

Sikhism Artefact Collection (SI-PACK)

This collection contains a variety of artefacts for teaching and learning about religious festivals, worship, art and faith. Using the artefacts can help bring religion to life and promote discussions.



Questions you could ask children about the artefacts

Initial Discussion

- What is this object?
- Does it resemble anything the children have seen?
- What do you think the item is used for and by whom?
- Which religious belief is it used by?
- Does anyone know what it is called? Learn how to pronounce the name.
- What does it represent?
- How might it be used?

Collect any other questions the children might have about the artefacts and display them as you try to find the answers through your learning sessions.

- **What do the objects tell us about the faith?** *This last question can be returned to at the end of the investigation.*

All About the Sikh Artefacts



Contents: -

1. Khanda
2. Kachera
3. Kesh
4. Kara
5. Kanga
6. Kirpan
7. Chauri
8. Prayer Beads

Please note contents may vary.

1. Khanda

Main symbol of Sikhism. Often found on Sikh flags and is a recognisable symbol of the Sikh faith. It consists of a double-edged sword in a circle (Chakkar) that represents God's eternity and unity. Two kirpan swords cross each side representing spiritual authority and political power.

Learn about Sikhism and the teachings of Guru Nanak.

2. Kachera

One of the five Ks. Kachera is a pair of shorts worn as an undergarment. The goal is to be modest and show cleanliness at all times.

3. Kesh

One of the five Ks. Kesh is the uncut hair of the Sikh. Hair is seen as a gift from God. Sikhs made a promise to not cut their hair but to let it grow as a symbol of faith. Sikh men often cover their uncut hair with a turban. The turban is a way of keeping it tidy.

4. Kara

One of the five Ks. Kara is a steel bracelet worn by Sikhs to represent the continuous bond with God and others. It reminds Sikhs that God has no end and no beginning and that we are all connected to God and equal in his eyes.

5. Kanga

One of the five Ks. Kanga is a comb, often worn in the hair. It symbolises cleanliness and order and reminds Sikhs to keep their lives tidy and disciplined.

6. Kirpan

One of the five Ks. Kirpan is a sword worn as a symbol of self-respect. It reminds Sikh's to stand up for what is right. Kirpan means act of kindness.

Learn about the 5 Ks and their importance to Sikh's values, beliefs and way of life. Draw each item and match it to the correct name and description to create a poster to show what the 5 Ks represent.

7. Chauri

A type of whisk or fan used to wave over the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book) to show respect to the sacred text. Traditionally made from yak or horse tail hair. Other symbols of respect to the Guru Granth sahib include bowing the head in the presence of it, covering your head, removing shoes and providing a room and bed for the Guru Granth Sahib to rest.

If possible, visit a Gurdwara (Sikh place of worship) and see the artefacts being used.

8. Prayer Beads

Sikh worshippers may use prayer beads (mala) while reciting verses from the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book).

Useful Tips

- Be sensitive using religious and cultural artefacts and understand any special requirements in handling them.
- Avoid creating stereotypes and understand that not all people from the same culture may use the artefact in the same way.
- Use the appropriate language to talk about the artefacts.
- Teach the children to handle and store the artefacts with respect and sensitivity.