

Peace-Makers

Gobind Singh: Magical Arrow (Sikh)

PREVIEW

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- ✓ Background – Sikhism (Smartphone Time)
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REVIEW

Briefly discuss last week’s Take-Home Opportunity: Peace in the Midst of Arguing. See if anyone has examples to share about helping others remain peaceful.

Briefly review previous lessons.

Theme: What peace means, saying peace in other languages/traditions, symbols of peace

Muhammad (Islam): Muhammad and his followers wanted to pray at the Kaaba, but the tribal leaders of Mecca wouldn’t allow it. Eventually, they signed a peace treaty allowing Muhammad and his followers to pray, in peace, at the Kaaba the following year.

Tribal Chiefs (Native American): After losing his sons to war and giving up on life, the chief finds himself at a “peace tree.” Two other chiefs join him, and together, they decide their tribes should live in peace. They made peace pipes in honor of their agreement.

BACKGROUND – SIKHISM

Prompt: Our story from today comes from the Sikh {SEEK} tradition. Have any of you ever heard of that? [Share]

Prompt: Let’s see if you can figure a few things out on your own.

Smartphone Time

Prompt: Try to find a map that shows the region of the world where Sikhism started. You might have to search a couple of different things to get it.

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BACKGROUND – SIKHISM (cont.)

Prompt: So where did the Sikh religion start? [Share – in the Punjab region of India. Make sure everyone gets a chance to see where that is.]

Prompt: Did any of you happen to notice when the Sikh religion started? [mid-1400s]

Prompt: So about how old is Sikhism? [about 500 or 600 years old]

Prompt: Do you know how old Christianity is? Do you know when Jesus was born? [If they don't already know, explain that our calendar is based on Jesus' birth, which is set at year zero. That means Christianity is about 2,000 years old. That also means Sikhism is relatively new compared to Christianity.]

Prompt: People who follow the Sikh religion call their leaders Gurus. Do you know what a Guru is? [Brainstorm/Guess/Answer – a wise and special teacher]

Prompt: In the Sikh religion, there were a total of 10 human Gurus. They taught Sikhs to live in peace and harmony with everyone. Their “Bible,” which is called the Granth Sahib {granth SAH-heeb}, is the 11th Guru. [Make sure they can say “Granth Sahib.”]

Prompt: There is something else very special about Sikhs. They often wear turbans. Both men and women can wear turbans. [Show image on p. 48 of man in turban.]

Prompt: Even Sikh children sometimes wear a kid version of the turban [Show image on p. 49 of boy in turban.]

Prompt: Do you think you would like to wear a turban? Why/why not? [Share]

Prompt: These turbans are white and black, but turbans come in all different colors. If you were to wear a turban, what color would you choose? [Share]

Prompt: Sikhs are also known for giving away free food. When they host a free meal, called a *langar* {LANG-gar}, everyone sits together on the floor, and everyone is equal. No one has a better seat or a better meal than anyone else. There can be hundreds – or even thousands! – of people at a *langar*. In nearly all cases, the meal is vegetarian. [Make sure they all know what that means – no meat, chicken, or fish]

LESSON/STORY

Prompt: In our story for today, the 10th human guru, Guru Gobind Singh {GO-bind SING}, came up with a very clever way to keep the Sikh people from going to war. He was a great warrior, but as you will see, he used his skills to keep things peaceful.

Read: Magical Arrow – Part I

He was only nine years old, but he was already the Guru of the Sikh people. That's Guru with a capital G. It was an incredibly important and difficult job. His full name back then was Guru Gobind Rai {RAH-ee}. He was supposed to become the leader when he grew up, but those plans changed rather suddenly when the Emperor decided to target Gobind Rai's father.

LESSON/STORY (cont.)

Emperor Aurangzeb {or-AHNG-zeb} was a horribly mean man who was not opposed to killing people when they disagreed with him. He thought everyone should worship God the same way he did, which meant he wanted all the Sikhs in the land to give up their faith.

Since Gobind Rai's father was the leader of the Sikhs, the Emperor wanted to make an example of him. When Gobind Rai's father refused to follow the Emperor's order to give up his faith, the Emperor had him thrown in prison and then killed. That's how Gobind Rai became Guru, with a capital G, at the age of nine.

Prompt: Nine years old is younger than you are! Would you like to be ruled by a nine-year-old? [Share]

Prompt: What if you were the ruler at age nine? Would you enjoy that? Why/why not? [Share]

Read: Magical Arrow – Part II

Gobind Rai and his people lived in India about 300 years ago. The Sikh community was so happy when he was born they built a shrine, called a *gurdwara* {gurd-WAH-rah}, that still exists today.

Even as a child, Gobind Rai was strong and brave. He would stage pretend battles with his friends, and he always played the fearless leader. As Gobind Rai got older, he prepared for real-life battles by learning how to hunt, ride horses, use swords and spears, and shoot a bow and arrow. Gobind Rai's caregivers made sure he was more than just a warrior. He also studied history, math, religion, and lots of different languages. He was a good student, and he worked hard since he planned on being a great Guru someday.

Gobind Rai did become Guru earlier than expected, but even as a young Guru, he led the Sikh people well. His heroic spirit inspired everyone to work hard and play fair. The people strengthened their bodies with martial arts and hunting competitions. They strengthened their minds by reading and studying. And they strengthened their souls through poetry and prayer. The Sikhs led a good life, but trouble was brewing.

Many other rulers were afraid of Guru Gobind Rai and his Sikh community. They didn't like it when the Sikhs beat their drums, and they didn't like how powerful and united the Sikh people had become. It seemed dangerous somehow. Many rulers also hated the Sikhs' ideas about equality. Sikhs thought everyone should be treated fairly, but the chiefs worried about losing their power if everyone was equal.

A few battles had already taken place. On one side, there was Guru Gobind Rai and his Sikh community. On the other side, there was the evil Emperor Aurangzeb, his allies among the chiefs, and all their followers. It was getting more and more difficult for the Sikhs to keep their peaceful life.

In response, Guru Gobind Rai decided to further strengthen the Sikh community. He chose five men to be leaders of the Sikh faith, and he changed their last names to Singh, which means "lion." Guru Gobind Rai even changed his own name, which is why he is now known as Guru Gobind Singh instead of Guru Gobind Rai.

The Guru also baptized many of his followers and wrote down the rules that Sikhs should live by. He wanted to form a tight-knit, organized group of people who recognized the

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LESSON/STORY (cont.)

divine in everyone. The Sikhs re-dedicated themselves to peace, harmony, and equality, and they tried to create a society where everyone was valued and respected.

Prompt: Can you think of anyone in society who is not respected or who is left out/ignored? [Share]

Prompt: Do you ever feel like you (or a group to which you belong) are not respected or left-out/ignored? [Share]

Prompt: Do you ever think about what you could do to change that? [Share]

Read: Magical Arrow – Part III

This newly-structured Sikh community now numbered about 80,000 people, and that really displeased the other rulers. They were afraid the Sikh community was getting too big. For several years, tensions rose. Finally, Emperor Aurangzeb and the other chiefs decided to stop Guru Gobind Singh and his Sikhs once and for all. It was the moment Guru Gobind Singh had trained for – body, mind, and soul – his entire life.

The Emperor's troops surrounded the Sikh town of Anandpur {ah-nahnd-POOR}. The fortress on the edge of town kept the enemies away, but the Sikhs found themselves cut off from their food and water supplies. Everything came to a complete standstill. No one was actually fighting. Instead, the enemy forces were just waiting. They figured that if the Sikh people got hungry enough and thirsty enough, they would surrender. But waiting was a little boring, so the leaders of the enemy forces passed the time by playing chess.

Prompt: Do you know how to play chess? [Share]

Prompt: Do you have other board games you like to play? [Share]

Read: Magical Arrow – Part IV

That's when Guru Gobind Singh decided to send a message. Anandpur was two miles away from the enemy camp, but Guru Gobind Singh could see two men sitting at the chess table through his telescope. The Guru removed one of his gold-tipped arrows, placed it into his bow, and carefully took aim. [Show story illustration on p. 50.]

"Thwack!" The arrow flew through the air and landed in a leg of the chess table.

Everyone ran for cover. The enemy camp became eerily silent. No one dared breathe. But no other arrows followed. Slowly, everyone crept out from their hiding places. Wazir {wuh-ZEER} Khan, one of the enemy leaders, walked up to the table and removed the gold-tipped arrow.

"Who shot at us?" he shouted to whomever would listen. "They should be killed."

"That gold-tipped arrow belongs to Guru Gobind Singh," said one of the men.

"That's impossible!" cried Wazir Khan. "He is trapped in their fortress at Anandpur, and no one, not even the great Sikh Guru, can hit a target from two miles away!"

"Oh, you don't know Guru Gobind Singh," said the man. "He is a brave warrior and a master with the bow."

LESSON/STORY (cont.)

“Impossible,” declared Wazir Khan again.

Just then, another arrow whizzed through the air. It landed in exactly the same spot on the same leg of the same table!

Once again, everyone ran for cover.

This time, Zabardast Khan, another enemy leader, noticed there was a letter attached to the arrow. The letter was written in Persian, the language of kings. It said, “My skill with the bow and arrow is not a miracle. It comes from years of practice. I was not trying to kill you. I was trying to send a message. The Sikhs are strong in both body and spirit, and we will never give up on our divine message of equality.”

The enemy chiefs were so awed by the Guru’s skills and his written message, they decided to abandon the battle and head for home. On that day, the soldiers siding with the evil Emperor Aurangzeb learned a valuable lesson about the peace-keeping ways of the Guru and his people. They learned that Sikhs would never kill unnecessarily, nor would they give up on their vision for the world. It was, and remains to this day, a vision of hope and peace for all.

Prompt: Gobind Rai trained his body, his mind, and his spirit. What things do you do train your body? What about training your mind? And what about your spirit? [Share/Discuss]

Prompt: Do you think shooting the arrow into the table leg was a good way of sending a peaceful message? If not, what would you have done instead? [Share]

Prompt: Do you have an example of someone using a clever, non-violent method to keep peace? [Share]

CREATIVE RESPONSE –GOLD LEAF BOW-AND-ARROW

Supplies

One sheet of gold leaf (measuring 5½” x 5½”), ½ sheet of background paper (any kind/any color), ½ sheet of double-sided adhesive paper, and one bow-and-arrow template (p. 51) per person; writing utensils; scissors/box-cutters/utility knives; paint brushes

Helpful Hints

This craft looks really nice on black construction paper.

The kids can make their own templates, but it will end up being a lot of cutting for them. Consider making one template per 2-3 kids to avoid that.

Preparation (recommended)

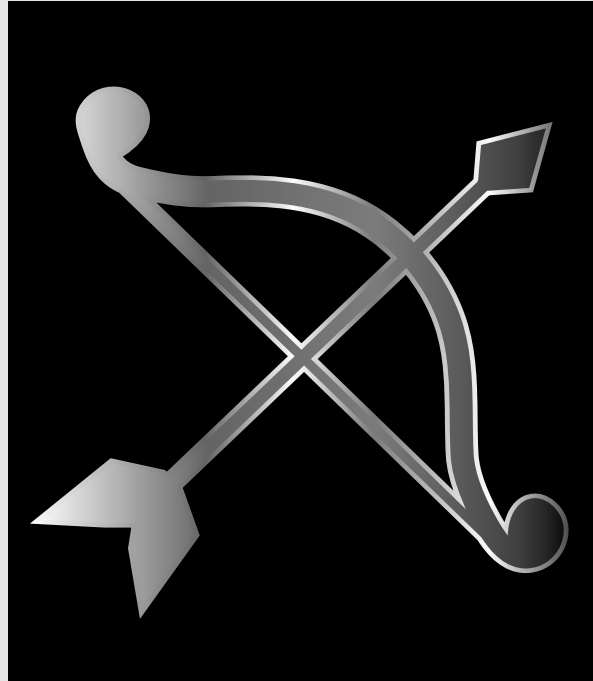
Cut around the bow-and-arrow images and use a utility knife to remove the interior spaces. These will serve as the templates. If you want the templates to be heavier, photocopy the images on to cardstock and/or glue them to a piece of light-weight carboard (e.g., recycled cereal box) before cutting them out. If you have lots of artistic kids, they can simply draw their own bow-and-arrow images, and you can skip the templates entirely.

CREATIVE RESPONSE – GOLD LEAF BOW-AND-ARROW (cont.)

Prompt: Since Guru Gobind Singh had a gold-tipped arrow, we're going to make a gold bow-and-arrow craft today.

Here are the steps for making this craft:

- 1) If you haven't already made the templates, that will need to be done. If you have made the templates, pass them out, along with the ½ sheet of double-sided adhesive paper. Have the kids trace around the template (or draw their own bow-and-arrow image) on the piece of double-sided adhesive paper.
- 2) Use scissors and/or utility knives to cut around the bow-and-arrow image on the adhesive paper. Also, remove interior spaces.
- 3) Remove the covering from one side of the adhesive paper and apply the bow-and-arrow sticker to the sheet of background paper.
- 4) Now remove the top covering from the bow-and-arrow sticker.
- 5) Apply the gold leaf. It should stick to the adhesive paper.
- 6) Brush off the extra gold leaf using a paint brush to create a shiny, gold bow-and-arrow image.



ACTIVITY – HIT THE TABLE LEG

Supplies

One piece of light-colored felt per group of 3-5 kids, one or two ping pong balls per person, markers, Velcro®-type strips/dots, something to attach the target to the classroom wall/door (e.g., tape, push pins), tape/string/yarn to indicate lines on the floor.

Helpful Hints

A target measuring about 6" across and about 24" high works well.

Velcro®-type products are made up of a hook (rough) side and a loop (fuzzy) side. For this activity, you need only the hook side. Self-adhesive strips are quick and easy but slightly more expensive. Gluing on the strips is less expensive but more time-consuming and needs time to dry. You can also use Velcro®-type dots (about 6 per ball).

ACTIVITY – HIT THE TABLE LEG (cont.)

Preparation (optional)

Cut out the felt target. If you want the kids to make the target, you'll also need to bring a tape measure, a marker (any color), and scissors.

Attach the Velcro®-type strips/dots to the ping pong balls.

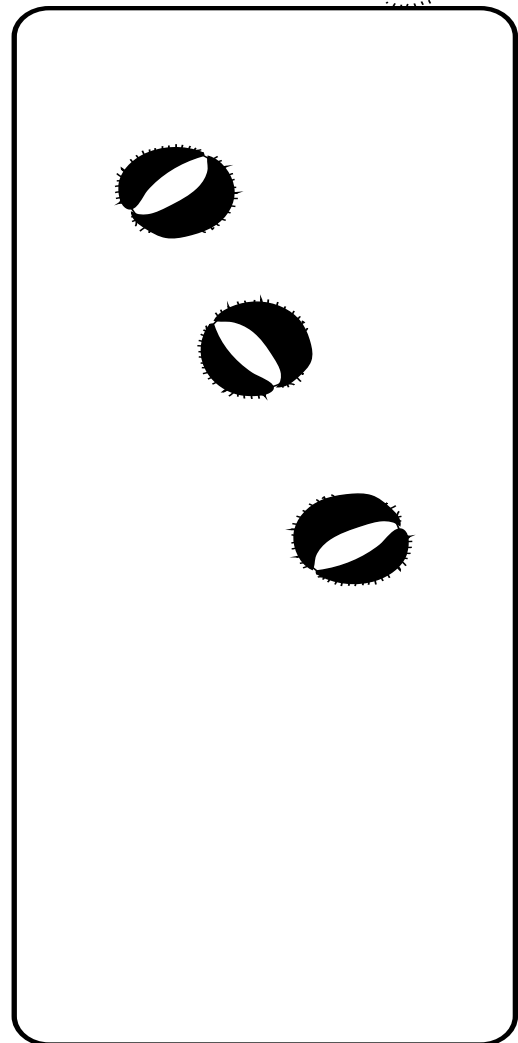
Prompt: Today, we're going to see if you can hit a table leg from a distance.

Show them the target and let them make their “sticky balls,” if not already done.

Make some lines on the floor to indicate varying distances from the target.

Let them throw the sticky balls at the “table leg” target and see if they can hit it. You can simply let them play around or you can create some sort of game (e.g., counting up how many times they hit the target from a particular distance, determining who can hit the target from the furthest distance).

If you want to make the target more like a table leg, place it low on the wall.

**TAKE-HOME OPPORTUNITY – PEACE FOR OUR “ENEMIES”**

Prompt: In our story for today, the Guru prevented a fight with his enemies by scaring them with his arrow. This week, see if you can make peace with someone you don't like very much or even someone you might consider an “enemy.” Can you all think of someone who fits that description? [Share] Can you think of something nice you might be able to do for that person to make things more peaceful between you? [Brainstorm]



[Wikimedia Commons: Bhai Sahib Satpal Singh Khalsa (public domain courtesy of Tariksingh)]



[Wikimedia Commons: Sikh boy wearing a *patka* in Punjab, India.
(Photo courtesy of Sanyam Bahga)]

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