

Grade: Kindergarten
Lesson Number: 22
Course: Sikh Virṣā
Title: Māi Bhāgo

Standards

Standard 5: Important Dates

- Students identify and describe the events people celebrate during Sikh holidays and why we celebrate them. (e.g. *Vaisākhī, Divālī, Holā Mohallā, Parkāsh Utsav Gurū Nānak, Parkāsh Utsav Gurū Gobind Singh, Shahīdī Choṭe Sāhibzāde, Gurgadī Gurū Granth Sāhib, Māi Bhāgo and Sikh Bībīāṁ Celebration.*)

Objectives

- Students will learn the biography of Māi Bhāgo (ਮਾਈ ਭਾਗੋ) and will re-enact it in the form of a play.

Prerequisites

- This lesson plan is a part of a series focusing on the important dates.

Materials

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Pencils
- Picture of Māi Bhāgo / Māi Bhāg Kaur
- Copies of the play
- Costumes (cunnī – ਚੁੰਨੀ – can be used as Mughal dastārs, orange dastārs for the Sikh army, plastic or cardboard swords.
- Backdrop – poster boards, markers or paints, brushes

Advanced Preparation

- This lesson may take more than one class period; it is at the teacher's discretion how much time they would like to spend on this lesson.
- Create a backdrop to show where Māi Bhāg Kaur fought in the battle – this can be done on a large poster board.
- If you could provide costumes or ask parents to help with costumes it will make the play more realistic.
- Have extra volunteers for this class.

Engagement (20 minutes)

- Ask students who the tenth Gurū was? Ask students to share some information that they know about Gurū Gobind Singh. They may need to be reminded that he had four sons and during the later part of his life, Aurangzeb was an emperor with whom the Gurū fought a lot of battles.
- Next, ask students about the Sikhs who fought with Gurū Sāhib.
 - Who do think fought in Gurū Gobind Singh's army?

- What do you think these people looked like?
- Do you think there were any women or girls that fought in Gurū Gobind Singh Jī's army?
- Why do you think they did fight? Why do you think they didn't fight?
- Show picture of Māī Bhāg Kaur. Ask the following questions:
 - Who do you think this person is?
 - What can you tell me about her from looking at the picture?
 - What questions do you have about her?
- Tell the sākhī of Māī Bhāg Kaur. (BE DRAMATIC!)
- Do a quick recap with help from students.
- Ask the following questions to make sure students understood the sākhī:
 - Why did the Sikhs who were with Gurū Gobind Singh want to go home?
 - What did they write on the paper?
 - When they came back to the village, how did everyone react?
 - Why do you think Māī Bhāg Kaur was soooooo mad?
 - What did she do?
 - Why do some of us think women wouldn't fight in the army?
 - Do you think Gurū Gobind Singh would agree?
 - How can we show more respect to our women?
- Tell students that now they would get a chance to reenact that part of history.
- Assign roles, ask volunteers to help set-up backdrops and costumes.

Exploration (30 minutes)

- Rehearse two or three times.
- Do the play with costumes.

Explanation/Extension (10 minutes)

- Put Māī Bhāg Kaur's picture back up and ask students:
 - If you could ask Māī Bhāg Kaur any question, what would you ask her?
- Write down students' questions and answer them.

Evaluation (On-going)

- For homework, have students tell this sākhī to two or three people.

Teacher Resources

Great Sikh Women Māi Bhāgo – Bhāg Kaur

Māi Bhāgo (ਮਾਈ ਭਾਗੋ) was a descendant of Phero Shāh, the younger brother of Bhāi Lauṁgā (ਲੌਂਗਾ) who converted to Sikhī during the life of Gurū Arjan. Born in her ancestral village of Jhabbal in present-day Amritsar district of the Pañjāb, she was married to Nidhān Singh of Paṭṭī (ਪੱਟੀ). Overall, she was a staunch Sikh by birth and upbringing.



Her story begins in a moment where Mughals and hilly chiefs had surrounded Anandpur Sāhib and were demanding it be evacuated. The Mughals promised that anyone who renounced their allegiance as Sikhs of Gurū Gobind Singh would be left untouched. A group of 40 Sikhs, led by Mahān (ਮਹਾਂ) Singh, decided to take that route and told Gurū Gobind Singh that they no longer belonged to him.

Gurū Gobind Singh accepted their decision and asked them to record this renunciation in a document. After the forty Sikhs signed this document, they left Gurū Gobind Singh and returned to their homes. Upon their return, Māi Bhāgo learned of their abandonment of Gurū Gobind Singh and was distressed to hear that some of the Sikhs of her neighborhood had deserted their Gurū. So Māi Bhāgo took action and began an inspirational movement. She rallied the deserters of the Gurū, and together, they traveled to reunite with their leader.

Meanwhile, Gurū Gobind Singh had to evacuate the fort of Anandpur, and his children were lost in the confusion. The two youngest sons, Zorāvar Singh and Fatih Singh, went along with their grandmother (mother of Gurū Gobind Singh). Meanwhile, the elder two Ajīt Singh and Jhujhār Singh were with their father. Then at the battle of Camkaur (ਚਮਕੌਰ) Gurū's elder sons attained martyrdom, and the Gurū was saved by five Sikhs and he evacuated Camkaur. While traveling in the Mālṡā (ਮਾਲਵਾ) region he was hotly pursued by Mughal forces of Aurangzeb (ਔਰੰਗਜ਼ੇਬ).

Traveling day and night in the Jungles of Mālṽā region, imperial Mughal forces were in constant pursuit of the Gurū. Gurū Gobind Singh reached the village of Khidrāṇā (ਖਿਦਰਾਣਾ), when Māi Bhāgo and the men known as Cālī Mukte (ਚਾਲੀ ਮੁਕਤੇ), who she was leading stopped near the pool of Khidrāṇā. An imperial army in pursuit of Gurū Gobind Singh was about to overtake him. They challenged the pursuing host and fought. Now this battleground is known as Muktsar (ਮੁਕਤਸਰ) Sāhib.



Her hut in Jinvārā (ਜਿਨਵਾਰਾ) has now been converted into Gurduārā Tap Asthān Māi Bhāgo. At Nanded, too, a hall within the compound of Takht Sackhand (ਸਚਖੰਡ) is devoted to her, and Srī Hazūr Sāhib marking the site of her residence is known as Buṅgā (ਬੁੰਗਾ) Māi Bhāgo.

Images courtesy of: www.sikh-history.com

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