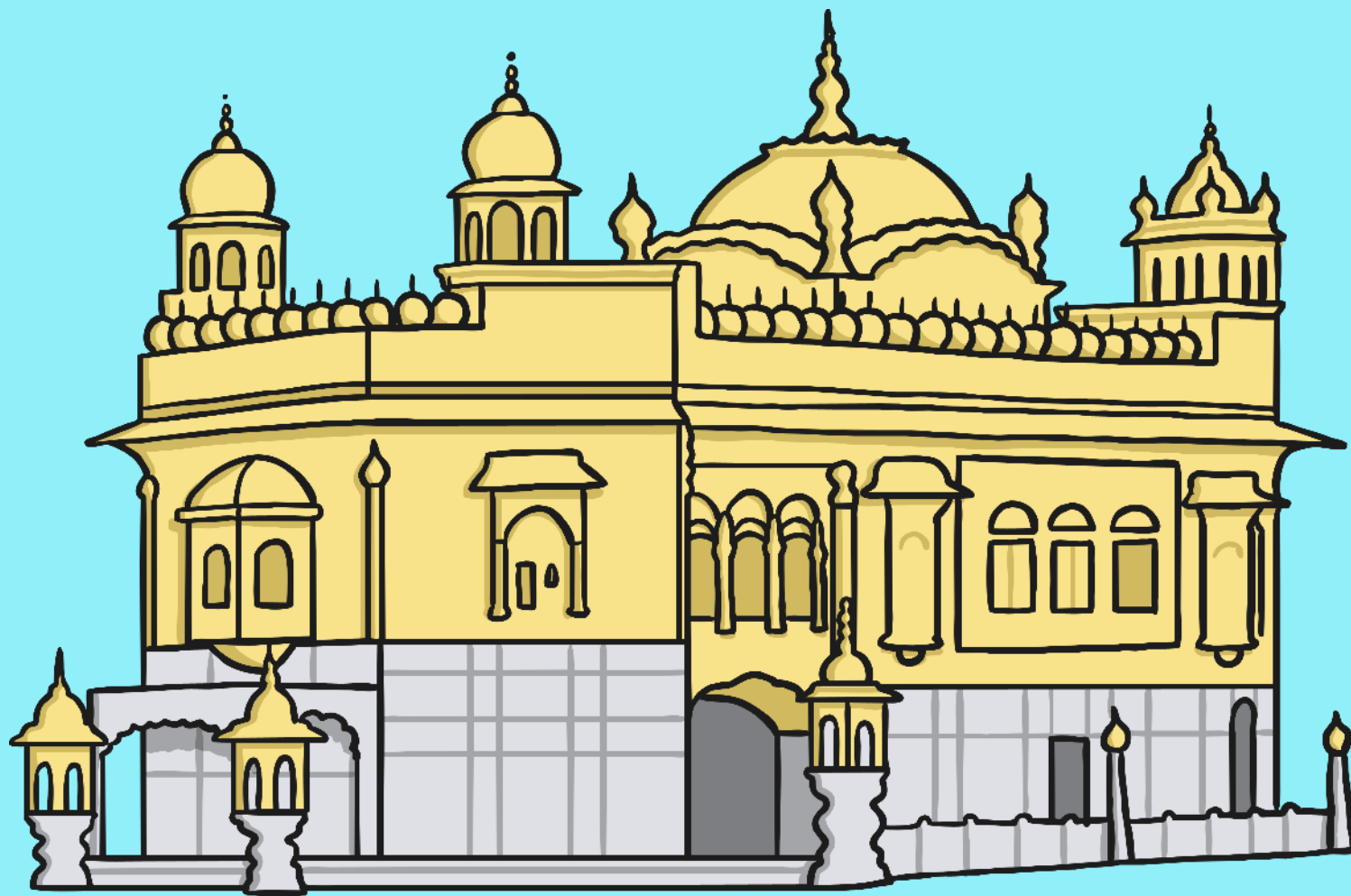


Places of Worship



Starter Activity



All of these buildings look different, but what do they all have in common?
Who might visit them?
What might happen there?

Learning Objective

- To learn about the Sikh gurdwara and its importance to individuals and the community.

Success Criteria

- I can describe similarities and differences between a variety of Sikh gurdwaras which exist throughout the world.
- I can name and describe the significance of special objects found within Sikh gurdwaras.
- I can explain why the gurdwara is an important place for many people by describing what takes place there.
- I can list rules for how to behave in a Sikh gurdwara.

Sikh Gurdwaras Around the World



Sri Harmandir Sahib, located in India, is also known as The Golden Temple. This is the most famous and important place of worship in the Sikh religion with its doors open from all the sides to people of all faiths.



Hemkund Sahib, Hemkund, also in India, is a gurdwara 15,000 feet above sea level in the Himalayan range. People come here from all over the world.



Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha is thought to be the biggest in London.

What do you think it is like inside a Sikh gurdwara?



Guru Granth Sahib

This is the Sikh holy book. It is treated like a person and even has its own room during the night. The book is placed on a raised platform under a canopy and covered with an expensive cloth during the day



Important Features of a Sikh gurdwara

Chaur

A fan which is waved over the Guru Granth Sahib as a sign of respect.



Langar

This is a free kitchen where food is served to worshippers without charge.



Flags

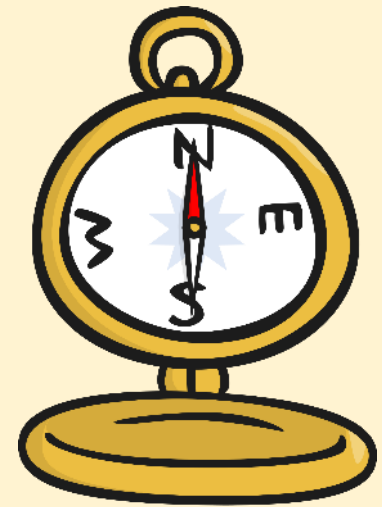
Gurdwaras fly flags outside to show that it is a special place of worship. The flag contains the Sikh symbol.



Important Features of a Sikh gurdwara

The Four Doors

There are four doors into the gurdwara to show that people from the north, east, south and west are welcome.



Look out for these other features!

The most important focus in the main hall is the Guru Granth Sahib, which is treated with the respect that would be given to a human Guru. It is kept in a room of its own during the night and then carried to the main hall at the beginning of the day's worship.

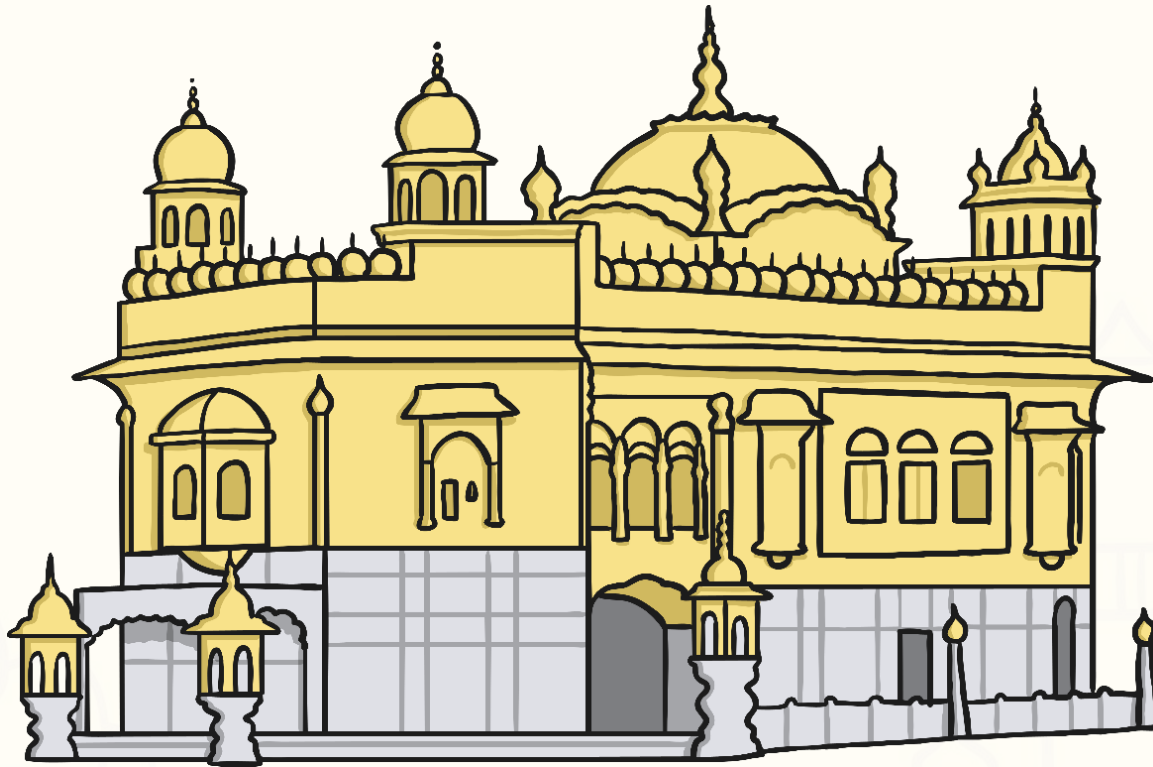
The book is placed on a raised platform, under a special canopy, and covered with an expensive cloth when not being used.



Look out for these other features!

There are four doors into a gurdwara, known as the Door of Peace, the Door of Grace, the Door of Livelihood and the Door of Learning.

These doors are a symbol to everyone that people from all four points of the compass are welcome to enter.



Why do people go to a Sikh gurdwara?

Many Sikhs visit a gurdwara for worship. The gurdwara is also a place to learn more about Sikhism. The gurdwara is a community centre too, offering food, shelter and company for those who need it.

The morning service begins with singing a hymn, there is also a religious talk (called a sermon), prayers are said then there are readings from the Guru Granth Sahib (the holy book). Last of all, food is offered to everyone so people can eat and spend time together.



Why do people go to a Sikh gurdwara?

People also visit the gurdwara during special festivals to celebrate Gurus such as Guru Nanak because he started the Sikh faith.

Sikhs don't have priests so any Sikh can lead the prayers and read from the Guru Granth Sahib.





Why do people go to a Sikh gurdwara?

Sikhs come to the gurdwara to name a new baby.
Watch the video to find out what happens.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/the-gurdwara-pt-1-2/4836.html>



Engagement ceremonies can take place at the gurdwara and thanks is given for bringing the man and the woman together.

The wedding ceremony takes place in front of the Guru Granth Sahib and at the end of the service, everyone eats in the langar.

Showing Respect

Anyone is welcome in a gurdwara but there are certain rules to follow.



- Cover your head
- Take off your shoes and wash hands and feet before entering
- When you enter the main prayer hall, bow in front of the holy book, touching the floor with your forehead

Showing Respect

- Offer a donation such as money, flowers or food
- Sit quietly on the floor with your legs crossed, facing the Guru Granth Sahib
- Never point your feet at the Guru Granth Sahib as this is disrespectful
- Men and women sit in different places





Plenary

Why do you think it is important to many Sikhs to worship and eat together in the gurdwara?

Do you have any other questions about this place of worship?

