

Cultural Safari Video Transcript

Welcome to Kaur Foundation's Cultural Safari. This 17-minute video covers Sikh culture and heritage and helps close the cultural awareness gap that exists between the educators, administrators, and peers of Sikh American students. The video covers five main areas of Sikh culture and heritage: origins, history, physical attributes, festivals, and holidays.

You can view the video on our website: <https://www.kaurfoundation.org/cultural-safari.html> or our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheKaurFoundation>

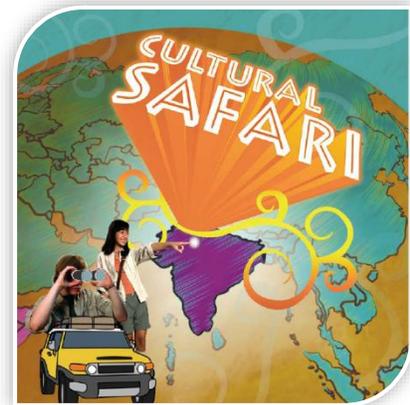
Introduction

[Alex] Oh, hi there! And welcome to the Kaur Cultural Safari!

[Matthew] Where we help you discover different cultures of the world.

[Josh] We're cultural explorers!

*♪ Come explore many worlds
♪ Far and near from your home
♪ You'll love to learn about
♪ Ways not your own
♪ The more we know, the more we grow
♪ On a Cultural Safari!
♪ Each culture is full of amazing things
♪ From the clothes that we wear, to the songs we sing
♪ Curiosity is all you need to bring on a Cultural Safari! On a Cultural Safari!*



[Alex] Learning about different parts of the world is a lot of fun! And the more we know and understand about each other, the more we accept people just the way they are.

[Matthew] When we say culture, we're talking about food, clothing, life events, art and music, holidays and festivals, and beliefs and traditions.

[Alex] And here is the great thing with culture, the more you know, the more you want to know.

[Josh] More and more and more and more! Sorry!



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[Alex] There are a lot of cultures out there to explore like the one we're going to talk about today.

[Matthew] Today we're going to explore the **Sikh-American** culture. Many Americans pronounce it as "seek" and that's okay too.

[Josh] Did you know that the word "**Sikh**" means student, a seeker of knowledge?

[Alex] Sikhism originated in the northwest part of India, known as **Punjab**, which means "Land of the Five Rivers."

[Alex] Sikhs are members of the world's fifth largest religion, known as **Sikhism**. Their basic beliefs include living a life of devotion, labor, and charity.

[Matthew] Sikhism began a little over 500 years ago.

[Josh] That's right about the time Christopher Columbus discovered the New World.

[Alex] Sikhs have been in America for over a hundred years. They've helped build America by working on railroads, farms, and lumber mills. Sikhs have served in the US Congress and in both World War One and World War Two.



[Josh] You'll find Sikhs in all different walks of life: teachers, attorneys, scientists, mechanics, airplane pilots, entertainers, businessmen, and well, just about anything else you can imagine.

Did you know?

Punjab is about the size of Nebraska.

History

[3:34]

[Josh] Let's explore the history of Sikhism!

[Matthew] Okay Josh, Sikhism began with the teachings of **Guru Nanak**.

[Josh] You know the word **guru** means teacher?

[Matthew] Guru Nanak saw people being denied basic human rights because of their social status. He taught of equality, hard work, honesty, and community service as the basis of leading a good life.

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[Alex] And Sikhism is not a form of Hinduism or Islam, which are also other major religions of India. It's a separate faith with its own unique identity.

[Matthew] Sikhs can be recognized by their common last names.

[Alex] For example, Sikh men have the last name of **Singh** which means "lion." And Sikh women have the last name of **Kaur** which means "princess." This gives men and women equal status in society.

[Matthew] Thank you Alex. Sikh Americans can also be recognized by their physical appearances. The men and boys were **patkas** or **turbans**, and all Sikhs wear steel bracelets.

[Alex] To learn more, let's ask a typical Sikh family. Come on let's go!

Meet a Sikh Family

[4:30]



[All] **Sat sri akal**

[Dad] I'm very impressed are you familiar with our traditional Sikh greeting.

[Josh] Of course, we are cultural explorers.

Did you know?

**Sat Sri Akal means
"God is Truth."**

[Alex] Could you tell us about the turban and the patka and the steel bracelet?

[Mom] Sure, would love to. Let's start with the steel bracelet. It's called a **Kara**. The Kara is worn on the wrist. It signifies strength and unity with God.

[Matthew] And the turban and the patka?

[Dad] Sikhs do not cut their hair. Men wear turbans and beards like me. And boys wear patkas, like Ranjit.

[Alex] And do Sikh women ever wear turbans?

[Mom] Turban is optional for women. Some choose to wear it. Generally, girls don't wear turbans and often braid their hair.

[Dad] Ranjit, would you like to help me show them how to tie the turban and parka?

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[Ranjit] Sure

[Dad] Do you have a mirror?

[Matthew] Sure, right over there.

[Josh] Wow, that's long!

[Josh] 15 feet 5 inches. That's right about 5 meters.

[Matthew] The turban is prepared and worn every day.

[Alex] It is not a hat or a cap that can be removed and put on casually.



[Josh] His turban's gray, but I've seen lots of other colors. Is there a special meaning behind the color?

[Alex] No, not really. It can be any color, but usually it's a matter of taste.

[Matthew] The turban represents honor and dignity for all Sikhs.

[Josh] Eight minutes, 20 seconds, wow!

[Dad] Are you ready to demonstrate the patka? [Mom] Sure!

[Josh] Do boys wear patkas from the time they're born?

[Alex] Josh, they need to have enough hair first! They need to make a top knot.

[Alex] Before the patka has worn the hair is combed out, gently rolled, and tied into a topknot.

[Matthew] Then the patka is worn over the head to keep the hair groomed and neatly in place.

[Dad] I'd just like to add, the turban and patka are not hats. They are special articles of faith, and they should be respected. You should never touch or pull on someone's turban or patka. That would be highly disrespectful.

Did you know?

99% of people who wear turbans in the United States are Sikhs.

Fun Fact

A patka is a cotton cloth worn over a Sikh boy's hair.



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[Josh] That's important, we all want to be respected.

[Alex] Wow, that was really interesting, thanks for helping us understand!

[Dad] You're very welcome.

[Mom] We've enjoyed being here.

[Kids] Bye!

[Josh] Wow! People move really fast around here!

Sikh Practices

[8:44]

[Matthew] So Josh, did you have any questions?

[Josh] Do I ever! First, do the Sikhs have a holy book like the Bible the Torah or the Quran?

[Matthew] Yeah, but different. The sacred book of the Sikh faith is called the **Guru Granth Sahib**. It's considered to be a living guru or spiritual teacher.

[Matthew] So what's your other question?

[Josh] Oh, do they have a place of worship like other faiths?

[Matthew] Yeah Josh, a Sikh place of worship is called a **Gurdwara**. The most well-known gurdwara is called the **Golden Temple** and is in the holy city of **Amritsar** in India.

[Josh] Wow I can totally see why they call it the Golden Temple!

[Alex] It sits in the middle of a beautiful reflecting pool. There are four open doors, one on each side. They represent an openness to all who wish to come.

[Josh] Just like America!

[Matthew] That's the outside. Let's take a look at what happens on the inside of a gurdwara.



Did you know?

The Golden Temple is covered with over 1,500 pounds of gold.

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[Matthew] To be respectful, there are three things people do upon entering a Gurudwara. One, remove their shoes;

[Alex] Two, cover their heads;

[Matthew] and three, bow in reverence to the Guru Granth Sahib before sitting with the congregation.

[Ragis performing music]

[Alex] Music plays a very important part in the Sikh worship service. Many of the hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib are performed by resident priests called **ragis**.

[Alex] The two ragis on the left are playing the **harmonium**, an instrument similar to an accordion.



[Matthew] And the **tabla** is similar to a small drum set.

[Josh] After the worship service, everyone has a communal meal called **langar** in the community eating hall.

[Matthew] This meal is prepared by volunteers from the congregation.

[Josh] To symbolize equal status everyone sits together on the floor.

[Alex] Common langar foods include lentils, beans, peas, spinach, flatbread, and salad.

[Josh] mmm mmm, that's delicious!

[Matthew] Josh—

[Josh] Oh, sorry.

[Josh] That was delicious! So, tell me, what else goes on the Gurdwara?

[Alex] Plenty! One thing I found very interesting was the the **Dastar Bandi** or the Turban Tying Ceremony.

Did you know?

Some gurdwaras serve over 40,000 free meals a day.

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[Matthew] When a Sikh boy reaches the age of 11 or 12, a Turban Tying Ceremony is performed. Family and friends come to join in this very important celebration.

[Josh] It's a big moment in a young boy's life. You might say a coming-of-age or rite of passage.

[Alex] At this ceremony, the child's first turban is tied on by a Sikh elder.

[Matthew] From then on, boys tie their own turbans.

[Matthew] That's cool, he looks so proud

[Alex] Wow we have learned so many things about Sikhs — their origins, their history, their faith, their ceremonies. Now let's talk about their festivals!

Festivals and Holidays

[13:31]

[Josh] Great! Because I am ready to celebrate! Let's talk about **Baisakhi!**

[Josh] These dancers are performing a traditional Punjabi dance called **Bhangra**.

[Josh] It is known for its bright colors and high-energy.

[Josh] Every spring, Sikhs gather together to celebrate the beginning of harvest in Punjab.

[overlapping voices]

[Alex] Every spring, Sikhs gathered to celebrate the beginning of the harvest in Punjab.

There's dancing, great food, games, and special treats for kids and grownups.



Did you know?

Bhangra can burn up to 500 calories per hour.

Fun Fact

**Gurpurab means
“festival of the guru”**

[Alex] Other popular festivals or celebrations are associated with the life of Guru Nanak and the nine gurus that followed him.

Review

[15:35]

[Matthew] Well guys, I think we're just about out of time. I sure learned a lot. Josh, what did you learn about the Sikh culture today?

[Josh] I learned it is all about the number five.

[Matthew] The number five?

[Josh] Yeah, Sikhism is the world's fifth largest religion. There are five hundred thousand Sikhs in America. The religion started five hundred years ago. They have five basic beliefs, and it all began in the 'Five Rivers' area of Punjab.

[Alex] Wow! I never thought about it that way, Josh. Thanks!

[Josh] No worries.

[Alex] We hope you have all found the Sikh culture as fascinating as we have. Being a cultural explorer is so much fun, and all of you can be cultural explorers too.

[Matthew] Until next time,

[Alex] Respect the differences in others.

[Matthew] Get to know those around you from different cultures.

[Josh] And remember, it's important to appreciate the differences in everyone. Hey, the more you know, the more you grow.

[All] Happy exploring!

[Matthew] So Josh, what culture are we gonna explore next?

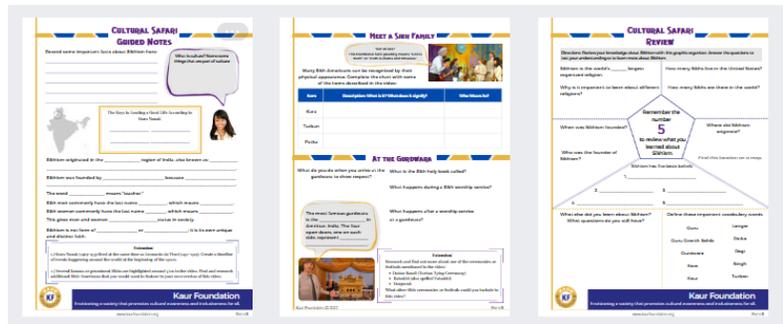


Vocabulary

Amritsar	Gurdwara	Kara	Sat Sri Akal
Baisakhi / Vaisakhi	Guru	Kaur	Singh
Bhangra	Gurpurab	Langar	Sikh
Dastar Bandi	Guru Granth Sahib	Patka	Tabla
Golden Temple	Guru Nanak	Punjab	Turban
	Harmonium	Ragi	

More Resources

Cultural Safari guided notes and review worksheets:



Plus, additional lesson plans, recommended reading, our Youth Voices interview series, and more!

Find more Kaur Foundation resources at www.kaurfoundation.org
and follow us @KaurFoundation



