

November – Guru Nanak's Birthday – Sikh

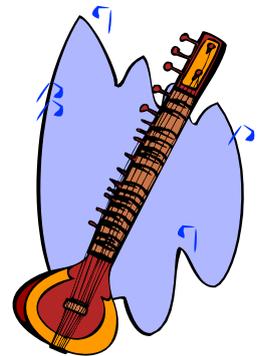
The Sikh religion was founded by Guru Nanak in the 15th Century. 'Guru' is the name given to a spiritual teacher and 'sikh' means 'disciple' or 'student'. Nanak was born in the country now known as Pakistan and was brought up in the Hindu faith, he also knew many Muslims but he was not happy with either Hinduism or Islam. He decided to follow his own path to God where everyone is equal; people soon began to follow him and became known as Sikhs. Guru Nanak taught them to work hard to earn an honest living, share food with others and be kind, helpful and charitable. On his birthday the Golden Temple at Amristar is lit by hundreds of tiny candles and lamps!

Sikhs worship at a gurdwara, where they say prayers, hear readings from the Sikh holy book - the *Guru Granth Sahib* and sing hymns called 'kirtans' accompanied by musical instruments such as sitars and drums. A sitar is similar to a guitar.

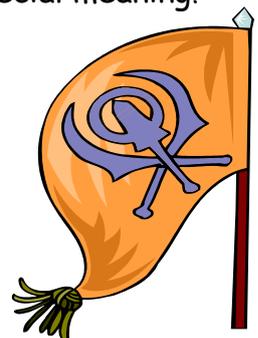
Perhaps the Beavers could make some Indian musical instruments.

Use shoe boxes or plastic containers to make the main body of the sitar and elastic bands of different sizes stretched across the opening. When plucked these will make various sounds like the strings of the sitar.

Why not make some drums from items of junk and decorate with bright colours and patterns!



Before Guru Nanak died he appointed a new leader - there were 9 Gurus after Nanak. Guru Gobind Singh created a strong Sikh brotherhood called the 'Khalsa'. Members of the Khalsa wear 5 items beginning with the letter 'K', each has a special meaning!



'Kesh' is uncut beard and hair, men wear their long hair caught in a bun by the 'kangha' or comb under a cloth 'patka' and covered by a turban. They also wear 'kaccha', a type of underpants or shorts and a steel bangle on their wrist called a 'kara' bracelet.

They carry a 'kirpan', a curved knife which represents justice.

Could the Beavers sit in a circle and play a memory game of words beginning with 'K'?

The Sikh symbol - the Khanda - includes two crossed kirpans which represent a Sikh's responsibility to God and the community. This has echoes of our Scout Promise.