

Cultural Safari Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 5-8

This lesson uses the 17-minute film Cultural Safari to deepen and extend students' knowledge about Sikhism. The conversational approach of the film introduces viewers to Sikhism and to a Sikh family. There are many ways to use the film in the classroom, from a simple one-time viewing to an in-depth analysis and creation of additional material that could complement the film.

Objectives:

Students will be able to...

- Explain basic Sikh beliefs and practices.
- Identify common characteristics of Sikh-Americans.
- Analyze features of a video for characteristics of purpose, audience, and tone.
- Conduct additional research to expand their knowledge and understanding of the Sikh tradition.

Materials:

- Cultural Safari video (<https://www.kaurfoundation.org/full-cultural-safari-content-here.html>) – 17 minutes
- Cultural Safari Guided Notes*
- Cultural Safari Review Worksheet*
- Cultural Safari Video Transcript (optional)

**These worksheets are available at two levels to facilitate differentiated instruction.*



Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 6 topics, texts and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy. SL.6.2

Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g. visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy. W.6.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy. W.7.7

Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generative additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

CCSS.ELA -Literacy. L.7.6

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

C3 D2.Rel.2.9-12

Describe and analyze examples of how religions are internally diverse at both macro levels (sects and divisions within traditions) and micro levels (differences within specific religious communities).

Lesson Activities:

1. *If using to introduce Sikhism:* Ask students what they already know about Sikhism and what questions they have. Record prior knowledge and questions to return to at the end of the lesson.
2. *If using as part of the KF Sikh Studies Unit:* Ask students to briefly recount some of the things they learned in previous lessons. Reiterate questions that were raised and remind students to listen for answers for those questions as they are watching.
3. Play the video through and ask students to just watch and listen.
 - a. Note: Some key information is displayed on title cards rather than spoken by the characters. Watching the video first without having to take notes will help students get all of the important points.
4. Distribute the Guided Notes worksheet. Play the video again and ask students to fill in the worksheet as they hear relevant information.
 - a. Optional: Pause the video periodically to check for understanding and respond to students' questions.
5. Check for understanding by reviewing the Guided Notes page. Discuss with students how this information fits in with what they already knew about Sikhism or has learned in a previous lesson. What was new information?
6. In small groups, as a whole class, or in a written assignment, ask students to engage with some or all the following **discussion questions**:
 - a. How does the Cultural Safari video fit in with what you already know or understand about Sikhism?
 - b. What did you learn that changes your perspective about Sikhs?
 - c. What were the most important parts of the film?
 - d. What weakness did you find in the film and what recommendations would you make to the directors?
 - e. What was not included in the film that you would include if you were the creator? Or what would you put in a sequel to this film?

- f. What questions would you ask to the originator/creator of this film? Why are those questions important in general? Why are those questions important to you?
 - g. Why is it important or beneficial to learn about other cultures and religions?
7. Return to the questions identified at the beginning of the lesson. Which questions were answered? Conduct additional research (individual or in small groups) to answer remain questions.
8. Distribute the Review Worksheet.

Assessments:

- Assign written responses to selected discussion questions.
- Collect the review worksheet, including definition of key vocabulary words.
- Outline or storyboard a new segment for the film based on questions that remained after watching the video.
- Generate more interview questions for the Sikh family featured in the film. Do additional research to answer some of those questions.

Extensions

Have students create their own video response to any section of the film or create a new segment for the film.

Starting around 3:00 in the film, several prominent Sikhs are highlighted, including the Singh Twins (artists), Fauja Singh (oldest marathon runner), and Gurinder Chadha (film director). Assign students to do additional research on these people and other contemporary Sikhs. Create a new segment for the film that teaches about the life and accomplishments of the assigned individual(s).

Find out more about one of the ceremonies or festivals mentioned in the video (e.g. Dastar Bandi, Baisakhi (also spelled Vaisakhi), Gurpurabs). Research other Sikh ceremonies or festivals that could be included in the video.

Guru Nanak (1469–1539) lived at the same time as Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) and the voyages of Christopher Columbus. This was a time of significant change around the world. Create a timeline of events happening around the world at the beginning of the 1500s.

Find and view other introductory videos about Sikhism. Compare the content included or excluded from each video. Discuss the intended audience for each video and the biases of different creators.

Modifications:

For Online and Remote Learning: The full Cultural Safari film is available on the Kaur Foundation website so students can easily view it independently. Identify timestamps of specific parts of the video that you want students to respond to. Supply additional comprehension or reflection questions to be completed at each time stamp.

For Accessibility: Provide students with a copy of the Video Transcript and/or enable the closed captions while watching.

For Older Students: Older students may feel that the tone of the film is aimed at a younger audience. It may be helpful to preface the film by saying this and asking students to view it with a critical perspective. How would they change it for an older audience?

For World Religion Classes: Outline or storyboard another episode of a “Cultural Safari” for another religion that has been studied. Use the structure and format of this film as a guide.



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