

Worshipping in the darbar

Worship services take place in the darbar.



Q1. What is the boy doing in this illustration?

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Q2. (i) What is the word for group worship in the darbar?

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(ii) When can it take place?

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Q3. Give three things that might happen during group worship.

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Q4. What is the word for hymn singing?

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Q5. (i) What is kardh parshad?

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(ii) When is it eaten?

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Answers

1. Singing a hymn.
2. (i) Diwan.
(ii) At any time.
3. Singing hymns; reading out loud from Guru Granth Sahib; a sermon or talk; Ardas prayer.
4. Kirtan.
5. (i) A sweet food.
(ii) At the end of worship.

Lesson objectives

- ▶ To introduce some of the elements of Sikh worship services.
- ▶ To familiarise students with some of the words used in Sikh worship.
- ▶ To describe the kardh parshad and its meaning.

Lesson outcomes

- ▶ The children are familiar with some of the prayers and activities that take place during services.
- ▶ The children know a few Sikh words used during services and their meaning.
- ▶ The children know what kardh parshad is and when it is eaten.

Teaching notes

There are different ways to worship in the gurdwara. Here we focus on congregational worship, which in the UK usually occurs once a week, although in India it occurs twice a day. It can be any day of the week, but Sunday is usually the most convenient in the UK. Individual worship, consulting the Guru Granth Sahib, and even other types of worship, such as reciting the entire Guru non-stop, also take place in the darbar. These types of worship can occur at any time and on any day. Some of these also include singing and music.

Reading from the Guru

During the service the Guru Granth Sahib is opened at random and a section, or hymn, is read out loud. This is the hukum, or lesson for the day. If there is a sermon or talk, it is often on this reading, but not every service includes a sermon or talk.

Music

Music and singing is central to Sikh group worship. There are around 61 raags, or arrangements, which are used in the singing. Many of these were composed by the Gurus themselves. In many gurdwaras, the hymn singing, called kirtan, is performed or led by trained singers and musicians, called ragis. Anyone can join in, but many people prefer to meditate on the meaning of the verses while they listen.

There are many traditional instruments used in worship, including the harmonium, lute, rabob (similar to a sitar) and tabla. Modern instruments, such as guitars, may also be used, and electrified instruments are common.

Kardh parshad

The words kardh parshad mean 'sacramental pudding'. The pudding is made from equal parts of ghee (clarified butter), sugar and flour.

Complementary work

The children could listen to tapes or online recordings of Sikh hymns, music and prayers.

Resources

Tapes can sometimes be purchased at gurdwaras or online. For online recordings in RealAudio go to: www.sikhnet.com/Gurbani; www.gurbani.org/kirtan.htm; or www.gursikhi.org/keertanpage.htm.