Beliefs, Values and Practices: Sikhism
Sikhism

What is Sikhism?
Founded by Guru Nanak more than 500 years ago, Sikhism stresses the importance of doing good actions rather than simply performing rituals. There are over 9,000 Sikhs in Scotland according to the last census in 2011. By keeping God in their heart throughout everything they do, living an honest life and helping those less fortunate than themselves, Sikhs believe they will be living a good life.

What is it like to be a Sikh?
This video shows one young Sikh talking about what it means to her to be a Sikh in Scotland today.

Video
Watch: Testimony – Sikhism on YouTube - https://youtu.be/3qFYbAqsvgQ
Watch: Testimony – Sikhism on GlowTV (Glow login required)

Reflecting on Sikhism
• What questions might you ask this young Sikh?
• How has this young person’s life been shaped by her beliefs?
• What beliefs and values shape your life?
• Is it important to put your beliefs and values into action?
• How might you/do you put your beliefs and values into action?
• In what ways are your beliefs and values similar to/different from those of others?
• Why is it important to understand the diversity of beliefs and values in modern Scotland?
• What skills do you think are important when exploring beliefs and values?
• Why might understanding your beliefs and values and those of others be an important skill in the workplace?
Prominent figures in Sikhism: Bhai Mohinder Singh

Introduction
Born in 1939, Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh or Bhai Sahib Ji has become a leading figure within the Sikh community. He is leader of the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha in Birmingham and received a Papal Knighthood for helping to promote Sikh and Roman Catholic relations.

An engineer by trade, he has travelled and worked in various locations around the world, including working in Zambia for the National Housing Authority. After a full working life, he decided in 1989 to devote his life to service of the Sikh community. His continuing work has seen him become a predominant figure in inter-faith work.

The Path of Spiritual Life
In this video, Dr Bhai Mohinder Singh talks about what it means to live a spiritual life and the impact this has on others.

Video
Watch: The Path of Spiritual Life: Bhai Mohinder Singh at https://youtu.be/omCpLbe9zuM
[Please note: This video has not been uploaded to YouTube by Education Scotland]

Reflective questions
1. What questions would you like to ask Dr Mohinder Singh?
2. What do you think Dr Mohinder Singh means by ‘The Path of Spiritual Life’?
3. What do you think the word ‘spiritual’ means?
4. Do you think of yourself as having a ‘spiritual’ part of your life?
5. Some people say they are ‘spiritual but not religious’ what do you think this means and what’s your view about this?
6. What do you think is your ‘path’ in life? How did you come to be on this path?
7. How important is it to understand the beliefs, values and practices and traditions of others?
8. How might understanding others help you to understand yourself?

1 By following this link, you will be moving away from the Education Scotland website. Education Scotland is not responsible for content on external websites. YouTube provides an open forum for users to post comments it is recommended that practitioners check the clips, and any appended comments, in advance so as to assess suitability before directing learners to them.
Bhai Mohinder Singh discusses forgiveness

In this video Dr Bhai Mohinder Singh talks about the nature of forgiveness.

Video

Watch: Consider Forgiveness: Bhai Mohinder Singh at: https://youtu.be/-mOvOZXjB34

[Please note: This video has not been uploaded to YouTube by Education Scotland²]

Reflective questions

1. Dr Mohinder Singh says that forgiveness is a battle with his mind. What do you think he means?
2. Have you ever had a ‘battle with your mind’?
3. In your opinion, can anything be forgiven?
4. Sikhs believe that we should fight against oppression. Should we fight against oppression? What form should our ‘fight’ take and ‘how far’ should we go?
5. Some think that forgiveness is good for the person being forgiven and for the person forgiving. What do you think they mean? Do you agree?
6. ‘Forgiveness can make you stronger’ What do you think?

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Activities to support learning

Picture of Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, his arm around the Sikh leader Bhai Sahib Mohinder

Read the following articles and consider the following activities:

- **Sikh leader receives papal award**
  The Catholic News website on 20 May, 2012

- **Birmingham Sikh leader becomes a papal knight**
  Columban Missionaries Britain website on 9 May 2012.

Activities

- What do you think Interfaith work is all about? What might its advantages and disadvantages be?
- Find out more about Sikh beliefs and values. How do you think the life of Bhai Mohinder Singh demonstrates these beliefs and values?
- In what ways are Sikh beliefs and values similar to/different from beliefs and values of other religions and belief groups?
- How has learning about Sikh beliefs and values influenced your own developing beliefs and values?