



TITLE:

**Beginning to learn
about Sikh
people:**

- symbols
- stories
- sharing

YEAR GROUP: 1 / 2



***Sandwell SACRE RE
Syllabus:
Non-statutory
exemplification***

This unit is one of a series of examples written for Sandwell SACRE and teachers of RE by consultant Lat Blaylock of RE Today Services. Contact Lat for support and guidance on the syllabus via email: lat@retoday.org.uk



Children & Families

Sandwell SACRE RE Syllabus: Non-statutory exemplification

TITLE: Beginning to learn about Sikh people: symbols, stories and sharing

YEAR GROUP: 1 or 2

About this unit:

This unit enables pupils to begin to learn about the Sikhs. It is appropriate in different ways both for schools where many Sikh pupils learn, and for those where there are few or no pupils from Sikh families. The population of Sandwell and the region includes tens of thousands of Sikh people, and it is important for pupils to begin to understand the faiths around them.

Using stories, symbols and the special manner in which Sikhs emphasise equality and shared life, the unit enables children to make progress in learning about Sikhism and to build some learning from Sikhism on the gathering of information. They will acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Sikh beliefs, experiences and practices, as well as reflecting on their own beliefs, values, perceptions and experiences in the light of their learning. The unit sets the foundations for developing positive attitudes of respect towards Sikhs and to other people who hold views and beliefs that are different from their own.

Where this unit fits in:

This unit will help teachers to implement the Sandwell Agreed Syllabus for RE by providing them with well worked examples of teaching and learning about the Sikhs, focusing on some artefacts and their symbolism, a story and the questions that arise from it, and the theme of sharing exemplified in the langar kitchen. The unit anticipates a further study of Sikh religion and belief later in the RE course. While it is always excellent to make a visit to the Gurdwara, many schools reserve this experience³ for key stage two – either practice can be an inspiring experience.

This unit in the whole primary curriculum

As the Rose review proposes new structures for the primary curriculum, teachers need to think about how these units connect with the big ideas of human, social and environmental understanding. This unit connects to the big ideas in substantial ways:

- **Time and change:** the unit explores how Sikh life in Sandwell is changing and growing.
- **Place, space and scale:** the unit notices that Sikhs from the Punjab and those who live in have much in common and live differently as well
- **Identity, community and diversity:** the unit tackles issues and attitudes to religious diversity by asking all pupils what they can learn from a Sikh story
- **Questions of meaning and value;** the unit explores the meaning and value of sharing.
- **Making connections:** the unit focuses on the human links Sikhs share with others in Sandwell.

Estimated teaching time for this unit: 7 hours. It is recognised that this unit may provide more teaching ideas than a class will cover in 7 hours. Teachers are invited to plan their own use of some of the learning ideas below, ensuring depth of learning rather than covering everything.

KEY STRANDS ADDRESSED BY THIS UNIT

AT 1: Learning about Religion

- Beliefs, Values and Teaching
- Religious practices and ways of life

AT 2: Learning from Religion

- *Questions of Values and Commitments*

The core RE concepts that the unit develops are values and teachings

Attitudes Focus: Pupils will explore attitudes of:

- **Respect for all** by developing a willingness to learn from Sikh story and symbol
- **Open mindedness** by engaging in positive discussion and exploration of who shares, why and when.

The unit will provide these opportunities:

- Pupils have opportunities to consider the concept of sharing and the way a story can make a difference to a person's behaviour
- From the study of Sikh objects and ideas, children can reflect on their own lives and thoughts

Background information for the teacher:

- In the Sikh communities of Sandwell, there are now more than ten Gurdwaras (2012). In 1970, there were two. The community has grown in many ways, not just in numbers, over the last 40 years. Sikhs make many contributions to the life of Sandwell, and try to practice the generosity, God-consciousness and concentration on spiritual rather than merely material treasure that comes from the teaching of guru Nanak.
- Every Gurdwara has a langar (kitchen) at which food is served free to all who will eat with everyone else. No distinctions of caste, race, colour or age are applied: all share together. Sikhs consider it an honour to provide the food served in the langar, and all are welcome. School pupils are often most impressed by this generosity when they visit a Gurdwara. This unit focuses on the value Sikhs give to being generous and including everyone.
- The Gurdwara is the 'house of the Guru' because the presence of the sacred writings in the form of the Guru Granth Sahib live there. The text is honoured as a living Guru by the community – so for example the guru has a bed, and is installed there at night.

Vocabulary + concepts	Resources
<p>In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:</p> <p>Specific religions: Sikhism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sikhs • Guru • Gurdwara • Guru Granth Sahib • Langar <p>The language of shared human experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing • Generosity • Mean~ness • Selfishness 	<p>Teachers might use:</p> <p>On the web: Web:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The BBC's clip bank is a major source for short RE films that can be accessed online and shown free: http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips ▪ The BBC also offers lots of information and material on its main religion site: www.bbc.co.uk/religion ▪ The best gateway for RE sites is: www.reonline.org.uk/ks1 ▪ You can find and use searchable sacred texts from many religions at: www.ishwar.com ▪ There is some more TV material at: www.channel4.com/learning ▪ The site for Cumbria and Lancashire Education Online has many useful and well thought out resources for this unit of work: www.cleo.net.uk ▪ The websites of REToday and NATRE are useful places for pupils and teachers to see examples of work. www.retoday.org.uk and www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts ▪ Online searchable sacred texts from different religions at: www.ishwar.com • Two Website entry points for Sikhism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ www.sikhnet.com ○ www.sikhs.org • For downloadable artefacts pictures and line drawings: http://www.strath.ac.uk/Departments/SocialStudies/RE/Database/Graphics/Images • http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcs/re/places/index.html is a useful multi religious site for RE <p>DVD / Video / visual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVD 'Worship' produced by REonline is a useful tool to explore places of worship. The films include visits to places of worship in the UK to hear what believers say about their faith and the importance of worship. (www.reonline.org.uk) • Pathways of Belief (BBC) <p>Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kanwalit Kaur Singh, Keystones: Sikh Gurdwara, A&C Black, ISBN 0-7136-4834-1, • Chris Richards, 1996, Living Religions: Sikhism, Nelson Thornes, ISBN 0-17-428055-6. • Developing Primary RE: Faith Stories, Symbols of Faith, Special Times, Words of Wisdom, Stories about God (RE Today). • Exploring a Theme in RE: Founders and Leaders(RE Today) • A Pictorial Guide: Sikhism (RE Today) • Say Hello To... Series of flash books, including a Sikh story for 4-7s and support materials for the whiteboard (RE Today) <p>Artefacts might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ik Onkar symbol ('there is only one God') • Copy of the Mool Mantar. • Pictures, images of Guru Nanak and other Gurus. • Photographs / video of the gurdwara. • The 5Ks (Kesh – uncut hair, Kangha – comb, Kara – wrist band, Kachera – short trousers, Kirpan – sword) • Places of Worship Photo packs (Folens) • Prayer and Worship reference books (Franklin and Watts) • 'Let's find out' about books (series of books on the six major faiths and their place of worship, Raintree publishers) • Religion in Evidence supply a range of books and artefacts from each faith. (www.tts-shopping.com) <p>CD Roms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchfield software series - Interactive Places of Worship. • RMEP supply - World Religions (encyclopaedia) • Granada Learning – Exploring World Religions. • Sherston: BBC Faiths and Celebrations • DVD plus packs (BBC shop) including places of worship and world faiths. • Soundhealth supply a range of music designed to enhance specific activities (relaxation, thinking, calmness) visit www.abtmusic.com

<p>Contributions to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.</p> <p>Pupils can develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritually by learning about and reflecting on a story, some artefacts and some values that are at the heart of Sikh practice. • Morally by considering how religious stories and values lead to particular actions. • Culturally by encountering people and resources from Sikh ways of life. 		
<p>EXPECTATIONS: At the end of this unit:</p>		
<p>Pupils working at level 1 will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Name some Sikh artefacts (AT1) ▪ <i>Talk about being generous and meeting generous people (AT2)</i> ▪ <i>Talk about why Sikhs like to share and why they like to share (AT2)</i> 	<p>Pupils working at level 2 will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retell the Sikh story of Durni Chand and the needle (AT1) • Identify a good reason to share (AT1) • Recognise what the 5Ks are, why some Sikh children wear them and why they are important to them. (AT1). • <i>Respond sensitively to the ideas of being generous, being equal and being fair (AT2)</i> 	<p>Pupils working at level 3 will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the teaching Sikhs try to follow about sharing equally, making links to the langar (AT1). • Describe how some Sikh artefacts are used (AT1) • Use religious or spiritual vocabulary such as (AT1). • <i>Make links between Sikh ideas about sharing and generosity and their own ideas (AT2).</i>
<p>Assessment suggestions</p> <p>A formal assessment of each pupil is neither required nor desirable for every RE unit. Continuing use of assessment for learning methods is best.</p> <p>Teachers can assess this work by setting a learning task towards the end of the unit. The task aims to elicit engaged and reflective responses to the material studied throughout the unit across the ability range.</p> <p>Make a table of objects as reminders to pupils. Put out the Sikh artefacts and photos that you have used, examples of the work done by pupils, some sweets, a lego model of a kitchen for all. Have a 'remembering' conversation: What can be learned from the Sikhs? How does it relate to pupils' own ways of life? How are pupils developing their own understanding of beliefs and religion?</p> <p>Give children an image to cut out: they might choose open hands, or an outline of the kara bracelet, or an outline of the world or some other image for sharing. Inside, ask them to draw the most generous person they know, and tell the class about their picture. This will give evidence of their thinking and their ability to handle</p>		

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	TEACHING AND LEARNING Practical classroom suggestions	LEARNING OUTCOMES	POINTS TO NOTE
<p>What objects are special for Sikh people?</p> <p>(This work might take up two sessions)</p>	<p>Pupils will learn: To handle and ask questions about some Sikh artefacts</p> <p>To think and talk about the meanings of holy objects from Sikh life</p> <p>To know and understand Sikh belief about symbols of identity and what they represent.</p>	<p>What objects are important in Sikh ways of life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use either artefacts or photographs for this lesson. Artefacts are worth displaying carefully and with a sense of occasion. You might use a feely bag to generate curiosity. ▪ Plan the work and discussion so that these questions are addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What symbols do Sikhs use and wear? What do they mean? ○ What is the Ik Onkar and the Khanda? Where do you find these symbols? ○ What are the 5Ks, and why do some Sikhs wear them? ○ What symbols do you wear or use and what do they stand for? ▪ Look at a Kara, the wrist bracelet made of steel worn by Sikhs. It symbolises the unending one-ness of God, and the strength or firmness of belief in God ▪ Observe an Ik Onkar being slowly removed from a wrapping. Discuss its physical attributes and consider what it might be. Some should be able to relate that they have seen it during previous work. ▪ Discuss how reflecting on God during the day reminds Sikhs of how they should act in order to acquire 'godly' characteristics e.g. being charitable, loving, treating others fairly. ▪ Explore what the Khanda, the Sikh Symbol means, and look at the kind of flags that display the Khanda at the Gurdwara. <p>What objects mean a lot to me? (This part of the work could be used first if the teacher wishes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask pupils to talk in pairs about five things that mean a lot to them, and why. If they put 5 things in a 'time capsule' to show what matters to them today, then what would they choose? ▪ Can the children talk about the 'time capsule' of things that came down to the Sikhs from their Gurus over hundreds of years? ▪ What symbol can children invent to show their own identity and belonging? ▪ Introduce pupils to the 5Ks worn by Khalsa Sikhs: Kesh (uncut hair), Kangha (comb), Kara (a steel wrist band), Kachera (short trousers), Kirpan (sword) ▪ Pupils can share what symbols they wear and use, and what symbols they are aware of in the community. What do these symbols mean? Why are they important? How could they be respected? ▪ Pupils design symbols of their own identity or belonging and explain meanings. 	<p>Pupils can:</p> <p>Name some Sikh artefacts (L1)</p> <p>Talk about where you would find the artefacts (L1)</p> <p><i>Suggest a meaning to an artefact (L2)</i></p>	<p>Using a Persona Doll in this lesson, to explore how Sikh children use and value the 5ks is very powerful</p> <p>Notice that the level 2 key skill is to suggest meanings, and this is central to the activities in the lesson.</p> <p>Model and practice suggesting meanings to the pupils in many different ways, so that they build up their own skills in doing this.</p>

<p>What stories do Sikh people love to remember?</p> <p>(This could be taught in one or two lessons)</p>	<p>To listen to and talk about stories of the gurus from Sikh faith</p> <p>To think about how a story can express a value, such as generosity or sharing.</p>	<p>What stories of Guru Nanak and the other Gurus are told by Sikhs? What are the stories really about?</p> <p>Teach pupils about Guru Nanak (founder of Sikhism), the first Guru, finding out about his upbringing, and hearing some stories from his early life. Tell the story of his call, when he disappeared for 3 days whilst bathing. Discuss what pupils think happened to him. Tell pupils about his journey and his teaching about God.</p> <p>Guru Har Gobind (the sixth Guru) who is remembered at the Sikh festival of Divali for helping to have prisoners released. He was in jail, and the king gave him release. He petitioned for the release of other prisoners, and the king promised that he could take free with him all those who held his cloak. All night long they stitched a huge cloak, so that the whole prison could hold on. The next morning the Guru led all the prisoners to freedom.</p> <p>Draw simple values like serving others or being kind from the stories you choose. Ask pupils to give the stories new titles that include an emotional word. Compare the titles different pupils choose and draw out the different values they recognise. Link the work to SEAL, and the development of a vocabulary of emotion and value. Circle time, hot seating, persona dolls and drama are all useful strategies to explore stories of the Gurus.</p> <p>Pupils could also hear and work with stories of some of the other Gurus, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guru Arjan (the fifth guru) who compiled the Adi Granth (holy book), built the Golden Temple, and was the first Sikh martyr. ▪ Guru Tegh Bahadur (the ninth Guru) who was martyred for the principle of religious tolerance. ▪ Pupils might learn about Guru Gobind Singh (the tenth Guru), and how he founded the Khalsa, the 'community of the pure' to which all initiated Sikhs belong at Baisakhi. An annual festival to mark this founding is celebrated. 	<p>Identify a Sikh story (L1)</p> <p>Retell a Sikh story (L2)</p> <p>Suggest a meaning in a Sikh story (L2)</p> <p>Talk sensitively about the values that can be found in Sikh stories (L2)</p>	<p>This part of the unit works best if two stories are well told and explored, for example using the skills of the literacy strategy for the age group.</p> <p>Too many stories and the depth of exploration is lost.</p>
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<p>What can we learn from the story of Dunning and the needle?</p> <p>What does the story mean?</p> <p>How can we explore the story?</p>	<p>To explore a story in depth and respond to it thoughtfully</p> <p>To retell a story with drama in a group</p> <p>To develop their own ideas about values from a Sikh story.</p>	<p>What is the meaning of the story of Dunning? The story: There is a great retelling of this story by Roop Singh at: http://www.sikhnet.com/Stories</p> <p>Guru Nanak was a travelling teacher. He visited Lahore, where there lived a banker called Dunning, well known for being greedy. His beautiful palace shone with gold, marble and precious jewels. Dunning learnt that Guru Nanak was visiting. He rushed to invite the Guru to a special feast: it would make him look very important to have a famous guest. Guru Nanak accepted the invitation. It was a wonderful occasion. When everyone had finished, Dunning turned to Guru Nanak: 'I am a wealthy man, I can help you. What do you want me to do?' Guru Nanak sat and thought. Fumbling in his pocket, he drew out a tiny sewing needle. "Something you can do for me," he replied, holding up the needle. 'I want you to keep this needle very safe and give it back when we meet in the next world.' Dunning felt very important. The Guru had given him a very special task. He took the needle and showed it to his wife, explaining what the Guru had told him. To his surprise, she burst into laughter. 'How are you going to do that?' she asked. He thought and thought, then ran back to the Guru asking "How can I take this needle with me when I die?" "If you cannot take a tiny needle with you when you die, how are you going to take all your riches?" asked the Guru. For the first time in his life Dunning felt ashamed. He realised he had been greedy. He and his wife decided to use their wealth to help the poor.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tell the story in an exciting way – you might dramatise it with a persona doll, or give the children a way of joining in. ▪ Ask the pupils in groups to develop a drama about the story. They might make a scene of the story, and then another scene in which Dunning puts his plan into action, and is generous. ▪ Make lists of all the things the children can think of that show generosity. What could rich Dunning do with his wealth? ▪ Talk about the idea of the 'next life'. Sikhs believe that when the body dies, there is another life. Thinking about this is what made Dunning change this life. 	<p>I can... Talk about what sort of person Dunning was in the story (L1)</p> <p>Retell the story in drama (L2)</p> <p>Respond to the idea of being generous with lots of ideas of my own about how to be generous (L2)</p> <p>Make links between the story and what Sikhs might do today as they follow their Guru (L3)</p>	<p>Many religions have stories about being generous. Pupils often understand these ideas perfectly well, but like adults, that doesn't make it easy for them to be generous.</p> <p>Explore this whole set of values through carefully planned classroom talk and examples.</p> <p>The work has a good connection with both literacy skills and SEAL learning.</p> <p>The Sikh belief in reincarnation might come up here – and it is good to talk about it, but not necessary to teach it in depth.</p>
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<p>Why is there a kitchen in a Sikh holy building?</p> <p>Who is welcome in the kitchen?</p> <p>(This could be taught in one or two lessons)</p>	<p>Pupils learn to think about the meaning of the Sikh langar, a free and equal kitchen, for themselves.</p> <p>Pupils take part in a speaking and listening 'enactment' drama where a dilemma of generosity is explored in a realistic way.</p>	<p>At the Gurdwara, why is there a kitchen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use photographs or video clips to teach pupils about the Guru Granth Sahib, the sacred writings of the Sikhs. The Guru Granth Sahib is treated as a living Guru. A 'gurdwara' is the 'Guru's house.' ▪ Ask some pupils to make a lego or playmobile model of a kitchen and get all pupils to make a figure to sit down in the kitchen together. ▪ Ask pupils: How is the Guru Granth Sahib treated? What do you think it means to Sikhs? How do Sikhs worship in the Gurdwara? <p>Why does a Gurdwara need a kitchen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask pupils what is essential to a holy building. They may know about mosques, churches or mandirs. None of these buildings has to have a kitchen, but every Gurdwara needs a langar. Why? ▪ Explore what happens in the langar: anyone can eat free meals there. What Sikh values does the langar represent? Talk about being generous and being treated generously with the pupils. What examples of generous behaviour have they seen in the films, or in real life? <p>Are we good at sharing and being generous? A debate about sweets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Try this: give two pupils a bag of 'safe in school' sweets. Emphasise that the sweets are theirs to do what they want to with. Ask the rest of the class in groups of 5 to help one of the group to make a short speech of less than one minute length. ▪ They must say all the reasons they can think (can they think of 4 or 5?) of why their group should have the sweets. Use the prompt 'We should have the sweets because...' Listen to the speeches, and then the two with the sweets say what they are going to do. ▪ Ask the class what advice the Sikh faith would give about the sweets. Talk about why the guru might say that sharing equally is the best thing to do. ▪ Discuss with the class: What are your values and how do you show what matters to you through how you lead your life? 	<p>I can...</p> <p>Talk about being generous and the feelings that go with it (L1)</p> <p>Say what happens in a langar kitchen, and why (L2)</p> <p>Respond to the idea of being generous by speaking thoughtfully about a dilemma (L2)</p> <p>Make links between Sikh ideas about sharing and my own ideas (L3)</p> <p>Describe how Sikh values to do with sharing make a difference in the Gurdwara (L3)</p>	<p>If some pupils make a model of the langar, then all pupils join in, this models the way Sikh sharing happens. Can children see the similarity?</p> <p>This enactment needs a well managed classroom environment, but it needs to be real as well. Choose two 'unlikely' pupils to make the decision about the sweets – share or keep? Fair or biased? The activity will make the learning real.</p>
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<p>What values do Sikhs think are more important than money? Why?</p> <p>What values make people happy?</p>	<p>Appreciate what Sikhism teaches about following God and the effect this has on their lifestyles and values.</p>	<p>What is special about Sikh values and ways of life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remind pupils about Sikh values of sharing (vand chhakna) and service (sewa) to others, represented by the langar (kitchen attached to the Gurdwara, serving free food to anyone who comes). Consider its importance for Sikhs. What does it mean to eat together? ▪ Explore other Sikh values such as earning one's living by honest means (Kirat karna), acceptance of God's will (hukam) and equality of gender, race and creed. ▪ Explore what values pupils have, why they hold them, and how they manifest them in their own lifestyles. ▪ Ask pupils to make a page of values, with two sides to it. On one side, the words that Sikhs value, and that they value. On the other side, the opposites to all these words. They can illustrate the words – perhaps copied from a word bank – with 3cm square cartoons, showing what happens when people behave like this. Which side of the page leads to more happiness? Why? Share the work in circle time. 	<p>Identify some Sikh symbols (L1)</p> <p>Retell a story of Sikh worship (L2)</p> <p>Suggest a meaning for Sikh artefacts (L2)</p> <p><i>Talk sensitively about the values that can be found in Sikh stories and symbols (L2)</i></p>	<p>The terminology in this lesson is hard for many pupils, but those from Sikh backgrounds may find it easy! Their family culture may give them rich learning here, and it is good for the school to affirm this in RE</p>
<p>What have we learned from the Sikhs about stories, symbols and sharing?</p>	<p>Engage with the ideas and learning in this unit for themselves by reflecting on stories, sharing and symbols.</p>	<p>Learning from Sikhs: what have we noticed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At the end of the unit, make a table of objects as reminders to pupils. Put out the artefacts, the work done, some sweets, a lego model of a kitchen for all. Have a 'remembering' conversation: What can be learned from the Sikhs? How does it relate to pupils' own ways of life? How are pupils developing their own understanding of beliefs and religion? ▪ Give children an image to cut out: they might choose open hands, or an outline of the kara bracelet, or an outline of the world or some other image for sharing. Inside, ask them to draw the most generous person they know, and tell the class about their picture. 	<p>Identify a good reason to share (L2)</p> <p>Recognise some Sikh symbols and retell a Sikh story (L2)</p> <p><i>Make links between the ideas of being generous, being equal and being fair (L3)</i></p>	<p>Choice is important in this final activity: children will observe that Sikh generosity is like other kinds of generosity. No one has a monopoly on sharing!</p>

Lat Blaylock, Sandwell SACRE, 2012