

Summer 2 Week 10 RE

Lesson 1

Can I understand the importance of a Gurdwara to a Sikh?

Recap - What is a place of worship?

A **place of worship** is a building or space where people go to practice and learn about their faith.

Today, we are going to look at Sikhism and their place of worship - a gurdwara.

A Sikh place of worship is a **gurdwara**. Just like churches, mosques and synagogues, not all gurdwara around the world look the same...



Sri Harmandir Sahib, located in India, is also known as 'The Golden Temple'. This is the most famous and important place of worship in the Sikh religion



Hemkund Sahib, Hemkund, also in India, is a gurdwara 15,000 feet above sea level in the Himalayan mountain range. People come here from all over the world.



Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha is thought to be the biggest in London.

What does a gurdwara look like inside?

As you saw from the pictures on the last slide, a gurdwara can look very different outside, but every synagogue will have the **same features inside**.

Click the link to watch a video that explains what would be found inside a gurdwara.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zkr87ty>

Important features of a Sikh gurdwara

Guru Granth Sahib

In a modern gurdwara, the Guru is not a person but the book of Sikh scriptures called the Guru Granth Sahib.

It is the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib that gives the gurdwara its religious status, so any building containing the book is a gurdwara.

It is treated like a person and even has its own room during the night. The book is placed on a raised platform under a canopy and covered with an expensive cloth during the day.



Important features of a Sikh gurdwara

Chauri

The Chauri is a ceremonial fan made of yak's hair. During Sikh worship, it is held over the *Guru Granth Sahib* (holy book) by the Granthi (reader) as a sign of respect.



Important features of a Sikh gurdwara

Langar

This is a free kitchen where food is served to worshippers without charge.



Important features of a Sikh gurdwara



Nishan Sahib

Gurdwaras fly flags outside to show that it is a special place of worship. The flag contains the Sikh symbol called the 'Khandda'.

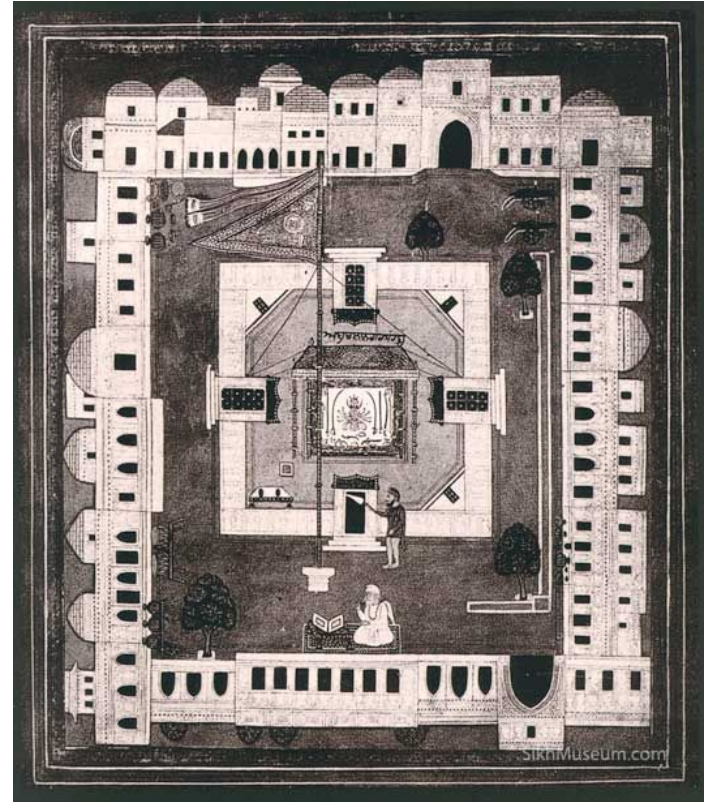


Important features of a Sikh gurdwara

The Four Doors

There are four doors into a gurdwara, known as the Door of Peace, the Door of Grace, the Door of Livelihood and the Door of Learning.

These doors are a symbol to everyone that people from all four points of the compass are welcome to enter.



Many Sikhs visit a gurdwara for worship. The gurdwara is also a place to learn more about Sikhism. The gurdwara is a community centre too, offering food, shelter and company for those who need it.

The morning service begins with singing a hymn, there is also a religious talk (called a sermon), prayers are said then there are readings from the Guru Granth Sahib (the holy book). Last of all, food is offered to everyone so people can eat and spend time together.



People also visit the gurdwara during special festivals to celebrate Gurus such as Guru Nanak because he started the Sikh faith.

Sikhs don't have priests so any Sikh can lead the prayers and read from the Guru Granth Sahib.



Engagement ceremonies can take place at the gurdwara and thanks is given for bringing the man and the woman together.

The wedding ceremony takes place in front of the Guru Granth Sahib and at the end of the service, everyone eats in the langar.

There are no idols, statues, or religious pictures in a Gurdwara, because Sikhs worship only God, and they regard God as having no physical form. Nor are there candles, incense, or bells, or any other ritualistic devices.

The focus of attention, and the only object of reverence in the Darbar Sahib (the main hall in a Gurdwara) is the book of Sikh scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, which is treated with the respect that would be given to a human Guru.



Anyone is welcome in a gurdwara but there are certain rules to follow.

- Cover your head.
- Take off your shoes and wash hands and feet before entering.
- When you enter the main prayer hall, bow in front of the holy book touching the floor with your forehead.
- Offer a donation such as money, flowers or food.
- Sit quietly on the floor with your legs crossed, facing the Guru Granth Sahib.
- Never point your feet at the Guru Granth Sahib as this is disrespectful.
- Men and women sit in different places.

Your task today is to match the features of the gurdwara to the picture. Some of you may need to complete the name of the feature.