



**Driving Question:** See Space  
**Power Skill:** Collaboration

**National Curriculum Learning Objectives**

- Expression - How could believing in God help a Sikh to make the world a better place?
- Action - How far would a Sikh go for his/her religion? What is the best way for a Sikh to live a good life?

**Key Vocabulary**

|         |        |          |        |             |
|---------|--------|----------|--------|-------------|
| Sikhism | Guru   | Gurdwara | Khanda | Mukti       |
| Amrit   | belief | practice | Karma  | Kesh        |
| Kara    | Kangha | Kachera  | Kirpan | Langar meal |

## Key Learning

**RE-VISIT AND REVISE LEARNING FROM YEAR 3 SPRING 2.** (See Learning Journey Maps for content covered)

Sikhism facts:

- Deity: God
- Holy book: Guru Granth Sahib
- Place of worship: Gurdwara
- Important symbols: Khanda
- Approximate worldwide followers: 30 million
- Countries where Sikh people live: 80% reside in India but there are significant populations in Canada, UK, US, New Zealand, East Africa, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.
- Denominations: Khālsā, Nāmdhari, Nirankāri

BBC Bitesize video: What is Sikhism? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zkjpkmn>



**Thinking Point:** What is Sikhism? What are the main facts about Sikhism? Who is a Sikh? Where are Sikhs mainly living?

**Beliefs held by Sikh's which help them to live a good life**

Sikhs believe that life is a cycle of birth, death and rebirth. This is known as the cycle of samsara.

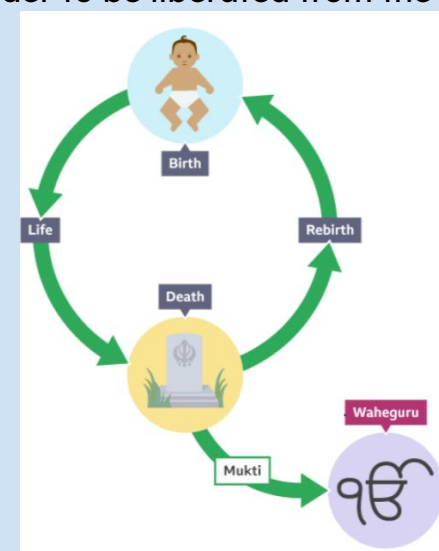
- . They believe that everyone has a chance to reach Waheguru (God) in Mukti (freeing of the soul from rebirth)
- . In order to reach mukti, Sikhs must live their life with Waheguru in their mind at all times. They must act with love and compassion towards others. However, because human life is not perfect, they must accept God's love and grace in order to be liberated from the cycle of samsara and be united with God.

**Living a life that is God-centred**

Sikhs believe that in order to break free from the cycle of samsara they must lead a life that is gurmukh, which means God centred, and not manmukh, which means self-centred.

Sikhs believe that they can live their life as gurmukh by doing the following:

- accepting God's grace and love
- having their mind focused on Waheguru at all times
- meditating on Waheguru's name (Nam Japna)
- earning an honest living (Kirat Karna)
- giving to charity and helping others (Wand Chakna)
- performing selfless service (sewa)



**Resources:** eg. atlases etc

## **Key Learning**

The negative aspect of mukti considers what a Sikh must 'get rid of' in order to reach mukti. This means that, to be reunited with Waheguru, Sikhs must remove all the barriers to mukti. The barriers they must remove are:

The five evils:

- pride (ahankar)
- anger (krodh)
- lust (kam)
- greed (lobdh)
- attachment (moh)

### Karma

Karma refers to the consequences of a person's actions and words. In Sikhism, a person gains good and bad karma throughout their life. Karma determines what happens to that individual's atma in the next life.

Sikhs believe that:

- Positive and moral actions lead to good karma, and negative and immoral actions lead to bad karma.
- What happens in a previous life directly impacts the atma in the next life, either positively or negatively.
- Atmas within animals can be reborn into the body of a human if they have gained good karma in their life.
- Atmas of humans can be reborn into the body of an animal if they have gained bad karma in their life. This means they have moved further away from liberation.

Sikhs believe if they live a good life they will later be rewarded and if they don't, punished.

### Following the teachings of the Gurus

In Sikhism, there are ten Gurus (spiritual teachers). Sikhs believe that these Gurus were at one with God. They were the link between God and humans. The Gurus were chosen to deliver God's messages. All Gurus lived their lives as an example to all Sikhs.

The ten Gurus were in human form but the eleventh and final Guru is considered to be the holy book - the Guru Granth Sahib (which contains the messages of all the Gurus).

**Guru Nanak:** He taught that there was only one God. He argued against social injustice and the caste system. He introduced the system of distributing food to all and communal dining.

**Guru Angad:** He promoted education and the teaching of reading and writing in Punjabi. He wrote down and compiled Guru Nanak's teachings as well as adding his own, in the Adi Granth (holy book).

**Guru Amar Das:** He extended the free communal kitchen called the langar, where all were given food and ate together regardless of who they were. Food was served all day and all night. He argued for the idea of women's equality at a time when women did not have many rights in India.

**Guru Ram Das:** He created the standard Sikh marriage ceremony known as Anand Karaj. He stressed the importance of kirtan (hymn singing) as part of worship.

**Guru Arjan:** He built the Golden Temple (Harmandir Sahib). This is considered the holiest of Sikh temples in the world. He wrote the prayer for peace called the Sukhmani Sahib Bani.

**Guru Hargobind:** He introduced the use of Sikh martial arts so that Sikhs could defend themselves. Sikhs celebrate his - and 52 other prisoners - release from prison during Diwali (Bandi Chhor Divas).

**Guru Har Rai:** He taught and gave lectures on Sikhism and the number of Sikhs grew during his time as the Guru. He refused to change the words of Guru Nanak in the Adi Granth as requested by the Emperor of India at the time.

**Guru Harkrishan:** He was the youngest Guru (aged 5 when he took over from Guru Har Rai). He helped to heal people with smallpox but caught the disease and died from it at the age of 8.

**Guru Tegh Bahadur:** He believed in and protected the 'right to freedom of religion' for all - not just Sikhs. He emphasised the importance of honest work and charity.

**Guru Gobind Singh:** He created the Khalsa, which consisted of Sikhs who had been baptised and dedicated themselves to Sikhism. He instructed that all Sikh males should use the last name Singh (lion) and all females the last name Kaur (princess). He finalised the Adi Granth (which contained the teachings of all the Gurus), and changed its name to the Guru Granth Sahib. He declared that it would be the last and only Guru after him.

**Thinking Point:** What beliefs do Sikhs hold? How do the beliefs held by a Sikh help to shape the way they live their lives?

## Key Learning

### Practices undertaken by Sikh's which help them to lead a good life

#### The 5 K's

The 5 Ks are 5 physical symbols worn by Sikhs who have been initiated into the Khalsa:

Kesh (uncut hair)

Kara (a steel bracelet)

Kangha (a wooden comb)

Kachera (cotton shorts)

Kirpan (steel sword)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-five-ks-of-sikhism/znbhf4j#:~:text=Khalsa%20Sikhs%20wear%20five%20symbols,%2C%20Khalsa%2C%20Kesh%20and%20Kanga.>

#### Visiting the Gurdwara and taking part in the Langar Meal

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-the-gurdwara/z4qc8xs>

There are certain practices Sikhs undertake when visiting the Gurdwara:

- Take off their shoes and wash their hands
- Cover their head out of respect to the Gurus
- Sitting down on the floor to pray and eat to show everyone is equal
- Most Sikhs visit the Gurdwara once a week. Although there is no set Holy day, they usually visit on a Sunday as it fits in around work
- Voluntarily preparing the Langar meal to share with people in need, no matter their religion

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zv7fsk7>

#### Amrit

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-taking-amrit/zj6d7nb>

Amrit Sanchar is the ceremony where a Sikh person joins the Khalsa. Usually, young Sikhs join the Khalsa between the ages of 14 and 16, when they are old enough to understand the commitment.

Sikhs who are part of the Khalsa are known as Amritdhari Sikhs. Amrit Sanchar is carried out by five people who are already part of the Khalsa. These five people represent the Panj Pyare (five loved ones). The original Panj Pyare were the first people to join the Khalsa during the life of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji, the tenth Guru.

Firstly, people taking part in the ceremony are reminded of the Sikh principles which people in the Khalsa must follow.

Then, the amrit is prepared and stirred with a khanda while parts of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji are read out by the **Granthi**.

**amrit** - A special mixture of sugar and water.

**Granthi** - The name given to the person who reads the Guru Granth Sahib Ji in a gurdwara.



**Thinking Point:** Which practices do most Sikh's uphold? How do these practices help Sikh's to lead a good life? Do you think it would be difficult to follow these practices? Why?