

Year: 5

Subject: RE—Term 3

Unit of Study: Sikhism

Linked Literature: We are Sikhs/My Sikh Faith or Ada Twist, Scientist by Andrea Beaty

Who are Sikhs?

Sikh celebrations

Special books in Sikhism

Sikh places of worship

Special people in the Sikh faith

Sikh family life

Vocabulary

Sikh	Means disciple in Punjabi
Disciple	Follower of God
Waheguru	Wonderful lord or God
Reincarnation	Cycle of many lives - rebirth of a soul in another body
Gurdwara	Place of worship / temple for Sikhs. Means Gateway to the Guru
Guru Granth Sahib	The Sikh's book of holy scriptures which contains teachings and writings from Ten Gurus—treated as the last living Guru
Nishan Sahib	A triangular flag with the Sikh symbol—Khanda—on it and a tassel at the end
The Darbar	Main hall of the Gurdwara and is where ceremonies take place
The Langar	A community kitchen of a Gurdwara which serves free vegetarian meals to all
The Sachkhand	The holiest room in a Gurdwara which is where the Guru Granth Sahib is kept at night
Granthi	A person who takes care of the Guru Granth Sahib

I need to know:

Sikhism originates in **Northern India, in Punjab** and is the **fifth largest religion in the world with over 20 million followers**. Founded by **Guru Nanak**, just over **500 years ago**, it is one of the world's youngest religions. Sikhs are the disciples of God who follow the writings and teachings of the **Ten Sikh Gurus**.

Sikhism teaches that **all human beings are equal**, regardless of race, religion and gender, and can **achieve divinity** by being devoted to God—believing in only one God who is the same for all people and religions. Sikhs believe in **reincarnation** and that **being a human** is the most important form and **means they have lived honourably**, following the '*core beliefs*' of a Sikh. The **ultimate goal for a Sikh** is to be **reunited with God** and they believe that every word, thought or action has a consequence—known as **karma**.

I need to know continued:

Guruwara means '*Gateway to the Guru*'. It is a place (holy temple) where Sikh people go to worship God and learn about the Sikh scriptures. A yellow triangular flag, known as the **Nishan Sahib**, is raised outside of the Gurdwara so that it can be identified. Like with most religions, prayers can be offered to God from anywhere, however, it is expected that a practising Sikh will attend the Gurdwara daily to worship or pray. A service is generally held **twice a day**, morning and evening but this can vary. These are held in **the Darbar** (main hall) where shoes must be removed and heads covered prior to entering. There is a platform with a canopy above it where the **Guru Granth Sahib** (holy book) is placed. On entering the Guruwara, a Sikh **will bow** (touch their head to the floor) to the Guru Granth Sahib. This shows respect but also that they submit themselves to the truths within it's pages. A Sikh will place offerings in front of the Guru Granth Sahib, it is seen as sharing God's gifts. The money or food that is offered, is then used in the community kitchen called **The Langar**, which offers a free vegetarian meal to all. After greeting the congregation by gently speaking some special words, Sikhs take a seat on the floor to give everybody equal status. They usually cross their legs and men and women sit on separate sides of the hall.

The Guru Granth Sahib is the Sikh's holy scriptures. It contains teachings from the Gurus throughout history, as well as some teachings from other religions. It is not just seen as a holy book but it is **treated like a living Guru**. The teaching collated in this holy book are a collection of **hymns and poems (shabads or sacred hymns)**. The shabads are all sung in different **raags / melodies (60 in total)**, adding to the particular mood of the message contained within its words. During worship the Guru Granth Sahib is placed on a raised platform, under a canopy so that it is above everyone. When it is not being read, it is covered with beautiful fabrics called **rumalas**, which shows great respect. Waving a **chauri** (a fan usually made of yak hair) over the Guru Granth Sahib before it is read is also a sign of respect. To highlight that it has the same authority as other Guru's, it is woken in the morning and put to rest at night by a **Granthi**. Over night, the Guru Granth Sahib is kept in **the Sachkhand**, considered to be the holiest room in the Gurdwara. Anyone entering this room must bathe first, as well as cover their head and remove their shoes. The room is often at the highest point of the Gurdwara.

Sikhs believe that the teachings of Guru Nanak and the other nine Gurus help them to live the life that God expects. Whilst in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, a Sikh must show humility, they do this by:

- **Seating themselves lower than the Guru Granth Sahib**
- **Bowing**
- **Covering their heads**
- **Taking off their shoes.**

I need to do:

Describe the key teachings and beliefs of a religion, explaining how they shape the lives of individuals and contribute to society.

Explain practises and lifestyles associated with belonging to a faith.

Explain some of the different ways individuals show their beliefs.

Explain own ideas about 'tricky' questions/concepts that have no universally agreed answers.

Explain why individuals/communities may have similar and differing views.



The **Golden Temple** in India (below) is a Gurdwara and pilgrim site, with many Sikhs striving to visit at least once in their life time.



Prior knowledge:

Different religions have different beliefs and practises—**Sikh beliefs, 5Ks, death rites, key celebrations**

Some religious beliefs and practises are similar across religions

Religions have different place of worship, special (holy) books and

Core beliefs:

Only one God (same for all people and religions)

Everyone is equal and should be treated (regardless of race, religion and gender)

Always remember God (meditation)

Live honestly and work hard

Share with others and give to the needy



Above, you can see The Guru Granth Sahib close up, as well as on the raised platform, and the chauri being used in a Gurdwara.

What can we remember and what do we want to know?

Where do Sikhs worship? Important places of worship

What happens in the Gurdwara?

What is the Guru Granth Sahib?

What does the Guru Granth Sahib tell us about Sikhs?

What have we learnt about Sikhism?