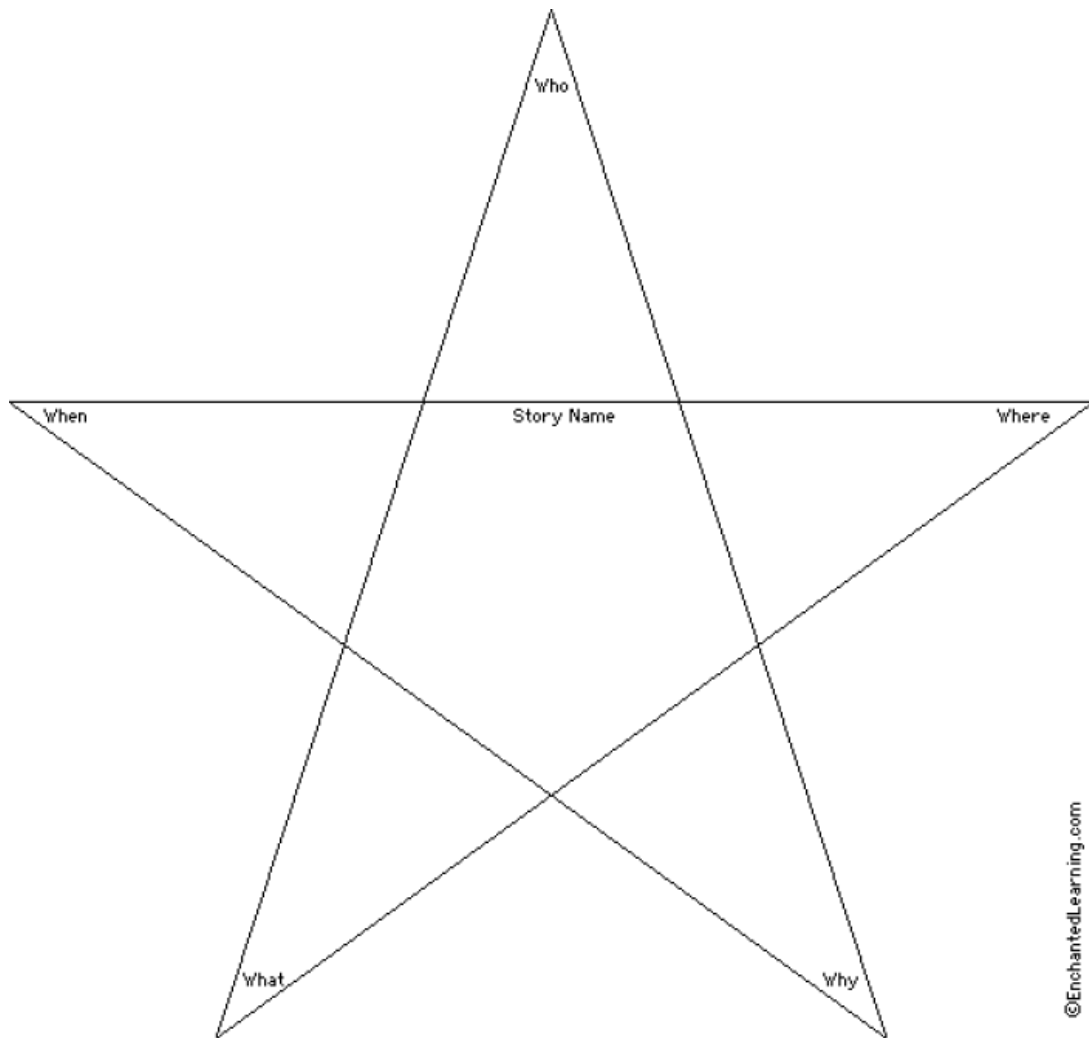


Star Graphic Organizer



©EnchantedLearning.com

“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.”*

(Gurū 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.