pictures of lamps. “The lights remind Sikhs that just as light conquers darkness, so the voice of the True Guru ends the darkness of ignorance.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a card to send to a Sikh friend at Divali (perhaps you could use the computer to do this) • Find out the story of Guru Hargobind’s imprisonment
<p>Understand & Respect Divali as a special celebration</p>	<p>Divali as a special celebration.</p>