



Sikh Community Library Toolkit

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One great way to start spreading Sikh awareness in your school, town, and district is through sharing meaningful literature that features Sikhs, explains the Sikh faith and identity, or celebrates Sikh stories. This library toolkit is a resource to help you get started including suggestions for books, activities and events that your local library can host. It is appropriate to celebrate Sikh stories at any point in the year, however, if you are looking to tie in Sikh awareness with an occasion, you can consider the ideas in this toolkit for Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month (you can check if your state has passed a Resolution for this), or the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi in April.

This toolkit contains the following information:

- *Sample Letter to your Librarian*
- *Ideas for Library Projects/Events to Celebrate Sikh Americans*
- *Window or Table Display*
- *After-School Book Readings & Kids' Activities*
- *Screenings & Discussions*
- *Featuring Local Sikhs on a Panel*
- *Hosting an Artist Night with Sikh Singers, Musicians, & Artists*

If you have any questions or need help organizing an event, please email us at community@sikhcoalition.org or give us a call at **212.655.3095**.

Sample Letter/Email to a Librarian

[Date]

[Library Address]

Dear [Librarian's Name],

My name is [Name], and [very briefly describe yourself and any way in which you are connected to the community – either by simply being a library patron, a parent of a child in the local school district, or some deeper interaction with the community.] I would like to meet with you to discuss how [library name] can celebrate diversity and be more inclusive of the Sikh American community.

Sikhism is the fifth largest world religion and Sikhs first immigrated to the US over 125 years ago. We have had notable achievements as farmers, soldiers, entrepreneurs, congressmen, scientists, actors, and more, and have made significant contributions to this country's rich history.

Unfortunately, many Americans know little information about Sikhs or Sikhism, and therefore face bias-based harassment, bullying, and even hate crimes. I'm sure you will agree that we can stop the cycle of ignorance and hate by spreading awareness about diversity and encouraging respect for everyone in our local communities.

I understand that your library is very busy with various community events that are already on the calendar. However, I kindly ask that we work together to find something that [library name] can do in partnership with the Sikh community. The Sikh Coalition, the largest Sikh civil rights organization in the country, has developed a list of projects and ideas that I have included below.

- Window or table display
- After-school book readings & kids' activities
- Screenings & discussions
- Featuring local Sikhs on a panel
- Hosting an artist night with Sikh singers, musicians, & artists
- Book club featuring Sikh authors or Sikh specific content

Through these types of events, we can all celebrate diversity and encourage respect for one another's beliefs and customs. I would appreciate it if we could discuss this opportunity for collaboration further. My phone number is [XXX] and my email address is [XXX]. I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

[Name]

[Signature]

Ideas for Library Projects & Events to Celebrate Sikh Americans

Window or Table Display

Oftentimes, libraries will create a window or table display around a particular theme or holiday. To celebrate Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month, we suggest displaying the following items in the lobby at your library:

- **Informational Resources**
 - [‘Who are the Sikhs’ postcards*](#)
 - [‘The Sikhs’ brochures*](#)

*To order these items, please send an email to education@sikhcoalition.org.



- **Books about Sikhs or featuring Sikh characters**

Children’s Books:

- [‘The Many Colors of Harpreet Singh’](#) by Supriya Kelkar (Sterling Children’s Books). [Discussion Guide here](#)
- [‘Super Satya Saves the Day’](#) by Raakhee Mirchandani (Mango & Marigold Press) [Discussion Guide here](#)
- [‘Fauja Singh Keeps Going’](#) by Simran Jeet Singh (Penguin Random House). [Discussion Guide here](#)
- [‘Ajooni the Kaurageous’](#), by Amarpreet Kaur Dhami (Mascot Books)
- [‘What is a Patka?’](#) by Tajinder Kaur Kalia
- [‘The Garden of Peace’](#) by Navjot Kaur (Saffron Press)
- [‘A Lion’s Mane’](#) by Navjot Kaur (Saffron Press). [Lesson plan here](#)
- [‘Be Brave My Love’](#) by Bhajneet Singh (Brave Lion Books) and [coloring book](#)
- [‘The Boy With Long Hair’](#) by Pushpinder Kaur (The Sikh Foundation). [Lesson plan here](#)
- [‘Jasmin’s Summer Wish’](#) by Elizabeth Glines (Wilderness House Press)



Books for Adults:

- [*Sikhism: A Guide for the Perplexed*](#) by Arvind-Pal Singh Mandair
- [*Teachings of the Sikh Gurus*](#) by Arvind-Pal Singh Mandair and Christopher Shackle
- [*Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction*](#) by Eleanor Nesbitt
- [*Guru Nanak*](#) by Eleanor Nesbitt and Gopinder Kaur
- [*The Sikhs*](#) by Patwant Singh
- [*The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*](#) by Harbans Singh
- [*The Name of My Beloved: Verses of the Sikh Gurus*](#) by Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh
- [*Sikhism: An Introduction*](#) by Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh

Books by Sikh Authors:

- [*Milk and Honey*](#) by Rupinder Kaur
- [*The Sun and Her Flowers*](#) by Rupinder Kaur
- [*When You Ask Me Where I'm Going*](#) by Jasmin Kaur
- [*Her Name is Kaur: Sikh American Women Write about Love, Courage, and Faith*](#) edited by Meeta Kaur

After School Book Readings & Kids' Activities

We recommend reading any of the following books in a group setting with elementary school children. After the reading, we encourage you to have a discussion or do an activity with the children. We have included discussion guides below, which were created in collaboration with the respective authors and the Sikh Coalition.

- [*The Many Colors of Harpreet Singh*](#) by Supriya Kelkar (Sterling Children's Books). [Discussion Guide here](#)
- [*Super Satya Saves the Day*](#) by Raakhee Mirchandani (Mango & Marigold Press) [Discussion Guide here](#)
- [*Fauja Singh Keeps Going*](#) by Simran Jeet Singh (Penguin Random House). [Discussion Guide here](#)



** Check out our [Sikh Celebrations: Lessons & Activities for Inclusive Classrooms](#) resource to incorporate awareness about Sikh Celebrations year-round.



Screenings & Discussions

You can also host a screening at the library. At the conclusion of the video, we encourage you to host a discussion with the audience. We recommend the following:

- CNN's "[United Shades of America with W. Kamau Bell](#)" 60-minute episode on the Sikh community. Discussion guide can be found [here](#). The episode can be accessed on the CNN app, Xfinity DVR or Hulu streaming services.

Feature Local Sikhs on a Panel

Invite local Sikhs who are community leaders, educators, professionals, elected officials, etc to sit on a panel to discuss their experiences as Sikh Americans.

The panel can focus on how important it is for local communities to learn about and foster a respect for the diversity in their city. Ask a local media personality to moderate the panel.



If you have any questions or need help organizing an event,
please email us at community@sikhcoalition.org

To see more of our resources for parents and educators,
take a look at our [Back to School Toolkit](#)

If you curate a library display, do an activity, host a screening/discussion or use this toolkit in any way, we would love to see pictures!

Please share photos with us at media@sikhcoalition.org!