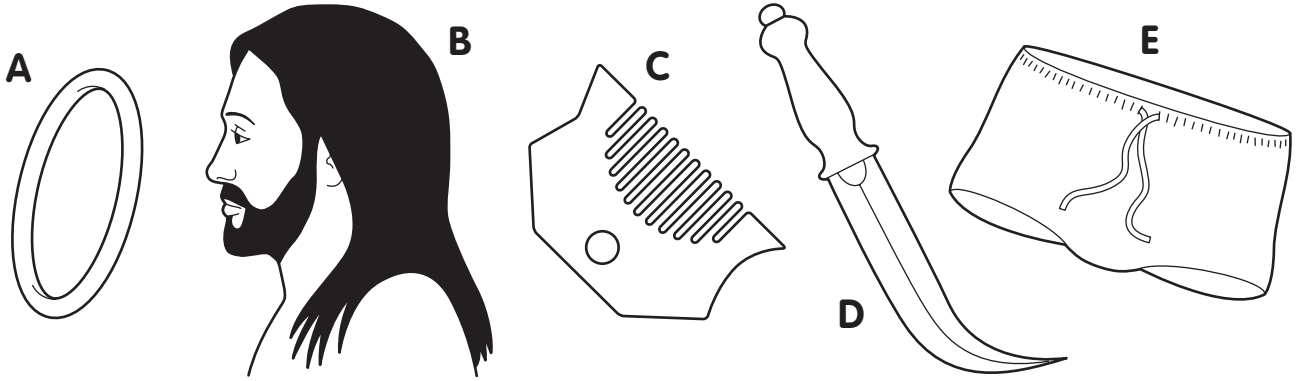


A way of life

Sikhism is more than worship in the gurdwara, it is a way of life.



Q1. Give the Punjabi name of each of the things labelled A, B, C, D and E?

A B C

D E

Q2. (i) What is A made out of?

(ii) What does its simple design remind people of?

.....

Q3. What does B stand for?

.....

Q4. What are the purpose of C and the turban or scarf?

.....

Q5. What is D a reminder of?

.....

Q6. What two things does E stand for?

.....

.....



Answers

- A=Kara; B=Kesh; C=Khanga; D=Kirpan; E=Kaccha.**
- (i) Steel.
(ii) That all people are equal.**
- Living in harmony with God.**
- To keep long hair neat and clean.**
- That Sikhs should have courage and be ready to protect themselves and the weak.**
- To always be ready to move quickly to defend yourself or others; a reminder to be modest.**

Lesson objectives

- ▶ To provide an introduction to the five important symbols that most Sikhs wear.
- ▶ To understand what the 5Ks stand for.
- ▶ To show some examples of the 5Ks.

Lesson outcomes

- ▶ The children know the meaning of each of the 5Ks.
- ▶ The children can describe each of the 5Ks.

Teaching notes

It was Guru Gobind Singh who introduced the idea of the 5Ks. The symbols were introduced at the same time as the idea of the Khalsa, or Sikh community of warrior-saints. A Sikh becomes a member of the Khalsa once he or she is baptised. Once baptised, the Khalsa are responsible for following all of the duties that Guru Gobind Singh laid down. These include: reciting certain prayers daily, never pay a dowry, do not smoke tobacco, drink alcohol or take drugs, do not eat halal meat, contribute one-tenth of your income to the poor, practise military training and be ready to defend the weak, and always wear the five symbols – the 5Ks – of the khalsa.

The turban

Students may be surprised to learn that the turban is not a requirement. The requirement is never to cut the hair, the turban is used to keep the uncut hair neat and tidy and out of the way and is more of a custom or tradition. The turban is made of a single length of cloth, five metres long by one metre wide and may be any colour.

Most Sikhs also wear an under-turban, which all the hair is tucked into. During swimming or sports, the turban is replaced by a scarf called a patka, which is knotted at the top. Many Sikh men also wear a strap under their chin that they use to tuck their long beards up and out of the way.

Sword

Many people are also confused by the role of the sword and find it hard to reconcile a weapon with spirituality. It is important to understand that when Sikhism began, and until very recently, Sikhs were constantly persecuted and in constant danger. So, a tradition of always being ready to defend themselves and others grew up. The sword became a visible reminder of self-respect, power and independence.

Today, most Sikhs do not wear a large sword every day. Not only is it not necessary in the modern world, where we have laws and police, but in most places it is forbidden to carry such weapons. Instead, they wear tiny swords as reminders, although many Sikhs still carry larger swords to worship.

Complementary work

The children could use secondary sources to find out more information about the 5Ks.

Resources

Student book, pages 6 to 7 and secondary sources about the 5Ks, such as www.sgpc.net; www.panthkhalsa.org.