

*Topic Question:*

*Why do some Sikhs choose  
to become part of the  
Khalsa?*

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of the Khalsa?*

*RE Today: Sikhism NEW*

*(T&W Agreed Syllabus: Religion and the  
individual: exploring commitment)*

# Lesson 1

*What are initiation ceremonies?*

*Can you think of some examples?*

Watch the videos and make notes around the pictures of them:

Bar Mitzvah:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDZuvPpzXCk>

Baptism:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uRymbCJmbYk>

Adhan:

[https://www.bing.com/videos/search?](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=whispering+the+adhan+for+baby+kids+bbc&adlt=strict&view=detail&mid=C4F77700632978EED5DCC4F77700632978EED5DC&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dwhispering%2Bthe%2Badhan%2Bfor%2Bbaby%2Bkids%2Bbbc%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVDMMH%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dwhispering%2Bthe%2Badhan%2Bfor%2Bbaby%2Bkids%2Bbbc%26sc%3DO-38%26sk%3D%26cvid%3D4A406342D4E74E079D27C2E83CB1369B)

[q=whispering+the+adhan+for+baby+kids+bbc&adlt=strict&view=detail&mid=C4F77700632978EED5DCC4F77700632978EED5DC&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dwhispering%2Bthe%2Badhan%2Bfor%2Bbaby%2Bkids%2Bbbc%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVDMMH%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dwhispering%2Bthe%2Badhan%2Bfor%2Bbaby%2Bkids%2Bbbc%26sc%3DO-38%26sk%3D%26cvid%3D4A406342D4E74E079D27C2E83CB1369B](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=whispering+the+adhan+for+baby+kids+bbc&adlt=strict&view=detail&mid=C4F77700632978EED5DCC4F77700632978EED5DC&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dwhispering%2Bthe%2Badhan%2Bfor%2Bbaby%2Bkids%2Bbbc%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVDMMH%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dwhispering%2Bthe%2Badhan%2Bfor%2Bbaby%2Bkids%2Bbbc%26sc%3DO-38%26sk%3D%26cvid%3D4A406342D4E74E079D27C2E83CB1369B)

# Orange and Blue Group

## Use the information to create a booklet about initiation ceremonies including at least 3 different ceremonies!



Thinking time: an initiation  
Christ in the wilderness  
Ivan Kowalowy, 1879  
[www.ivan-kowalowy.com](http://www.ivan-kowalowy.com)

From the age of 35 Muhammad used to withdraw to the mountains of Mecca to a cave on Mt. Hira. He was in meditation. It was during one of these times of seclusion that the angel Gabriel appeared to him. At first he feared that he had been visited by a devil. He was told that the angel Gabriel, who commanded him to 'read'. The subsequent revelation was the Qur'an. It is said of his encounters with the angel that at times Muhammad would be wounded by the sound of a bell.

Native American vision questing can take place as early as 10 years old. A young person retreats to the wilderness to wait for a vision that will give them an idea of their gift: the quality/characteristic that would be their contribution to their society. For more on the Native American vision quest: <http://native-american-online.com/native-american-vision-quest.html>

Charles Darwin is famous for his theory of evolution which was published in a book called *On the Origin of Species*. Darwin believed that all species (plants and animals) have descended from a common ancestor. Through natural selection individuals developing characteristics that make them more likely to survive. They would then pass these characteristics on to their offspring, and so on.

Darwin developed his theory through a voyage he took when he was a young man. He spent five years on a ship called *The Beagle* and visited countries as far away as South America. During his voyage he collected a huge number of geological and biological specimens many of which you can still see in the Natural History Museum in London.

Darwin suffered from bad health in later years and this kept him confined at home. It was at this time that he published his great curiosity with experiments involving plants: for instance insect pollination and the movement of climbing plants. He would walk through the grounds of his estate at Down House three times a day, both for exercise and because it helped him ponder the questions that were bothering him. He called it his 'thinking path'.



Darwin's 'thinking path'  
[www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk)



Shichi-go-san  
[Wikipedia](http://www.wikipedia.org)

Most girls wear kimonos when making their Shichi-go-san visit, while boys wear haori (style jacket) and hakama (skirt-like trousers or culottes).

Following the trip to the shrine, parents generally give their children *chitose-no-ue* ('longevity candy'). This candy is shaped like a stick and comes in a bag decorated with cranes and turtles, symbols of longevity; both candy and bag are expressions of parents' wishes that their children should lead long and prosperous lives.

Circumcision is an initiation rite for Jewish newborn males. This usually takes place in a ceremony called a Brit (or Britz) *milah* witnessed by family and community members. *Milah* is Hebrew for 'covenant of circumcision'. The ritual is an ancient practice that has been carried out by Jewish parents for more than 3,000 years. Such is the importance that circumcision can take place on the Sabbath or a holy day even though the drawing of blood is not normally allowed on these days under Jewish law.

Originally, there was no special celebration to welcome female infants into the world. After the birth, a few congregations began to create a ceremony to welcome girls into the world. The idea quickly made it a widespread practice in many families.

see: <http://www.britainonline.com>  
<http://www.britainonline.com>



Bat Mitzvah  
by Landis  
[www.fox.com](http://www.fox.com)



First communion, Austria  
by Layne Jackson

**Confirmation**  
For many Christians, confirmation is one of the three rites of initiation that incorporate an individual into the Body of Christ—i.e. membership in the Church. The other two are baptism and communion. The purpose of confirmation is to welcome the presence of the Holy Spirit into the life of the child or adult. Confirmation was originally developed by the Reform movement, which promoted an additional instruction into the faith—or catechism—as part of the preparation before confirmation and first communion.

**First communion**  
A child's first communion is traditionally a big event for Catholic families. Special clothing—often white to symbolize purity—is usually worn. Girls wear fancy dresses and often a veil attached to a headpiece, as well as white gloves.

**Jewish confirmation**  
Confirmation is a somewhat less widespread coming of age ritual that occurs when a child is 16 or 18. Confirmation was originally developed by the Reform movement, which promoted an additional instruction into the faith—or catechism—as part of the preparation before confirmation and first communion.

**Historical incidents**  
Christian baptism  
"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'" *Matthew 3: 16-17*



The baptism of Christ  
Joachim Patenier (1515)  
[www.galleryofart.com](http://www.galleryofart.com)



Vaisakhi 1699  
Guru Gobind Singh and the panj piare  
[www.gurugobind.com](http://www.gurugobind.com)

**Sikh merit ceremony**  
In 1699 CE, the tenth Sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh, chose Vaisakhi as the occasion to pass the mantle of authority from the succession of human gurus to the collection of Sikh scriptures; previously known as the *Adi Granth* ('original collection'), this set of texts would henceforth be known as *Guru Granth Sahib* ('collection of sacred wisdom').

At the time, the Sikhs community was under assault by the Muslim ruler of India. Addressing the issue would have to be replaced with unity and strength if they were to survive. With split swords, he gathered for the Vaisakhi celebration. Gobind Singh highlighted this threat, proclaiming that weak response. And then one man stepped forward and was led into the guru's tent. When Gobind Singh emerged with a bloodied sword, there was hushed silence, and soon four more brave souls went forward. They followed him into the tent and the crowd waited, expecting that only the guru would emerge. But when he did finally appear, he was not alone: all five volunteers came with him, the five men who had taken the leap of faith and risked all. The five men in turn offered the sword to the code of discipline set down by Gobind Singh.

For more on the importance of Vaisakhi to Sikhs: [www.sikhnet.com/sikhnet/gurbg/gurbg.htm](http://www.sikhnet.com/sikhnet/gurbg/gurbg.htm)



Whispering the address to newborn's ear  
[bhagpot.com](http://www.bhagpot.com)



Sikh naming ceremony  
[aboutislam.com](http://aboutislam.com)

**Islam:** There are several stages associated with the birth of a child: welcome into the *Ummah*, community of Muslims (this is accomplished when the head of the family whispers the *adha*, or call to prayer, into the newborn infant with religious piety (prayers asking for a sweet disposition are said as the child's gums are rubbed with crushed date or sugar), *Aqiqah* (the naming ceremony, which takes place seven days after birth: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9v\\_GW7v8A4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9v_GW7v8A4)), and for male children *Milith* (circumcision).

**Hinduism:** There are sixteen *samskaras* or important steps in the life of a Hindu, four of which occur before birth. The first nine *samskaras* are: prayer for a child, prayer for the health of the child, prayer for naming), a special meal, piercing the ears, the first haircut (occurs between age 1-3). It is also traditional to write the sacred symbol, *Aum* on the tongue of the newborn in honey, using a gold ring. Information about the Hindu naming ceremony (*namakaran*): <http://festivalsofindia.com/rituals/namakaran.html>

**Sikhism:** When a baby is born a special prayer is read and a drop of *Amrit* (sweetened water symbolizing the essence of divinity) is placed on the baby's tongue. At a ceremony at the *Gurdwara*, the name of the baby is chosen by opening the *Guru Granth Sahib* at random: the name chosen must begin with the first letter of the first word on the left hand side of the page. Singh ('son'; a reminder to be courageous) is added to boys' names, while Kaur ('princess'; to stress dignity) is added to girls' names.

**Humanist:** Naming ceremonies are relatively new and increasingly popular amongst humanists, who may want to mark their child's arrival but who want to do so in a way that isn't religious. They are individually tailored and can include a variety of elements, such as readings, words about the importance and responsibility of parenting, parental promises to the child, appointment of 'guide parents' and the choice of the child's names.

Yellow group

Use the twinkl information instead to  
create a booklet about 2 ceremonies



*Books*

*Question for the topic*  
*Video pics with info*  
*Booklet*



Friday 19th November

L.O. To understand about  
initiation into the Sikh  
Khalsa

## Becoming an Amritdhari Sikh

Many Sikhs want to show their commitment and dedicate their lives more fully to Sikhism, so they are initiated into the Khalsa, becoming Amritdhari Sikhs. This comes from Guru Gobind Singh.

Read the story together and watch the video. In partners, answer questions 1 and 2 in sentences in your books.

## Five brave men

### A Sikh story

*Colour-code parts which show commitment*

**Key Ideas: courage, commitment, symbols of belonging, Baisakhi**

It was the spring of 1699. The Sikhs had many enemies, including the Emperor of India, who was a Muslim. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth leader of the Sikhs called them together at Baisakhi, an old Indian festival celebrating spring. They were to meet at Anandpur. People came from far and wide, and soon over a hundred thousand Sikhs were gathered together.

On Baisakhi day, after early morning prayers, Guru Gobind Singh stood outside his tent, ready to talk to the huge crowd. He was dressed in military uniform, and held a sword in his hand as he began to speak. A hush fell over the crowd. Everyone seemed to sense the seriousness of the occasion.

The Guru held his sword high, and it glinted in the sun. "Which of you is ready to die for your faith? Who will give his head to prove he is ready to die for what he believes?" A gasp went round the crowd. This was a strange demand from a leader who had always been so kind and gentle. You could hear a pin drop. Then some people in the crowd started to turn and walk away. They thought the Guru had gone mad.

Suddenly one man stepped forward. His name was Daya Ram. He looked his leader in the eye. Daya Ram said he loved God enough to die for him. The people in the crowd held their breath. What would happen next? Guru Gobind Singh took Daya Ram into the tent. There was a swish, and a thud, and blood flowed out. The Guru emerged, his sword dripping red. He demanded another head for God. Most people were terrified by now, but another man plucked up courage, and said that he too was willing to die for God.

Again there was a swish and a thud from inside the tent, and again the Guru emerged, sword dripping. And again, he asked for a head. Another volunteer stepped forward. Twice more the same thing happened, until five men had gone into the tent, and only the Guru had come out.

By now the crowd was much smaller. All those who were afraid, or who thought Gobind Singh was mad, had left. Those who remained were awe-struck by what they had seen. They were even more amazed when, a few moments after the last swish and thud, all five volunteers emerged from the tent with the Guru. All five were dressed in saffron uniforms. All five carried swords.

The Guru announced to the crowd that these five were now his brothers and the first members of the Khalsa, an army of soldiers for God, and a brotherhood where everyone is equal. Each of the five men was given a drink of water and sugar, called amrit, and some was sprinkled over them. By the end of the day nearly all of the people present had taken part in the same ceremony, including the Guru and his wife.

To show that they belonged to the Khalsa, Gobind Singh asked all Sikhs to wear the five symbols of their faith, the five Ks, as a sign that they are all equal. He also gave everyone in the Khalsa a new name to show they belonged. All men should take the name Singh, which means lion, and all women Kaur, meaning princess.

Even today, Baisakhi is a day when many Sikhs take part in the ceremony to show they belong to the Khalsa. They wear the five Ks, and take the name Singh or Kaur.

<https://>

[www.truetube.co.uk/  
film/formation-khalsa](https://www.truetube.co.uk/film/formation-khalsa)

1. What commitment did the five volunteers show?
2. Why do you think they volunteered?

Now watch this video and answer questions 3 and 4:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mx69p>

3. How hard would it be to decide to become an Amritdhari Sikh?

4. What difference should taking part in this ceremony make to a Sikh person's life?

# Read the information about becoming a Khalsa Sikh:

## Becoming a Khalsa Sikh

### Sikh vows and duties

When a Sikh is being initiated he or she will be reminded that they must follow the Sikh duties at all times:

- to wear the five Ks
- to follow the teaching of the Guru Granth Sahib
- to not smoke or take drugs
- to accept other Sikhs as equal and be prepared to sacrifice everything for the Sikh faith
- to give a tenth of their income to charity

When the Khalsa was originally formed, the five Ks were adopted and the following vows made:

- to not cut the hair
- to not smoke or drink alcohol
- to not eat meat that has been killed in a ritual way
- to stay true to their husband or wife



Amrit is stirred by the Panj Piare

### The Amrit Sanskar

The *Amrit Sanskar* is the ceremony during which Sikhs can become part of the Khalsa. It takes place at the gurdwara in the hours before sunrise. The ceremony can be attended by both Sikhs and non-Sikhs but is conducted by five people who have already taken *Amrit*. These five act as the Panj Piare, representing the five beloved ones from the original ceremony conducted by Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur in 1699. The story of the first ceremony is remembered by Sikhs at the festival of Baisakhi, which is why Baisakhi is the most popular time of year for *Amrit Sanskar*.

Those who have made the decision that they are ready to take *Amrit* pray and meditate in the prayer hall near the Guru Granth Sahib. The five Panj Piare stir water and sugar with a *khandi*, a double-edged sword, in a steel bowl whilst reciting the daily prayers, and readings from the Guru Granth Sahib are completed.

During the ceremony each person who wants to make this commitment kneels and is given *Amrit* to drink and has *Amrit* sprinkled in their eyes and hair five times. After each time the candidates repeat the phrase 'The Khalsa belongs to the Waheguru, victory belongs to the Waheguru'. 'Waheguru' means 'God'.

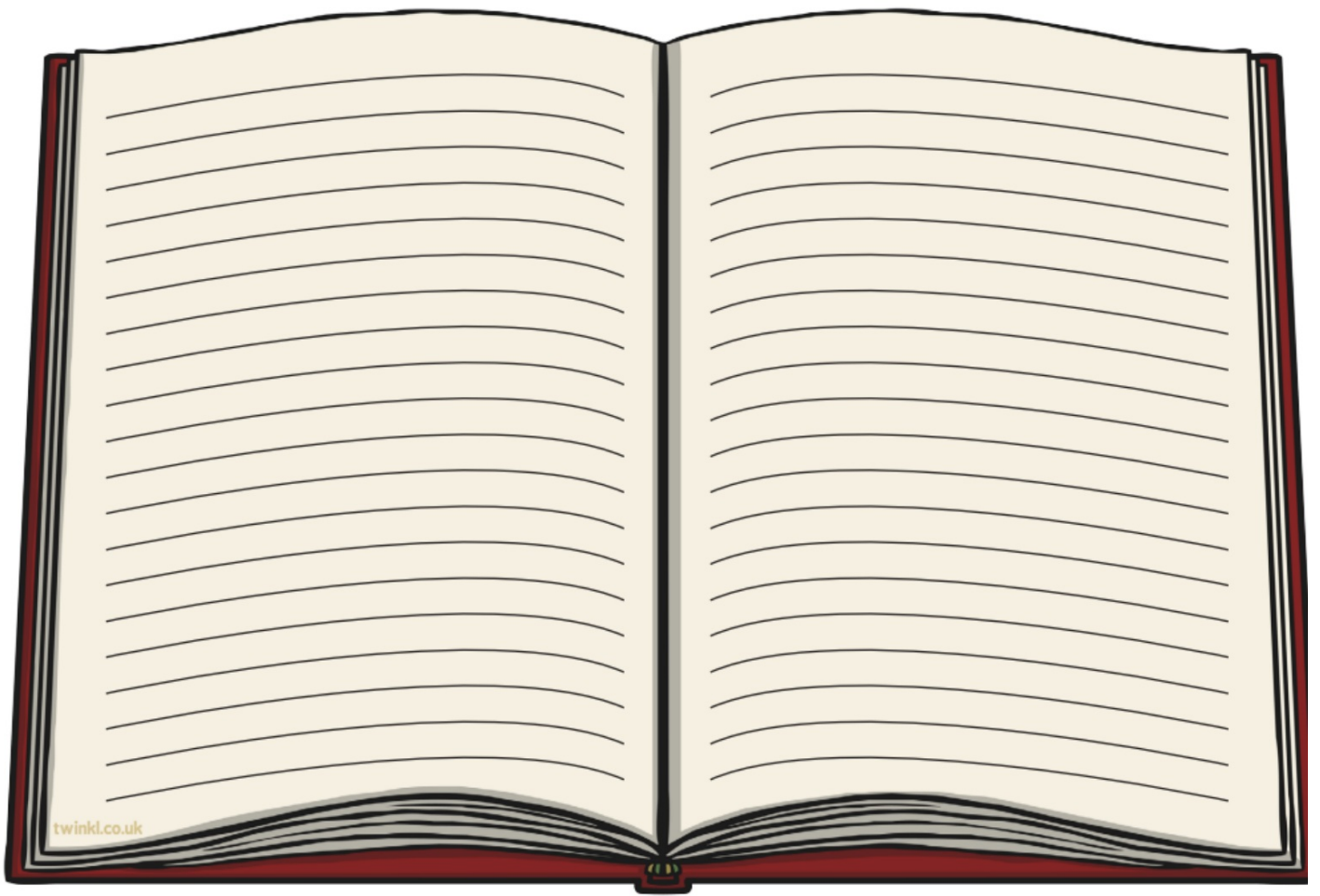
During the ceremony the Khalsa rules are explained. The Mool Mantar (the opening part of the Guru Granth Sahib) is recited. Other parts of the Guru Granth Sahib are sung and prayers said. Members of the Khalsa give out *karah parshad*, a blessed food made from flour, sugar, *ghee* and water, to the new members of the Khalsa. From this time men will have the name 'Singh', meaning 'lion', and women will have the name 'Kaur', meaning 'princess'.

After the ceremony everyone joins together for a meal in the *langar*.

Pretend you have attended to witness a Sikh friend being initiated into the Sikh Khalsa. Write a diary entry about what it was like. You can use the picture to make it look scrapbook-like!

TEACHER FOCUS GROUP - Yellow





## Books

Story colour coded

Question sheet

Answered questions

Diary entry

## Lesson 3

Making the decision whether or not to become an *Amritdhari* Sikh is a difficult one that means a deepening of one's commitment to Sikhism. Not all Sikhs decide to become *Amritdhari*, or see it as something they need to aspire to. Most commonly, Sikhs take part in the ceremony in their teens, but sometimes they are much older and sometimes younger.

Read the information about Amanpreet and Tanvir:

#### Amanpreet

Amanpreet is 15 and she lives in Northampton. She is taking her exams in June. She is a committed Sikh. No one in her close family is an *Amritdhari* Sikh.



It is a really exciting time in my life. I'm really enjoying the youth activities I do with my *sangat* (community). I really feel part of a massive Sikh family. I still managed to fit in my *sewa*, service, even with the work I'm doing for my exams. It is great to be able to help out with the work of the Midland Langar Seva Society giving out food to homeless people. I have been doing that for six months now.

Some of the other things are tough though. Wearing the five Ks is fine, although sometimes people ask me what seem to be daft questions like how will I look nice at prom if I don't get my hair cut.

I am managing to get up early to pray at the weekends but not in the week. Being a Sikh is really important to me but I'm at a really busy time of life right now.

I would like to go and talk to some of the women at the gurdwara about taking part in the *Amrit Sanskar*. I'm not sure how I will know if I'm ready.

#### Tanvir

Tanvir is 16 and he lives in Wolverhampton. He has just finished his exams and is starting to study his A levels. His mum and dad are both *Amritdhari* Sikhs.



What a relief to have finished my exams. It feels a bit like the rest of my life will start now. It is great to be able to have a bit more of a social life too and be back in the gurdwara football team. Mum and Dad mentioned that they would like me to take part in the big *Amrit Sanskar* that will happen in April at Baisakhi. My brother did it when he was 16 so I suppose it is my turn to do it. Being a Sikh is really important to me but I don't think about it very often. I take part in all the important things. I go on the Baisakhi procession. I even say my prayers, but not every day.

I have worn the five Ks for as long as I can remember but I know being an *Amritdhari* Sikh is much more than that.

I know I will do it at some time but the question is really about whether this is the right time. Maybe I need to learn to read the Guru Granth Sahib first. I've asked some people at the gurdwara to see if they know what it is best for me to do.

Underline anything you think is important in helping them to make a decision.

*This is their advice from family and friends:*

<p>Can you keep the promises? Can you be someone who shows Sikhi (Sikhism) at its best?</p>	<p>A Sikh should only take Amrit when he or she is mature enough to understand the obligations that being a full member of the Khalsa demands.</p>	<p>Your rehat (spiritual discipline) can suffer at university so maybe you should take it before then.</p>
<p>It is about becoming part of a big family. All those who are Amritdhari are brothers and sisters. It isn't about giving up the world.</p>	<p>Amrit is a gift and I am so glad that I joined the Khalsa. Remember, though, that joining the Khalsa is not something that every Sikh does – can you make this commitment?</p>	<p>It is a challenge: getting up early to say prayers, not doing certain things and trying to live the best Sikh life – are you ready for that now?</p>
<p>Why don't you wait until you have settled down and know what you really want in life? Do you really feel able to make this decision now? You are only a teenager!</p>	<p>If you are seriously considering this then you are probably ready. It is about showing what is important in your life and that you are old enough to make that choice.</p>	<p>Remember you don't have to be perfect to take part in the Amrit Sanskar. I certainly wasn't, but it helped to focus me on what was important in my life.</p>

*Cut them out and draw the line in your book then stick them where you think they should go!*

*Can you rank them from:  
It is the right time*



*Not ready yet*

Split the class in half and ask them to work on either Amanpreet or Tanvir. Stick in the middle of a double page and annotate your ideas from each question:

Use the information to prepare points for a discussion about whether Amanpreet or Tanvir should take part in the Amrit Sanskar and become an Amritdhari Sikh.

Include points about:

- What it means to be an Amritdhari Sikh
- The vows and duties taken on by an Amritdhari Sikh
- All the benefits and challenges of becoming an Amritdhari Sikh at this point in their life. Is this the best time in life to take this step, and why?
- Your suggestion as to what they should do, and why.

*Have a class discussion and take photos!*

*Books*

*Amanpreet abnd Tanvir sheet underlined*

*Responses ranked*

*Double page annotated*

*Photo of discussion*



*Lesson 4 and 5*

Your teacher will put you into groups of 4.

Imagine that schools have to organise a ceremony for 18 year olds at which they will receive their 'certificates of adulthood'. You will need to create these things:

1. Suggest 5 promises that everyone will have to agree to.
2. Create a list of some of the privileges and responsibilities that an adult has, to be read out in the ceremony.
3. Write an outline of a speech given by someone in their 20s at the ceremony, reflecting the challenges and benefits of adulthood.
4. Design the certificate, ensuring that it provides a reminder of both the privileges and responsibilities of adulthood.

Stick in your task sheet:

### Adulthood Ceremony Challenge!



*In your group, your task is to complete the following activities:*

- 1. Suggest five promises that everyone will have to agree to.*
- 2. Create a list of some of the privileges and responsibilities that an adult has, to be read out in the ceremony.*
- 3. Write an outline of a speech given by someone in their 20s at the ceremony, reflecting on the challenges and benefits of adulthood.*
- 4. Design the certificate, ensuring it provides a reminder of both the privileges and responsibilities of adulthood.*

Then with the copy of the activities, cut out activity 1, stick it in and decide with your group on the 5 promises that people joining adulthood will have to agree to. Write them under your cut out of activity 1!

1. Suggest five promises that everyone will have to agree to.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### Some ideas!

1. Don't be a jerk. Kids are allowed to react, throw peas at the wall, and have temper tantrums. This k
2. Take full responsibility for where you're at in your life. You can complain about your life, and some k
3. Love hard and responsibly. You've been hurt. We all have. But loving from a place of hurt isn't

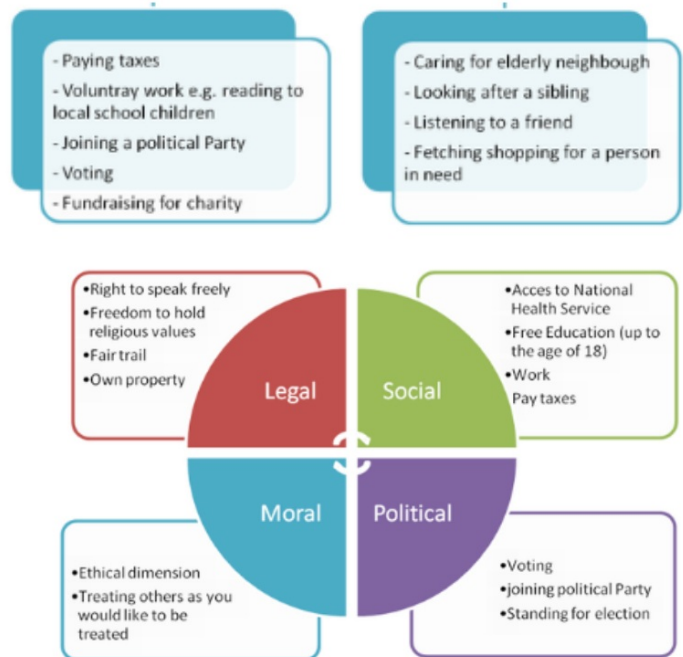
1. Show Up on Time. Be on time in the morning, to meetings, to presentations, to company all-hands, to off-sites early...
2. Dress Appropriately. You know what this means in your office.
3. Do What's Asked. It shouldn't have to be said, but I'm going to anyways. Your boss gives you an assignment, or asks...
4. Respect Your Co-workers. Be kind, honest, and patient with them. Along those same lines, avoid gossip. You'll have to...
5. Keep Your Complaining Quiet. There will be times...

Next, stick in activity 2 and think of about 10 priviledges/responsibilities an adult has!

2. Create a list of some of the privileges and responsibilities that an adult has, to be read out in the ceremony.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Some ideas!





*Annotate ideas as a class*

Then stick in activity 3 and brainstorm with the class about the challenges and benefits of adulthood. Write a rough draft of a speech with your group (introduction, 1 paragraph on challenges, 1 on benefits). Perform it to the class and your teacher will take a photo of you! Then copy it neatly into your books

3. Write an outline of a speech given by someone in their 20s at the ceremony, reflecting on the challenges and benefits of adulthood.

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### An example!

There are many factors that constitute being an adult. An adult is much more than turning the age of 18. The definition in the dictionary states an adult means being completely grown: fully developed and mature. I think there is much more that defines an adult. In the United States an adult is considered to be someone who takes responsibility of themselves and their actions. An adult has stability in their life and is able to take care of themselves physically, mentally, financially and emotionally. In other countries and cultures there definition of an adult differs. Adults are unique in many ways. Every person is an entity having their own identity, thought process, and way they see things. We all have different morals and ...



Photo!



Finally, stick in activity 4 and your certificate. Make sure it includes information on privileges and responsibilities!

4. Design the certificate, ensuring it provides a reminder of both the privileges and responsibilities of adulthood.



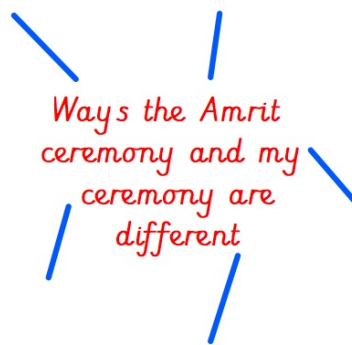
Here are some example certificates:



Consider the Amrit ceremony and the ceremony you have planned.

What are the similarities and differences?

Brainstorm some ideas in your books!



Answer the question!

# Why do some Sikhs choose to become part of the Khalsa?

Work in mixed ability partners to write a detailed answer!

Use the information to help you:

## The Khalsa

The Khalsa was formed by Guru Gobind Singh at Vaisakhi in AD1699. It is a group into which committed Sikhs can be initiated to demonstrate their devotion to their faith.

The Khalsa commemorates five volunteers who were prepared to offer their lives for Waheguru and Guru Gobind Singh. Their commitment is an example of *gurmatta* – a willingness to serve others without thought for your own wellbeing.

After offering their lives to Guru Gobind Singh, the five volunteers were given *amrit*, which is a mixture of sugar and water. They were given it in a bowl stirred by a *khanda* – a double-edged sword. This represented them being initiated into the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh then declared them the first five members of the Khalsa. They became known as the *Panj Pyar*, – the five beloved ones.

Guru Gobind Singh and his wife were then initiated into the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh declared that all men who were initiated into the Khalsa would be given the name 'Singh', meaning 'lion', and all women who were initiated would be given the name 'Kaur', meaning 'princess'. This indicates the removal of status or caste and represents equality and fairness within all humanity.

The word '**khalsa**' means '**pure**'. Joining the Khalsa is a sign of commitment in **Sikhism**.

Today, Sikhs who wish to become members of the Khalsa show their commitment and dedication by taking part in the *Amrit Sanchar* ceremony. This ceremony initiates them into the Khalsa.

### The Khalsa



"I have made this body and mind a sacrifice, a spiritual offering to the Lord. Sustaining my body and mind, I have entered over the burning path of devotion, and I have won the light of truth." (Dasavtaar, Chant, pg. 476)

#### Who and What is a Khalsa?

The Khalsa means the unquantifiable body of souls, and never ceases from the thought of One God. He who has the will and confidence in God and does not let his faith waver by anyone, in being in the company of Waheguru, Mitha, Anandkaur, or Singh of the Khalsa, for who recognizes the One God and the principles, accepting, non-discrimination, of the persons, or societies, and in whose heart the light of the Perfect One shines, he is to be recognized as a pure member of the Khalsa (Guru Gobind Singh, 10 Dasavtaar).



The word 'Khalsa' means 'pure'. Khalsa are Sikhs who have undergone the sacred Amrit Ceremony initiated by the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa order was widely created on Baisakhi Day March 29, 1699, with Guru Gobind Singh leading 5 Sikhs and there is one among them the Khalsa's leader. Following the 10th Guru, personally baptised thousands of men and women into the Khalsa order. The Khalsa baptised ceremony is undertaken as part of some non-personal spiritual evolution when the initiate is ready to fully live up to the high expectations of Guru Gobind Singh. All Sikhs are expected to be Khalsa or be working towards that goal.



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