

Vaisakhi



1. As pupils enter

Play your chosen music and display one of the focus images if you wish.

2. Introduction

Tell pupils that they will be learning about the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi. If the assembly coincides with the festival make sure everyone is aware of the date. Explain that Sikhism is one of the youngest religions in the world - it dates from around 1500 CE - and that the festival of Vaisakhi celebrates the formation of the Sikh community, known as the *Khalsa*. While they watch the video, ask them to think about what it means to make a sacrifice for something important that you believe in.

3. Play the video

The duration is 4' 08". Final words: 'Happy Vaisakhi!'

4. After the video - Time to talk

Aid pupils' recall of the video and their understanding of it by asking some or all of the following:

- **Can you remember about when that the Sikh religion was founded?** (Around 1500 CE)
- **How were the teachings of Sikhism's founder, Nanak Dev, continued for the next 200 years?** (By ten gurus - teachers or spiritual guides)
- **Can you remember how the 10th guru formed the Punj Pyare?** (Invited followers to give their life for their religion; one went into tent with guru but guru came out alone with a bloodstained sword; four more followers went in; but in the end all five came out alive; the five became the Punj Pyare)
- **What does this tell us about the faith of the Punj Pyare?** (That it was absolute - they were willing to sacrifice themselves for their faith)
- **When do Sikhs celebrate Vaisakhi?** (13th or 14th April) Can you remember some of the things people do to celebrate? (Religious services; folk music; martial arts displays; parades; chakkar performances; touch hand imprint in Pakistan; wash in holy waters; share a *langar* meal)
- **What colours will you see during Vaisakhi?** (Orange, yellow and blue)
What do these colours mean or symbolise? (Joy, dawn and happiness, representing the sacrifice and rebirth of the Punj Pyare)

Conclude by asking everyone: **Turn to the person next to you and tell them what you would most enjoy about the festival of Vaisakhi and why.**

5. Opportunity to sing

If your assembly is to include a song this would be a good time to sing.

Video page

6. Opportunity to reflect

Focus your reflection on the absolute faith of the Punj Pyare.

Sit quietly now as we think about the things we've heard today...

Vaisakhi is an important festival, with lots of colour, parades, and performances...

But it is also an important time for Sikhs to renew their faith in God and the Khalsa...

The Punj Pyare showed their willingness to sacrifice their lives for their faith...

Think about what it means to have such belief in something that you're willing to make a huge sacrifice for it...

Whether we follow Sikhism or not, it's good to think what we believe in... and what we'd be willing to sacrifice for it...

7. Opportunity for prayer

Begin with your usual form of address and:

Thank you for the opportunity to celebrate the festival of Vaisakhi. Help us to learn from the steadfast faith and commitment of the Punj Pyare, the foundation of the Sikh community.

And help us to remember what is most important for each of us...and why those things are so special to us. Amen.