

**Grade: 3**

**Lesson Number: 19**

**Course: Boli**

**Title: Letter Speeches**

### **Standards**

#### **Standard 4: Writing Coherent Sentences and Paragraphs**

- Students write coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea.
  - *Students can create a single paragraph, including a developed topic sentence, and simple supporting facts and details.*
  - *Students go through the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing successive versions).*

#### **Standard 9: Brief Recitations**

- Students deliver brief recitations and oral presentations.
  - *Students speak in a manner that guides the listener to understand important ideas by using proper phrasing, pitch, and modulation.*
  - *Provide a beginning, middle, and end, including concrete details that develop a central idea.*
  - *Clarify and enhance oral presentations through the use of appropriate props (e.g., objects, pictures, charts).*
  - *Retell and relate stories paying attention to the sequence of events by answering who, what, when, where, why and how questions.*

### **Objectives**

1. Students write a letter to Gaṅgū or Aurangzeb expressing how they feel about this person's actions against the Sikh Panth. This lesson will be completed by having students read their letters aloud in front of the class in speech format.

### **Prerequisites**

- None.

### **Materials**

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Lined paper
- Pencils/pens

### **Advanced Preparation**

- Teacher should prepare to avail the sākhīs of Choṭe Sāhibzāde and a translation of the Zafarnāmāh. Teacher should be familiar with the relationship of Gurū Gobind Singh with Gaṅgū and Aurangzeb.

### **Engagement (20 minutes)**

- Greet the students and allow them to get settled.

- Teacher will draw a vertical line in the middle of the chart paper. On one side the teacher will write “Gaṅgū,” and on the other side the teacher will write “Aurangzeb.”
- The teacher will ask the students, “Have you heard these names before? What can you tell me about these people?” ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਨਾਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸੁਣੇ ਹਨ? ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਦਸ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ?
- If students are not familiar with either name, stop and read them the Sākhīs and make them familiar with the two people.
- If students are familiar with them, allow students to brainstorm about who they were.
- Explain the assignment to students. Tell students. “You are to choose one person (either Gaṅgū or Aurangzeb) and you will be writing a letter to this person. In the letter, you need to explain how what they did was wrong and unjust. You need to express your feelings and tell them how you felt about what they did. Also, think about what you think Gurū Gobind Singh would say to these people.” ਗੰਗੂ ਜਾਂ ਔਰੰਗਜ਼ੇਬ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਚਿਠੀ ਲਿਖੋ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੋ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਉਹ ਕਿੰਨਾ ਗਲਤ ਸੀ। ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖੋ ਜੋ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਹੋਇਆ ਜਦੋਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਾ ਕਿ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਕੀ ਕੀਤਾ। ਆਖੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਲਿਖੋ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੀ ਕਹਦੇ, ਜੋ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ।
- Next pass out a blank paper to students, allow them to choose one person to brainstorm about. Allow students as long as they need to brainstorm. This brainstorming will help them collect their thoughts to write their letter. Students may choose to draw during brainstorming time.

### **Exploration (30 minutes)**

- As students complete their brainstorming, have a short conference with them. Ask them to show you their brainstorming, if students need extra assistance, please do it during this conference period.
- Next give them the lined paper and allow them to begin writing. You may want to discuss parts of a letter and clarify for children how to write one. You may want to provide an example.
- Walk around and offer assistance to students who may be struggling.
- Remind students that they need to mention the history – e.g., if they choose Gaṅgū, the student needs to mention how it was wrong for Gaṅgū to betray Mātā Gujrī Jī, Bābā Fatih Singh and Bābā Zorāvar Singh.
- As students finish up, allow them to pair up with a partner and edit their letters.

### **Explanation/Extension (10 minutes)**

- Give students time to fix up their corrections. If time allows, you may begin speeches during this session or continue this lesson during the next session.

### **Evaluation (On-going)**

- During the next session, students will share their speeches. At the end of the speeches the teacher should share parts of the Zafarnāmāh so that students would have a sense of how the Gurū reacted to these unjust behaviors from these men.

## **Teacher Resources**

### **Bābā Fatih Singh and Bābā Zorāvar Singh**

Although he was skeptical of the promises of safety made by the Mughal leaders, Gurū Gobind Singh complied with his followers' request to leave the battle at Anandpur Sāhib. As he approached the Sarsā (ਸਰਸਾ) river with his family and disciples during a torrential thunderstorm, the Mughal forces rescinded on their word and attempted a sneak attack. The situation was made even more troublesome by the quickly flooding river.

Only Gurū Gobind Singh, 40 Sikhs, and his elder two sons - Sāhibzādā (ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਾ) Ajit Singh and Sāhibzādā Jujhār Singh – crossed the river safely. The younger two sons of the Gurū, Sāhibzādā Zorāvar Singh and Sāhibzādā Fatih Singh, accompanied by their grandmother, Mātā Gujrī, were separated during the battle. As they fled the scene, they ran into an old acquaintance named Gaṅgū (ਗੰਗੂ) Brahmin, who had worked in their house for nearly 20 years. Upon his request, the three refugees agreed to go with Gaṅgū to his village and stay at his place for some time.

Gaṅgū was caught up in greed though. He knew he would get a handsome reward if he called the police to arrest Mātā Gujrī, Sāhibzādā Zorāvar Singh, and Sāhibzādā Fatih Singh. Accompanied by the village chief, he went to the police station and informed the station in charge about the presence of Gurū Gobind Singh's mother and his two younger sons in his house and asked for prize money for helping the authorities arrest them. The traitor Gaṅgū proceeded to take the police to his village and had Mātā Gujrī and her two grandsons arrested and handed over to Navāb Wazīr Khān of Sarhind, the Governor of the district. Navāb Wazīr Khān, who had been unable to capture Gurū Gobind Singh, was happy to capture and incarcerate the family.

The next morning, Mātā Gujrī woke her grandsons up to prepare them for their visit to Wazīr Khān's court. She cautioned them that they would be offered all kinds of riches, toys, foods, and anything that one could ever want, if they renounced their faith and accepted Islam. She shared her expectations that the grandsons would make her, Gurū Gobind Singh, and the Sikh community proud.

As the guards came to deliver the Sāhibzāde to Wazīr Khān's court, the two young ones announced their presence by loudly declaring 'Vāhigurū Jī Kā Khālsā, Vāhigurū Jī Kī Fatih!' (ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ). —

Wazīr Khān was offended and demanded that the two children bow before him. The Sāhibzāde refused, stating that a Sikh only bows to the Gurū. This upset Wazīr Khān even more, who then attempted to break the children's spirits by informing them of their father's death and the impending doom of the Sikh nation. The young ones were unaffected however.

One of the Navāb's counsels suggested that youth so strong and brave at such a young age will only become bigger problems as they age. The counsel suggested an immediate

execution, but the Navāb decided that a conversion on such high-profile individuals would be a worthwhile feat. So he decided to give it time.

The next day, multiple promises were made and threats were given to the Sāhibzāde. They still refused though, which angered the governor. He sent them back to their jail cells again with a similar conclusion. Give it more time.

On the third day, Sāhibzāde again entered by pronouncing ‘Vāhigurū Jī Kā Khālsā, Vāhigurū Jī Kī Fatih!’ This infuriated the already angered Navāb, so he asked the two boys what they would do if they were released.

The brave young boys replied: “A Sikh’s duty is to always fight for freedom against injustice. So we would organize more Sikhs and fight for freedom against any evil rulers. No one could stop us from such a mission.”

The governor felt embarrassed and humiliated that he failed in his efforts to convert the two children. An associate of his recognized his frustration and promptly suggested bricking the children alive before decapitating them. The decision was made.

The two boys were made to stand very close to each other and slowly a wall was built around them, so tight that they could not even move.

The two Sāhibzāde began reciting the Mūl Mantr, a composition that kept them in high spirits. When the wall reached up to their knees, they were asked if they would now convert to Islam. The two boys didn’t even pay attention to him.

The bricklayer continued building his wall until it reached the boys’ necks. They could barely breath at this point, but when asked if they would convert, the children declared with their trademark "Vāhigurū Jī Kā Khālsā, Vāhigurū Jī Kī Fatih!" The executioner responded by cutting off their heads.

Thus the two sons of Gurū Gobind Singh, aged 6 and 8 years respectively, became the youngest Sikh martyrs. Their bravery provided inspiration for all Sikhs. Mātā Gujri is another example and role model for all Sikhs. She was full of faith and determination and was able to share this with her grandsons.

### Zafarnāmāh

Zafarnāmāh (ਜ਼ਫਰਨਾਮਾ/ਜ਼ਫਰਨਾਮਾ) means the *Notification/Letter of Victory* and is the name given to the letter sent by Gurū Gobind Singh in 1705 to the Mughal Emperor of South Asia, Aurangzeb. The letter is written in Persian (ਫ਼ਾਰਸੀ) verse.

In this letter, Gurū Gobind Singh reminds Aurangzeb how he broke their promise made on the Koran. In this letter, Gurū Gobind Singh writes that though he has lost his four sons and so many brave Sikhs, he has won a moral victory over the Emperor who broke all his vows. He states that although Aurangzeb had a powerful army, they still were not able to capture or kill him because he was being protected by Vāhigurū.

The Zafarnāmāh has 111 verses, the maximum numbers of 34 verses are to praise Vāhigurū; 32 deal with Aurangzeb’s invitation for the Gurū to meet him and the Gurū’s refusal to meet the Emperor - instead the Gurū asks Aurangzeb to visit him; 24 verses detail the events in