A Gurdwara is a Sikhs place of worship. It houses the Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhs sit down in the prayer hall so they not above the Guru. They pray together as a community. At the end of their service they will have a meal together. This is called the Langar. It is vegetarian food.

Why do they serve vegetarian food?

In what other ways is the Gurdwara used?
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

Guru Granth Sahib

Guru Gobind Singh decided that he would leave the Sikh community to be guided by the writings and teachings of all the Gurus in written form. The book is now treated in exactly the same way as a human leader would be.

TASK: Write down 3 ways the Guru Granth Sahib is treated as a human.
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

What kind of rules should be followed concerning the Guru Granth Sahib?
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

The Khanda (Sikh symbol)

The Khanda is made up of swords and a circle. The circle represents belief in one God who is without beginning or end. Two crossed Kirpans (swords) represent spiritual authority and political power.

Gurus in Sikhism

There are 10 Gurus in Sikhism but there are two important ones:
- Guru Nanak (1469-1539) Guru Nanak started Sikhism.
- Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) Guru Gobind Singh started the Khalsa, instructed them to wear the 5 K’s and told Sikhs that their Guru would be the Guru Granth Sahib.

Gurdwara

Memorise these key words.

Gurdwara – a Sikhs place of worship
Guru – Religious teachers for Sikhs
Khalsa – Name given to Sikhs who are full members of the Sikh religion.
Guru Granth Sahib – Sikh holy book
Baisakhi – Spring festival, which includes the Sikh New Year
Sewa – Service – helping others

5 Ks in Sikhism

The 5 Ks are:
1. Kesh (uncut hair) – a gift from God symbolises adoption of a simple life
2. Kara (a steel bracelet) – belief in a never ending God, every time they look at it, it will remind them to avoid sin.
3. Kanga (a wooden comb) – it keeps the tangles out of their hair, gives them hope that God will take the tangles out of their lives.
4. Kaccha - also spelt, Kachh, Kachera (cotton underwear) – a symbol of chastity
5. Kirpan (steel sword) – a reminder to protect the faith and the vulnerable.

The 5 Ks form a uniform for baptised Sikhs.
What does this mean?

Khalsa

On the festival of Baisakhi Guru Gobind challenged the Sikh community by asking them who was willing to die for their faith and for their Guru? 5 volunteers agreed to sacrifice their own life. Guru Gobind Singh was testing them. They did not die but were awarded with bravery. The reward was to be part of an elite community called the Khalsa.

What must the members of the Khalsa wear?

How do members of the Khalsa differ from ordinary Sikhs?

History of Sikhism

The Life of Guru Nanak (The founder of Sikhism)
Nanak was born on 15 April 1469. The nurse saw a dazzling light around his head. His father was worried and asked the priest what it meant. The priest said it was a good sign and that he would grow up to be a great king or guru (teacher). Nanak always wanted to know who God was and what the purpose of life was. One day, Nanak disappeared while bathing at the river. His family feared he had drowned. After 3 days he returned and said he had been with God who had told him he was now a Guru of the new religion of Sikhism. Guru Nanak left his family and travelled around teaching people for 20 years. Guru Nanak died in 1539.

‘There is no Hindu, there is no Muslim.’ What do you think Guru Nanak meant by this?