

Grade: Kindergarten
Lesson Number: 21
Unit Name: Celebrations
Course: Sikh Virṣā
Title: 'Vaisākhī

Standards

Standard 4: Important Dates

- Students identify and describe the events of people celebrated during Sikh holidays and why we celebrate them. (e.g. *Vaisākhī, Divālī, Holā Mohallā, Parkāsh Utsav Gurū Nānak, Parkāsh Utsav Gurū Gobind Singh, Shahīdī Choṭe Sāhibzāde, Gurgadī Gurū Granth Sāhib, Māi Bhāgo and Sikh Bībīān Celebration*)

Objectives

1. Students will learn both the religious and cultural significance of Vaisākhī. They will be able to explain the purpose of celebrating this event.

Prerequisites

- None.

Materials

- Picture of the Vaisākhī of 1699
- Pictures of: crops, farmers harvesting crops
- Dry grase doard or ehart paper
- Markers
- Plain paper
- Large copy of Star Graphic Organizer
- Copies for class of “Distinct” poem by Harjit Singh
- Crayon, Color pencils
- Scotch tape

Advanced Preparation

- Teacher will need to copy the star Graphic Organizer onto large chart paper.
- Teacher will need to copy the poem “Distinct” on to a large chart paper.
- On a large sheet of chart paper, teacher will write “A Sikh’s Rules.”

Engagement (15 minutes)

- Write the word ਵੈਸਾਖੀ on the board. Ask students if they know what the word is. See if they can recognize some letters from the word. Help students pronounce the word and have them do a brainstorm with you. Put a circle around the word Vaisākhī and have students think of words that are correlated with Vaisākhī. Allow them to come up with both cultural and religious aspects. (e.g. it’s okay if students say Vaisākhī is about bhangrā performances – in that case, write “bhangrā” and go on to the next student)
- Tell students that you are about to share a very important sākhī with them.

- Next, have students sit down and get ready to listen to the Vaisākhī sakhi.

Exploration (30 minutes)

- Teacher will read the sākhī with lots of expression and will be dramatic.
- Class will discuss the sākhī.
- As a group, class will complete the Star graphic organizer. This will require recalling details – students may need some help but this is a great assessment to see how much students are able to remember. Teacher may want to use the following questions to help complete the graphic organizer:
 - What was this sākhī about? – What happened in the sākhī?
 - Who was an important person in this sākhī?
 - When did this sākhī really happen?
 - Where did this sākhī take place?
 - Why do you think Gurū Gobind Singh chose to have this Amrit ceremony?
- Once the graphic organizer is complete, have students discuss their feelings about the sākhī.
- Next, read the “Distinct” poem on the wall and read it to the students one time. Read it with a beat and a lot of expression.
- Explain the meaning to the students – discuss what the word distinct means.
- Next have the students recite “Distinct” as the teacher reads the rest of the poem.

Explanation/Extension (10 minutes)

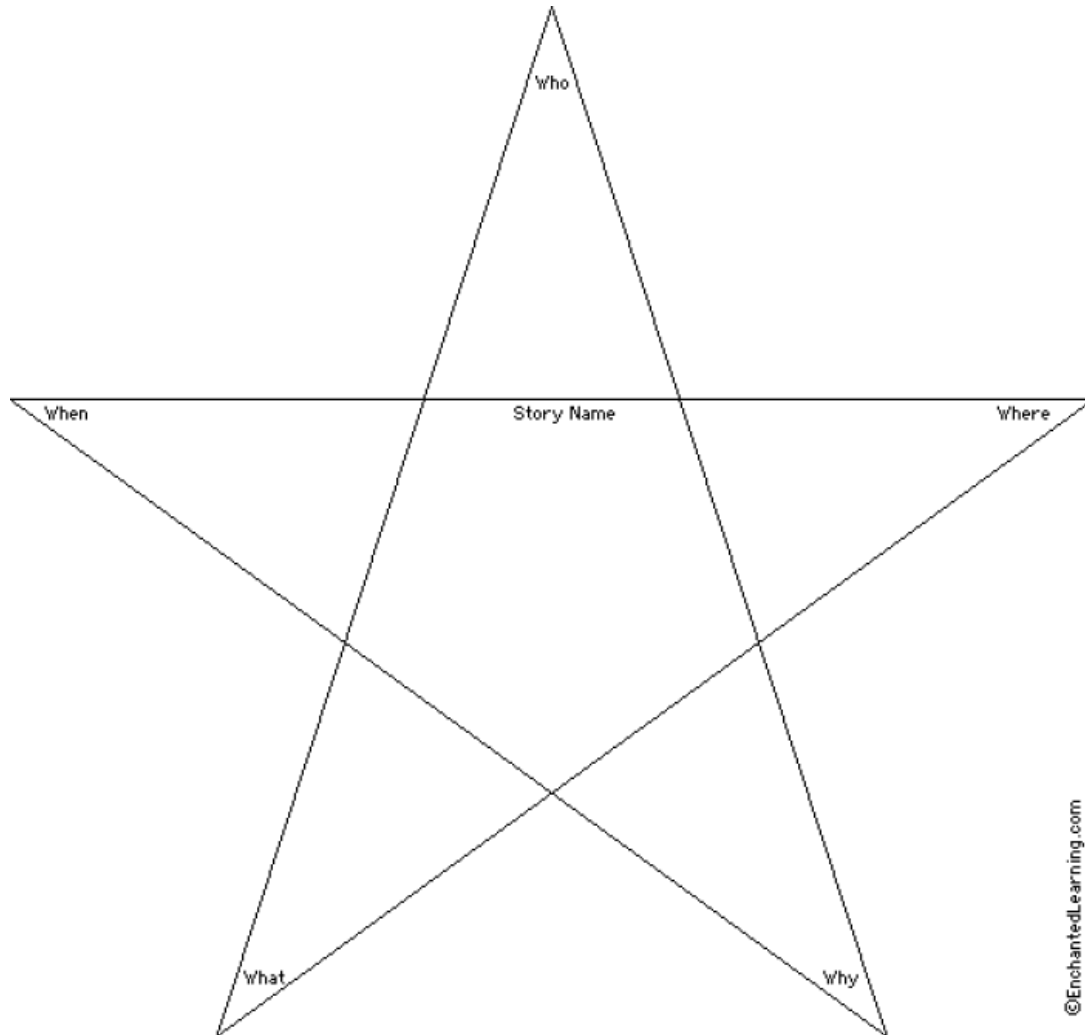
- Discuss with students about the reason rules are necessary – without rules there would be a lot of chaos and disorder.
- Teacher needs to put up the large chart paper that says “A Sikh’s Rules.”
- Next, have students think about the sākhī that they heard earlier also have them think about the “Distinct” poem and come up with rules that a Sikh should follow.
 - Students may need help with this – teacher may have to say: “What do think the Gurū would want us to do?” – Keep it positive by trying to avoid ‘Don’ts.’
- Hand-out copies of the “Distinct” poem and have students read it with their parents at home.

Evaluation (On-going)

- Leave “A Sikh’s Rules” on the wall to refer to them often.
- Make a mental note of discussion of individual performance.
- Assess and document individual students after every class.

Teacher Resources

Star Graphic Organizer



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Distinct Poem

*'AS LONG AS THE KHĀLSĀ REMAINS DISTINCT I WILL GIVE THEM ALL OF MY
BLESSINGS'
(Gurū Gobind Singh)*

*'THE WAY OF SAINTS IS DISTINCT,
SHARPER THAN A SWORD,
FINER THAN A HAIR '
(Guru Amardās)*

DISTINCT
in the way we look and dress
we only have God to impress
DISTINCT
in what we eat and drink
and in what we say and think
DISTINCT
in how we look and talk
and in how strong we walk
DISTINCT
with the 5Ks we wear
and our long uncut hair
DISTINCT
in the people we know
and in the places we go
DISTINCT
in each and everyway
on each and everyday
DISTINCT
by using our Sikh name
'cause we just aint the same
DISTINCT
'cause our Guru said
to be the same
is the same as DEAD!
DISTINCT
'cause we are great
EXTINCT
if we integrate!

- Harjit Singh

<http://www.bsingh.dsl.pipex.com/khalsa/poems11.htm>

Vaisākhī (ਵੈਸਾਖੀ)

At the Vaisākhī (also known as Baisākhī) festival of 1699, at Keshgarh Sāhib (ਕੇਸ਼ਗੜ੍ਹ ਸਾਹਿਬ) near Anandpur (ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ), Gurū Gobind Singh, the Tenth Gurū of the Sikhs founded the Khālsā. Gurū Gobind Singh, had organized for followers from all over India to meet him in Anandpur.

Gurū Gobind Singh emerged from a tent with a sword, and asked for people to give their lives for their faith. A young Sikh volunteered, followed the Gurū into a tent. Shortly after, the Gurū reappeared alone with his sword covered with blood, and asked for a second volunteer. A second Sikh stepped forward and again the Gurū took him into the tent, and reappeared alone, his sword covered in more blood. This was repeated for a third, fourth and fifth volunteer.

The crowd became very unnerved, as many believed that the Gurū had killed the five Sikhs. He soon came out of the tent again, this time followed by all five Sikhs who were alive and well and dressed in turbans and other symbols that have since become symbols of Sikh identity. He called the five Sikhs the Pañj Piāre (ਪੰਜ ਪਿਆਰੇ) - the beloved five.

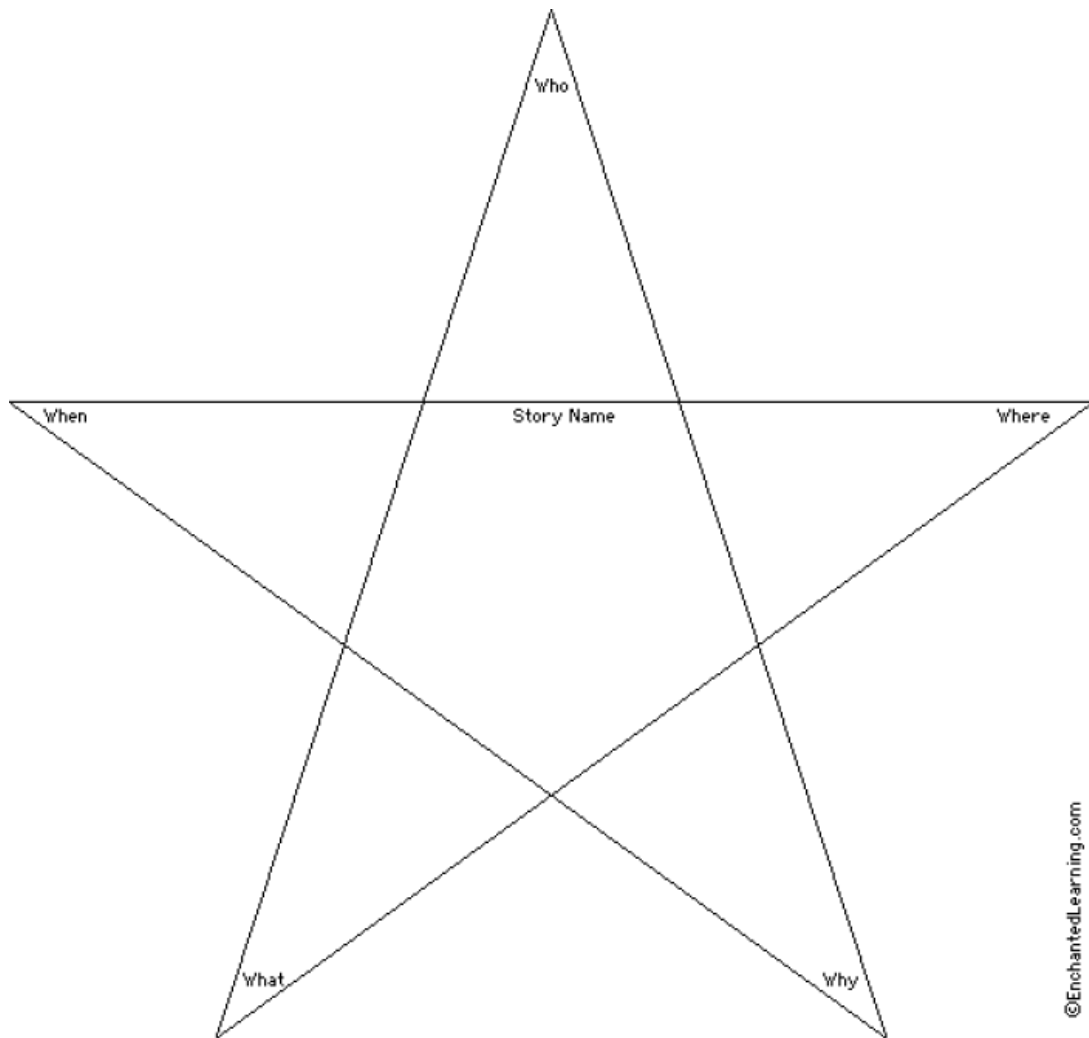
Then the Gurū put water in a bowl for sprinkling over the five in a simple initiation ceremony. He said prayers as he stirred the water with a short steel sword; symbolizing the need for strength. The Gurū's wife, Mātā Sundrī (ਮਾਤਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ), then came forward and placed some sugar crystals into the holy water or amrit as a reminder that strength must always be balanced by sweetness of temperament. After completing his prayers, the Gurū then sprinkled the amrit over the five.

He declared them to be the first members of a new community of equals, to be called the Khālsā (ਖਾਲਸਾ). These "saint-soldiers" were to dedicate their lives to the service of others and the pursuit of justice for people of all faiths. The Pañj Piāre were asked to wear five distinctive symbols of their new identity, The Five Ks.

In a move to end social divisions the five dropped their surnames - then linked to caste or occupation - and took the common name *Singh* (ਸਿੰਘ). At the same time, the Gurū gave Sikh women the name or title *Kaur* (ਕੌਰ).

The Gurū then knelt before the five and asked them to initiate him. Hence, the Khālsā became a community in which master and disciple were equal.

Star Graphic Organizer



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(Gurū Gobind Singh)

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