

Vaisakhi

Do you recognise this symbol?



Sikhism

Vaisakhi

Vaisakhi is the festival which celebrates the Sikh New Year.

It also celebrates the founding of the Sikh community, known as the Khalsa (in 1699).

It is usually celebrated on the 13th or 14th of April.



It was originally a harvest festival in the Punjab before it became the Sikh's most important festival.

The Story of Vaisakhi

In 1699, Sikhs from all over the Punjab gathered together to celebrate the local harvest festival of Vaisakhi.

Guru Gobind Singh came out of a tent carrying a sword and requested that anyone prepared to give his life for his religion come forward.

A young Sikh came forward and disappeared into the tent with the Guru. Then the Guru reappeared alone with his sword covered in blood and asked for another volunteer.

This was repeated another four times until a total of five Sikhs had gone into the tent with him.



The Story of Vaisakhi

Everyone present was very worried until eventually all five emerged from the tent alive, with Guru Gobind Singh, and wearing turbans.

The five became known as the Panj Piare, or 'Beloved Five'.

The men were then baptised into the Khalsa by the Guru. He said some prayers over the five and they were sprinkled with the Amrit (Holy Water).

This is how the Amrit ceremony came into being and these five Sikhs became the first members of the Khalsa.



How do Sikh's celebrate Vaisakhi?

Sikhs celebrate this very important day of their religion with joy and devotion. They take an early bath, wear new clothes and visit the Gurdwara to participate in the special prayer meet marked for the day.

Gudwaras are decorated and parades, dancing and singing happen throughout the day. Many Sikhs choose to be baptised into the Khalsa brotherhood on this day.



How do Sikh's celebrate Vaisakhi?

The street parades in London and Birmingham attracts between 40,000 to 100,000 people.

The procession is carried through the cities and lead by the Panj Piaras. Men, women and children alike participate in the Vaiskhi processions with enthusiasm.



Vaisakhi Video

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zs6sb9q>

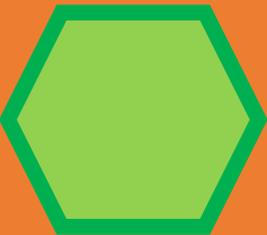
Task!



1. Your task is to work with a partner and fill in the gaps on the sheet to tell the story of The Khalsa.
2. Answer the questions on the board in your books using full sentences!



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1. What is the name for the Sikh community?
2. What did Guru Gobind Singh state that the Sikhs should always do?
3. Who was Guru Teg Bahadur?
4. In which year did the Sikhs of Punjab gather together to celebrate the harvest festival?
5. What did Guru Gobind Singh carry out of the tent?
6. Who disappeared into the tent with the Guru?
7. When the Guru reappeared, what was his sword covered in?
8. How many Sikhs in total went into the tent with him?
9. What were they wearing when they came out of the tent?
10. What are these five people now known as?