

Grade: 3

Lesson Number: 9

Course: Virṣā

Title: Bandī Choṛ Divas (ਬੰਦੀ ਛੋੜ ਦਿਵਸ)

Standards

Standard 2: Comprehension of Appropriate Passages

- Students comprehend grade-appropriate reading passages and summarize the materials.
 - *Students ask questions and support answers by connecting prior knowledge with literal information.*
 - *Students demonstrate comprehension by identifying answers in the text.*
 - *Students recall major points in the text and make and modify predictions about forthcoming information.*

Objectives

1. Students will learn about the significance of Bandī Choṛ Divas.
2. The students will create cards for friends and family conveying its message for the Sikhs.

Prerequisites

- None.

Materials

- Information on Bhāī Manī Singh (resources attached)
- White or beige cardstock (can be found at any office supply store)
- Crayons, Color Pencils, or Markers
- Pencil
- Chart paper
- Lined notebook paper

Advanced Preparation

- The information about Bhāī Manī Singh has been provided, please make sure you take a look so that you can conduct the discussion and answer any questions that the students might have.
- In the story of Bhāī Manī Singh, teacher is going to need to know historical background, so that s/he are able to explain historical facts when need be.
- The teacher needs to be clear that Divālī does not have any significance to Sikhī. Instead, Sikhs celebrate Bandī Choṛ Divas. This commemorates the the return of Gurū Hargobind from prison and the fact that Bhāī Manī Singh laid down his life for what he believed.

Engagement (20 minutes)

- Greet the students and have them get settled.
- As students are getting settled, pass out lined paper and pens/pencils.

- On the board or chart paper, write “Divālī” – Ask students to write everything they know about “Divālī.” Give students about five minutes to write.
- Next, ask students to write everything they know about the connection between Divālī and Sikhī if there is one – and if there isn’t one, why do we celebrate it?
- Discuss student responses. If students are unfamiliar with the purpose of Divālī ask them to listen to the story of Bhāī Manī Singh.

Exploration (30 minutes)

- Have students sit in a circle, and then tell them the story of Bhāī Manī Singh in a dramatic manner.
- Encourage students to write notes as you are reading the story.
- Next, discuss the story and have students write down the importance of celebrating Bandī Chor Divas rather than Divālī which is a Hindu celebration with no significance for Sikhs.
- Have students share their responses with the class.
- Explain to student that they will be creating a Bandī Chor Divas card to explain the significance to their friends and family.
- Have students help you come up with a couple of different messages for the Bandī Chor Divas cards.

Explanation/Extension (10 minutes)

- Next, pass out a piece of paper (the cardstock) and have students design a Bandī Chor Divas card with the message on the inside.

Evaluation (On-going)

- For homework, ask students to share the cards with friends and family and to share the sakhi of Bhāī Manī Singh with their family members.
- It is a great idea to display the cards for about a week before students take them home to share with their family.

Teacher Resources

Bhāī Manī Singh

In 1699 when Gobind Rāī (ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਰਾਇ) became Gobind Singh and initiated the Amrit ceremony, Manī Singh joined the Khālsā. In 1704 Manī Singh was with the Gurū when he was forced to evacuate Anandpur. Manī Singh went to Damdamā Sāhib with the Gurū and wrote a copy of the Gurū Granth Sāhib. After Gurū Sāhib passed away, Bhāī Manī Singh was made Granthī of Darbār Sāhib. He was well respected and admired by all.

During this time, the Muslim rulers had given orders to massacre the Sikhs. They made an extra effort to make sure that Sikhs could not congregate in large numbers. Due to this reason the Divālī festival had not been held in Amritsar. In the year 1738, Manī Singh decided to ask for permission from the governor of Lahore to hold the festival. The permission was granted on the condition that Bhāī Manī Singh would pay the government Rs. 5,000 after the festival. Manī Singh had believed that he would be able to pay this amount from the offerings made by the Sikhs. He sent out the invitation to Sikhs all over Pañjāb. Everyone was excited to attend the festival – many Sikhs began to leave for the journey to Amritsar shortly after they learned about the Divālī festival.

Bhāī Manī Singh had not known of the governor's true intentions earlier. According to him, he was sending a force of some officers to keep order during the festival but Manī Singh knew that something did not seem right. The large force sent by the governor was under the command of Divān Lakhpat Rāī (ਦਿਵਾਨ ਲਖਪਤ ਰਾਇ) who hated the Sikhs and was a sworn enemy of them. The force wasn't sent to keep order, instead it was sent to keep the Sikhs away from Amritsar. Lakhpat Rāī and the governor were afraid of allowing too many Sikhs to congregate. They had decided to have the force march into the city on the day of the festival so that the Sikhs would become afraid and leave on their own. Bhāī Manī Singh destroyed their plan by sending out another letter telling Sikhs not to come to Amritsar

Since no festival was held, Bhāī Manī Singh refused to make the payment. This was also an assertion of sovereignty. He was arrested for failing to make the payment. He was taken prisoner to Lahore in chains. There, he was brutally tortured. He was given the opportunity to save himself all he had to do was convert to Islam. Bhāī Sāhib remained calm and refused to convert to Islam. Orders were issued that his body should be cut to pieces, limb by limb. As the executioner was about to begin, Bhāī Sāhib sat serenely. His focus was on Vāhigurū. Bhāī Manī Singh attained martyrdom about one month after the day on which Divālī festival was to have held in 1738.

Bandi Choṛ Divas (ਬੰਦੀ ਛੋੜ ਦਿਵਸ)

Bandī Choṛ is also a very special time for the Sikhs because we celebrate the return of Gurū Hargobind from his imprisonment in Gvāliar (ਗਵਾਲਿਅਰ) Fort. He refused to be released until the other 52 kings were also released who were being held there unfairly. It was decided that those that could hold on to Gurū Sāhib's robe could be released along with him. A special chola was made with 52 strips. All the kings were able to hold on to Gurū Hargobind's robe and were released. His return to Amritsar was celebrated with lights illuminating the city of Amritsar. This was close to the same time as Divālī (ਦਿਵਾਲੀ) – however, the city was not celebrating Divālī, they were celebrating the return of our Gurū.

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