



Welwyn ST Mary's RE knowledge organiser

Year 4: Sikhism Knowledge organiser

Guru Nanak, who first taught the Sikh faith, was born in 1469 in northern India (now Pakistan). He was born into a Hindu family in an area deeply divided between Muslims and Hindus.

Belief

Sikhs sum up their basic beliefs in the Mool Mantra, the first hymn written by Guru Nanak: *'There is only one God. Truth is his name. He is the Creator. He is without fear. He is without hate. He is timeless and without form. He is beyond death, the enlightened one. He can be known by the Guru's grace.'*

Sikhs believe in one God, 'Waheguru', meaning 'Great Teacher'. Sikhs place great emphasis on equality and community service. In parts of India, temples feed the poor through a free kitchen (langar) every day.

Sikhs wear 5 marks of their faith - the 5 K's - including the turban for Sikh men.

There are 10 human Gurus who each appointed their successor. The collection of hymns, written by six of the Gurus and by Hindu and Muslim teachers became the peoples final or 11th 'Guru'. This book is known as the Guru Granth Sahib. It is treated with great respect, just as a human Guru would be.

Sikhs believe that after death, God will judge each soul and if it is pure enough it will rest with him instead of being reborn.

Many Sikhs are vegetarian.

Festivals

Sikh festivals are often celebrated at the same time as Hindu festivals. All Sikh festivals are preceded by a full reading of the Guru Granth Sahib, taking about 48 hours. Others come to hear part of the reading, called the Akand Path.

Diwali - Sikhs light lamps in their homes to celebrate the release from prison of Guru Hargobind who had been imprisoned by the Emperor Jehangir.

Guru Nanak's birthday - stories of Guru Nanak are told and his hymns are sung in the gurdwara. In many parts of India, processions are held through the streets which are decorated for this occasion.

Gurdwara

The gurdwara is the centre of activity for the Sikh community. Music is an important part of Sikh worship. Each hymn in the Guru Granth Sahib has its own traditional tune.

People pray in the gurdwara and although people come and go during services the atmosphere is peaceful and meditative.

There is a separate room in the Gurdwara for the Guru Granth Sahib. Everyone removes their shoes, covers their head and washes their hands before coming into the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib.

The Sikh flag always flies outside the gurdwara. Once a year, at the festival of Baisakhi, the flag is lowered and a new one raised.

Vocabulary

Guru Granth Sahib – a collection of hymns from the 10 human Gurus

The 5 Ks

Karah prashad

Khalsa

Gurdwara

Nishan sahib

The Golden Temple at Amritsar

Waheguru – God

Turban