

California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month

The History of Sikh Heritage Month

- Sikh Heritage month is celebrated in the month of November
- Legislation passed in 2015 that California would celebrate and honor the growing Sikh community

Who are the Sikhs?



Sikhism is the 5th Largest World Religion

1. Christianity – 2.2 billion
2. Islam – 1.4 billion
3. Hinduism – 900 million
4. Buddhism – 396 million
5. **Sikhism – 23 million**
6. Judaism – 15 million



The Khanda – the symbol seen on the Sikh flag – “charity, sword, and victory.”



History

- Sikhism is a relatively young religion – just over 500 years old! It originated in South Asia in an area called Punjab in 1469, which in the present day is now split between India and Pakistan (due to the Partition of India in 1947)
- Today, most Sikhs live on the India side of Punjab



Farmers on the West Coast



Stockton Gurdwara, Sikh house of worship, on the left was the first Sikh house of worship founded in US in 1912



Dalip Singh Saund, the first ever Asian American congressman – he was of Sikh heritage and was elected in 1957.



Bhagat Singh Thind
Supreme Court Case: United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind

A Brief History of the Stockton Gurdwara



Sikh Values

One God: Loves and
sustains all of
humanity

Equality: Respects for
all genders, religions,
races, etc.

Live and earn
honestly

Service to humanity

Social Justice

Equality is a large value for Sikhs. This stems from the caste system they endured in 1469. Sikhs reject the idea that people should be broken into different classes and not marry and interact with people outside their caste. This aligns with the belief there is only one God and everyone is equal and the same in God's eyes.

The Sikh Identity

- Sikh individuals have the opportunity to dedicate their life to the Khalsa.
- The Khalsa was created to initiate Sikhs that you are committing to live your life by the Sikh values because you believe in them and not just because you were born Sikh.
- This initiation happens at any time in a Sikhs life. After initiation men's last names will change to Singh and women's last names are changed to Kaur.
- It is noted that all Sikhs are on their own journeys. So how, when, and if they go through initiation is up to them. They may live varying degrees of the values throughout their lives.

Vocabulary

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- Gurdwara
 - Place of prayer, and learning
- Langar
 - A meal served by volunteers at every gurdwara
- Punjabi
 - 80+ million people speak Punjabi, including many Sikh Americans that live in the US. It written from left to right like English. It has 35 letters compared to our 26 in the alphabet.



Articles of Faith



Iron Bracelet (Kara)
Good Deeds



Comb (Kanga)
Cleanliness



Kirpan
Protection



Underpants
(Kachera)
Self Discipline



THE
SIKH COALITION

What are the Sikh 5 Ks?



A Sikh American Experience



Dastaar: Sikh Turban Styles

- 99% of people wearing a turban in the U.S. are Sikhs
- Means that Sikhs can always be recognized and are duty bound to offer help
- Mandatory religious obligation
- Under no circumstances can the turban be forcibly removed



“Neel” by David Woo



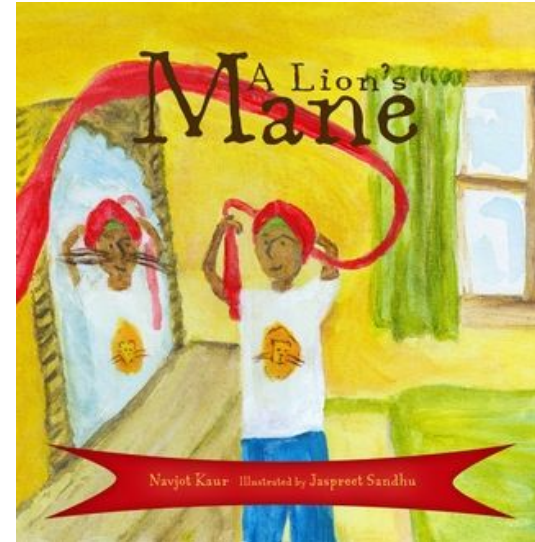
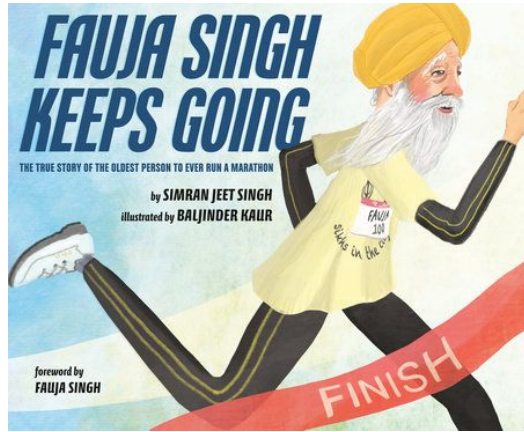
Challenges

- Hate Crimes
 - victims of homicide, assault, vandalism
- School Harassment
 - bias based bullying, name calling, physical attacks
- Workplace Discrimination



Children's Books by Sikh Authors

Click the covers for read alouds and videos.



Lesson Plans

- Elementary
- Middle School and High School

Slide Recognition

This presentation is based from the [Sikh Coalition](#) heritage recognition slides.

We are grateful for the resource from the Coalition to be able to provide information and resources for FCUSD.

**Did you try and any lessons in
your classroom?**

**Click here to submit student
work to be showcased.**