

Stories of the Gurus

Guru Nanak and the Chapattis	The Guru visited a village and stayed with a poor man. A rich man tried to tempt the Guru into staying at his house by preparing a feast. The poor man only had enough flour for one chapati for the Guru and so was very upset. However, the Guru refused to stay with the rich man because, although he had more, he had not earned this in an honest way. He had hurt others in the process whereas the poor man earned a fair and honest living. The rich man was very ashamed of himself.
Guru Nanak and the Saints	The Guru's father gave him some money to go and trade, to make himself rich in the city and buy beautiful things. On his journey, Guru saw around twenty good men in prayer, but they looked very weak. They needed food but had no money. The Guru gave all the money, he had to buy food, to the men. When his father asked about the money, he said "I spent the money to feed twenty hungry men. What other trade can be better than this, dear father?".

Key Quotes

"The clay is the same, but the fashioner has fashioned it in different ways"
(Guru Granth Sahib)

"There is no Hindu nor Muslim, but only man. So whose path shall I follow? I shall follow God's path"
(Guru Granth Sahib)

Key Terms

Gurdwara	The Sikh place of worship. 'Gateway to the Guru'
Guru Granth Sahib	The Sikh holy book.
Langar	A free meal/ a communal kitchen.
Sach Khand	The room where the Guru Granth Sahib is kept overnight in the gurdwara.
Diwan Hall	The room where worship takes place in the gurdwara.
Takht	Literally means 'throne' where the Guru Granth Sahib is kept.
Nishan Sahib	A triangular flag with the Sikh symbol (Khanda) on it. Usually outside the gurdwara.
Khanda	The Sikh symbol.
Sewa	Selfless Service.
Equality	The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.
Vegetarian	Someone who does not eat any meat.
Service	Offering something to someone else.
Guru	Teacher/Guide.

Sewa

Sewa through the Langar

There are a range of ways you can participate in sewa through the langar.
These include:

1. Cooking and preparing food whilst saying prayers. This is always vegetarian.
2. Cleaning before and after langar service, for example, washing up.
3. Serving the food to the people who have come to the langar for a meal.

International langar week

International Langar week: Each year in October, Sikhs mark 'International Langar Week' during which Sikhs are asked to do 3 things:

1. **Introduce a friend to the langar**
2. **Set up a langar in a public place**
3. **Join a local street langar team.**

In 2016, the hashtag for this was '#HelloLangarGoodbyeWorldHunger'

Benefits of Sewa through Langar

Type of Benefit	Benefit
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to create peace and acceptance amongst all people. • Creates communities that work together and support one another.
Mental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminates personal ego. No one is better than another. • Gives you inner peace that you have helped someone else less fortunate.
Spiritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving God by helping others makes you feel good and happy! • Reminds Sikhs that everyone is equal and all God's creation.

How does the Langar reflect equality?

- Vegetarian food
- All people sit on floor
- All cover their heads
- All served the same food
- Everyone is able to receive a meal completely free



Trinity TV

For more help, visit Trinity TV and watch the following videos:

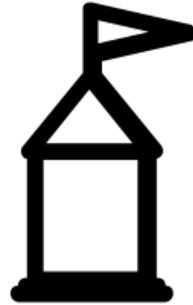
Trinity TV > Year 9 > Religious Studies > KO > Term 6

Is Langar more than Food? – The Big Picture

Continuing with Sikhism, after learning some of the basic beliefs of Sikhism you will now move on to move towards an enquiry question which is – ‘is langar more than food’. This will draw on the knowledge about the characteristics of Waheguru and primarily equality, the way equality is reflected and promoted in the life of Sikhs today, and why the duty of sewa is important.



Before you can explore what is meant by langar, you must first explore the features of a gurdwara, the Sikh place of worship. You will compare your own knowledge of religious buildings and then compare these to the Sikh holy building. Furthermore, you will also have the opportunity to go on a virtual tour of a gurdwara and identify the key features including the langar.



After being able to identify the langar in the gurdwara, you will then move on to compare the different meanings of the term ‘langar’ as both a communal kitchen and as a free meal accessible to all. You will explore how the practice of langar originated with Guru Nanak and analyse how that practice has changed to meet the needs of the 21st century including responding to homelessness, natural disasters and prejudice.



Using your understanding from the previous unit about the duty of sewa and why it is essential for Sikhs, you will explore how sewa can be performed through the langar. This includes specific roles and responsibilities that Sikhs take within the langar as well as evaluating the physical, mental and spiritual benefits of performing sewa through the langar. This will begin to explore alternatives as to whether langar is just about food or about something more – selfless service.



Using your understanding from the previous unit about why the principle of equality is central in Sikhism, you will explore how the langar reflects equality. This will be explored from two different perspectives: for those who give langar and those who receive langar. This includes how people all sit on the floor, all cover their heads and how only vegetarian food is served, to ensure that people of all race, religion, ethnicities, genders etc. can access langar.



Finally, you will apply your knowledge to a GCSE style question. This is to enable you to evaluate the importance of langar with regards to food, but also how langar reflects other key principles in Sikhism such as equality and sewa. You will do this in a GCSE format to allow you to develop arguments for and against a statement in the style of a debate, and then support your arguments with relevant pieces of evidence.

