

SIKH RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN VICTORIAN STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

This program is run by the Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria with the support of Religions for Peace.

The objective of this program is to impart Sikh religious teachings as an integral part of the moral education and character development of Sikh children. Students are given an introduction to the Sikh faith (its role in the family, in society and in self development and discipline); the ten Sikh Gurus and their important messages; Sikh scriptures; Sikh values and Worship both at home and in the Gurdwara.

Volunteer teachers are drawn from the Sikh community and have registration with the Department of Education and the Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria. Training for the teachers is provided by co-ordinators who are experienced in the field of education.

FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE OF THE SIKH FAITH

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion which believes in one omnipresent God. It promotes a holistic experience encompassing work, worship, service and family life.

There is One God

- The Eternal Reality
- The loving Creator
- Without fear
- Without hate
- Timeless, beyond births and deaths
- Self existent
- Known by Grace through the Guru. *SGGS p.1*

COURSE OUTLINE

Sikh Heritage

- Names of the ten Sikh Gurus and their contribution to the Sikh faith.
- The lives and teachings of the Sikh Gurus provide models for the Sikh way of life

Sikh Scriptures

- Guru Granth Sahib.
- Selected shabads (hymns) will be taught

Worship

- Practices at home and in a Gurduara
- Role of a Gurduara , Related terms , e.g.
- Sadh sangat; Kirtan, Ardas, Langgar,etc

- Outline of a typical day at a Gurduara
- Names of daily prayers.
- Recitation of Mool Mantra, Japji Sahib and selected shabads

Khalsa and Articles of faith (5 K's)

- What are the 5 Ks
- Who prescribed them and when

Spiritual Messages and Sikh Values

Social, ethical, moral and spiritual values which the Sikh Gurus taught and practised and their relevance to our daily lives. These include :

- Equality;
- Selfless service to humanity;
- Tolerance and accepting others' right to worship in their own way;
- Humility;
- Compassion;
- Fairness and Justice;
- Love and friendship
- Care for the environment

Practices include: Working hard; Sharing with others in need, and Reciting God's name

Special Sikh Occasions

- *Gurpurabs* - Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji
- *Martyrdom* of Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Guru Teg Bahadur Ji
- *Vaisakhi*
- *Bandi Chor*
- *Gur Gaddi Divas* (Installation of Guru Granth Sahib , the Eternal Guru in 1708)

UNITS OF WORK

LEVEL 1 Grades 1-2

Sikh Heritage and Values

1. **Guru Nanak** - Founder of Sikhism . Overview – birth; parents, sister etc.

Use the following Sakhis about Guru Nanak's life to illustrate the messages and values imparted by him :

<u>Sakhi</u>	<u>Message</u>
Guru Nanak at school	Learning and studying
Shade of cobra	Protection of God
The boy who refused to wear the traditional thread	Outer versus inner appearance
The compassionate trader (<i>Sacha sauda</i>)	Sharing with the needy
The honest storekeeper (at Sultanpur)	Honesty & generosity
The critical thinker (at Hardwar)	Avoid ritualism, think rationally & critically; serve the living
Guru Nanak & the jealous Yogi	Helping others; don't be taken in by magic, tricks and claims of miracles
Guru Nanak's revelation	All religions are equal; forsake differences; equality; believe in only one God
Story of Duni Chand	Don't be obsessed with accumulating wealth
Bhai Lalo & Malik Bhago	Earn an honest living; treat people well
The reformed thug (Sajjan thug)	Deception is bad
Guru Nanak at Mecca	God is everywhere
Wali Kandari	Leave pride, be humble and helpful
The active elderly (at Kartarpur)	Purposeful life and hard work

2. Guru Angad Dev - succeeded Guru Nanak

He refined the Gurmukhi script, promoted love for education, stressed the importance of Physical education and sports. Set up a Sikh centre at Khadur. Guru Angad passed many difficult tests – carrying fodder, construction of wall, etc.

Messages and values imparted : Service, love, obedience to Guru. importance of physical exercise and activity for a healthy body and a healthy mind. Use *sakhis* to illustrate these values.

3. Guru Amar Das - 3rd Guru

He was the oldest Guru. Set up a Sikh Centre at Goindwal. Introduced social reforms (forbad the practices of purda and sati) Made langgar compulsory before meeting with the Guru. His meeting with Guru Angad (Bibi Amro's shabad and link) Use relevant *sakhis* (Fetching water, Baoli sahib, etc) to illustrate messages and values he imparted including selfless service, hard work, humility and equality of men and women.

Practice of Sikh way of life

- Sewa - Meaning. (selfless service)
- Examples of sewa In the Gurdwara and at home .
- Sewa in the community

Worship

Gurduara – Layout – the different areas and purposes e.g. Shoe room, Diwan Hall/Darbar Sahib, etc. Nishan Sahib and Khanda. (students can make a model of the Nishan Sahib & Khanda) Correct recitation of Mool Mantra and 5 stanzas of Japji Sahib Recitation of Shabads – Tu Thakur tum peh ardas ; Dada data ek hai; Tu mera pita; Gurah ek deh bujayi

LEVEL 2 Grades 3-4

Sikh Heritage & Values

1. Guru Ram Das – 4th Guru

Founded Ramdaspur. Started construction of Sarowar (pool). Composed Lavan for Anand Karaj. Preached humility and selfless service. Use *sakhis* to illustrate his messages of service; equality; humility e.g. Visit of Baba Sri Chand

2. Guru Arjan Dev - 5th Guru

Completed the building of the Sarowar and constructed Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple); Compiled Guru Granth Sahib. Maintained the Sikh faith and established new Sikh centres at Kartarpur, Tarn Taran & Sri Hargobindpur. Became the first Sikh martyr. Use *sakhis* of Satta Balwand and “the jealous brother” to illustrate his message of overcoming obstacles and his firm faith in God.

3. Guru Hargobind - 6th Guru

Built the Akal Takht; Promoted Sikhism and developed the Sikh community from Amritsar, Kartarpur & Kiratpur. Imprisoned by Emperor Jahangir at Fort of Gwalior. *Sakhi* : Freeing of 52 prisoners Message caring and thinking of others; courageous. Developed concept of Miri and Piri , saint soldier. Fought wars to defend the Sikh way of life.

4. Guru Har Rai - 7th Guru

Practised love for nature and animals; Promoted public health through his clinic. Promoted Sikh way of life through missionary work. Kept Kiratpur as the centre of the Sikh community. *Sakhi* : Walking in the garden - care for the environment

5. Guru Har Krishan - 8th Guru

Child Guru . Served and cared for the sick and distressed, displayed compassion. Taught humility and showed wisdom.

Special Sikh Occasions

- At Birth – Naming ceremony
- Anand Karaj (Sikh wedding) – Lavan

Worship

- Guru Granth Sahib – Number of pages, contributors, care and respect
- Path Bogh and Akhand Path
- Parshad – how it is made; correct way of receiving and eating it.
- Correct reading of stanzas 6-15 of Japji Sahib
- Introduce evening and night prayers – Rehraas and Sohila
- Shabads : Oothath sukhiya; Jis ke sirh upar tu swami; Jo mangeh thakur apneh teh

LEVEL 3 Grades 5-6

SIKH HERITAGE AND VALUES

1. Guru Tegh Bahadur – 9th Guru

Meditated for many years at Baba Bakala; made Anandpur Sahib the centre for the Sikh community.

Undertook missionary tours in various parts of North India. Sacrificed his life for the religious freedom of Hindus

2. Guru Gobind Singh 10th Guru

Created the Khalsa in 1699 to complete the Sikh Gurus' mission. Fought many wars to protect Sikhism – sacrificed his mother and 4 sons to protect Sikhism. Made the Guru Granth Sahib as the eternal Guru of the Sikhs 5 Beloved ones; 4 Sahibjadas and their sacrifices; Bhai Kanhaiya

3. **Guru Granth Sahib** – shabad Guru; focal point of Sikh devotion; central authority and a permanent spiritual and inspirational guide for Sikhs all over the world.

4. 5 Tahkts

Other Personalities

- Baba Buddha; Bhai Gurdas
- Famous Sikh women e.g. Bebe Nanki, Bibi Bhani, Mata Gujri, Mai Bhago and others
- 15 Bhagats e.g. Kabir, Farid and others

Worship

- Ardaas – importance of Ardas
- Correct reading of stanzas 16 –37 of Japji Sahib and Salok
- Shabads – Aagiya payi Akal ki ; Mitar piyareh nu; Aad Gureh namai; Gobindeh mukandeh
- Introduce names of other main prayers – Asa Ki Vaar; Sukhmani Sahib; Anand Sahib

Resources

- Sikh Way of Life (SIKHWOL) series Books 1-8 Each course book is accompanied by an Activity Book
- Sikh way of Life – Resource Book for teachers
- Audio CD

Teaching Strategies

- Start each lesson of 30 minutes with a recitation of Mool Mantar

Strategies :

- Storytelling – tell the story episode by episode in an interesting and thought-provoking manner
- Memorisation of prayers and shabads - teachers to guide students
- Colouring sheets (for lower grades) - students talk about the picture and colour it
- Written worksheets – fill in the blanks, writing an account, etc
- Singing of hymns (shabads)

- Students narrate the story of the previous week – students take turns to tell the story to the class, episode by episode
- Making models
- Picture conversation - give the background and ask students to give the key message for each picture
- Crossword puzzles and word searches
- Making “Who am I” riddles