

LQ: How is equality and sewa (service) shown in the langar?

Here are the learning intentions for this lesson.

- Know about Guru Amar Das and the origins of the langar.
- Know how the langar functions today.
- Be able to express their own ideas and opinions about the benefits and challenges of serving others.
- Be able to make the link between Sikh beliefs about equality, sewa (service) and the langar.

Key religious vocabulary:

- Langar



- sewa (the service)

When was the last time you shared your food with someone? How did it make you feel? Is it easy or difficult to share your food when:

- It's your favourite crisps or sweets?
- It's something you don't really like?
- With your best friend?
- With people you are not really good friends with?

Why is it easy or difficult for you?

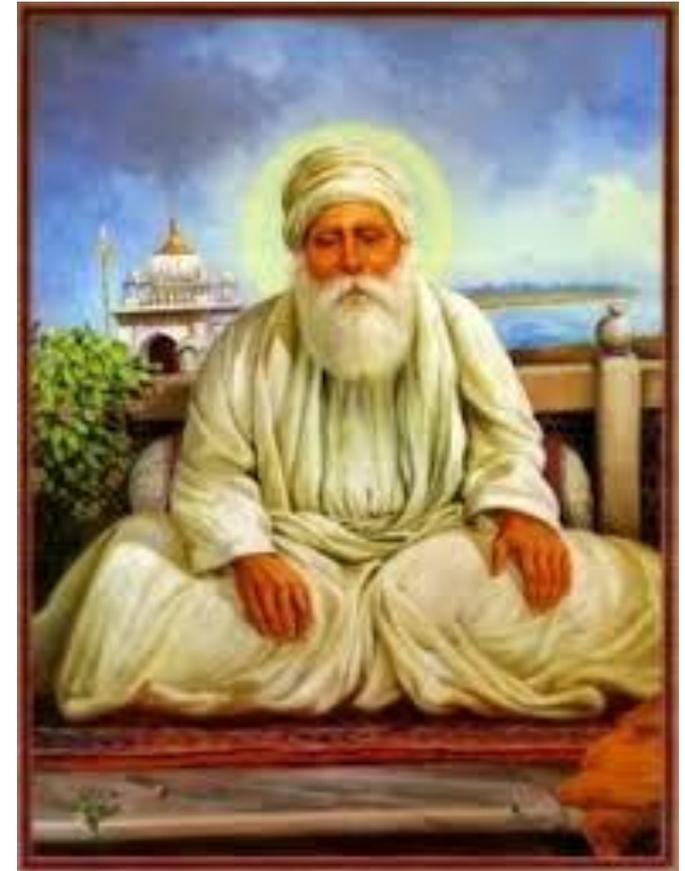


Guru Amar Das – Third Sikh Guru.

He converted from Hinduism to Sikhism and became a devoted follower of Guru Angad.

Amar Das was chosen to be the Guru when he was 73 years old.

Even though he was old, he was able to hold the Sikh community together and leave behind him a growing and well-organised faith when he died.





What did he do?

As a man of his time he was very radical, he formalised the langar, where everyone served and sat together to eat a communal meal.

This was to demonstrate the equality of all, at a time when the caste system was much more predominant than it is now.

It was a practical demonstration of the rejection of the Hindu belief that a person should not eat with someone of a lower caste, women or members of another religion.



He also believed that men and women were equal. He appointed both male and female preachers. He also allowed women to re-marry if their husbands had died.

Key questions:

- Does belief always lead to action?
- How do Sikhs express their beliefs in the langar?

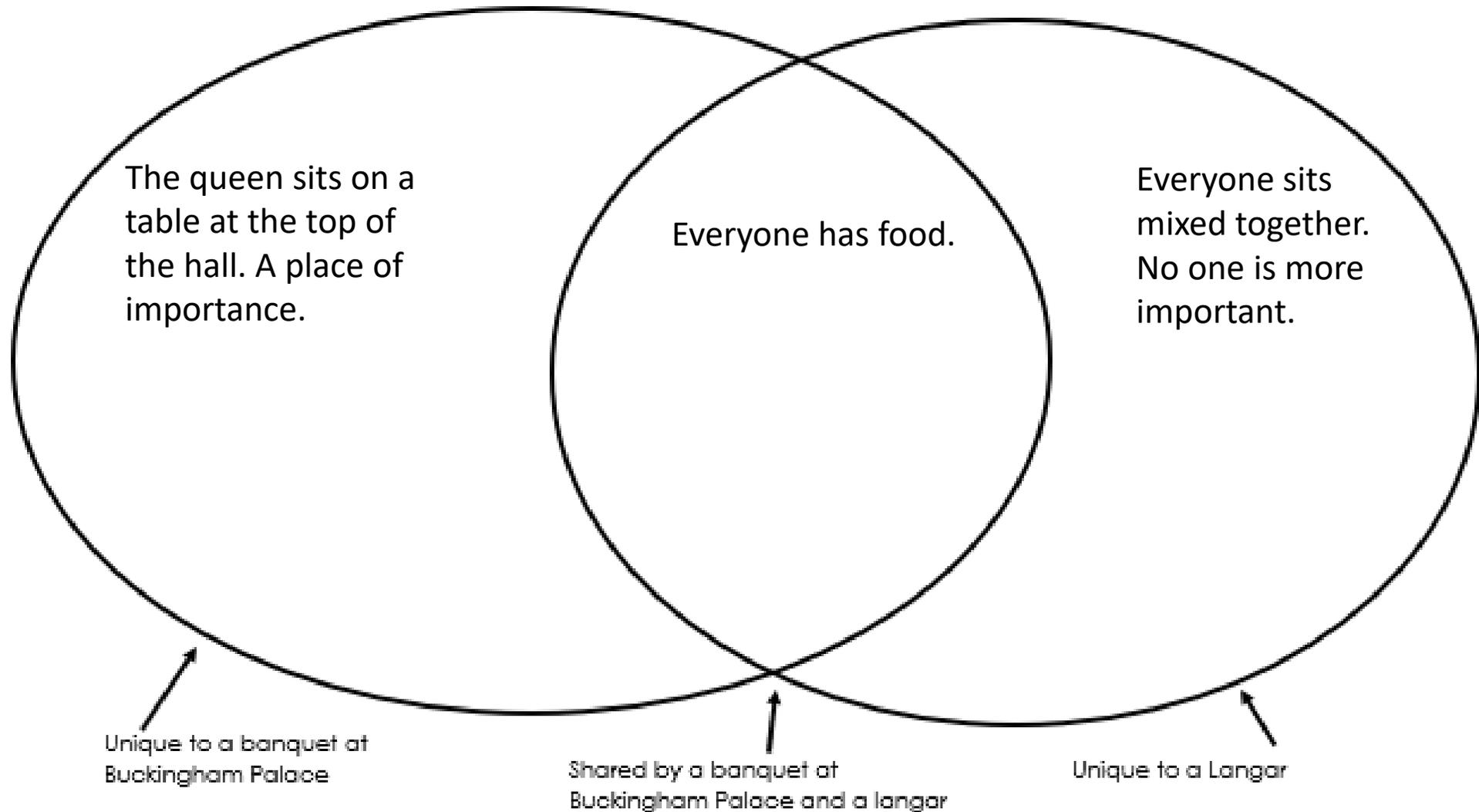
How is equality and sewa shown in the langar?



Look closely at these pictures and compare what is happening in both images. Use the first activity sheet to help you compare what is similar and what is different.

Example

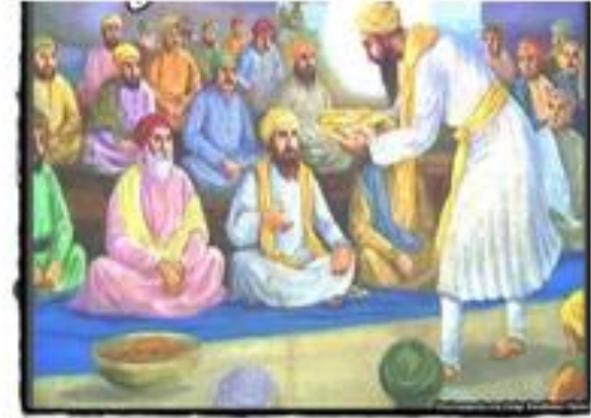
Compare a banquet at Buckingham Palace and a Langar at a Gurdwara. What is unique to each one and what is similar? Record your observations in the Venn diagram.



Story of the Emperor and the Langar



I know, let's have a big party or we could have a festival or invite local leaders



1. One day the Muslim Emperor, Akbar, decided he would visit Guru Amar Das and learn about the Sikhs

2. Everyone in the village was excited and had lots of ideas about how to welcome the Emperor. The Guru thought about it carefully.

3. When Akbar arrived, he was taken to the langar and sat on the floor with everyone else to eat bread, rice and lentils



This has been great. Please have this gift of land so that I can provide everything you need for the langar!



4. When the meal was over, Akbar went to speak to the Guru. Akbar offered him a gift of large piece of land to grow crops for the langar.

5. The Guru graciously refused the gift and explained that every Sikh has a duty to give to the langar. In that way everyone plays their part.

6. Akbar was impressed by the Guru's words and gave the Guru's daughter some land to put to good use.

Here is some more information about
Langar.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcNDjN1Gfc>

Reflection

- What do you do to serve others?
- How do we see equality and service around our school?