

**Grade: 1**

**Lesson Number: 6**

**Unit Name: Celebrations**

**Course: Virṣā**

**Title: Celebrating Bandī Chor Divas (ਬੰਦੀ ਛੋੜ ਦਿਵਸ)**

### **Standards**

#### **Standard 6: Important Dates**

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

### **Objectives**

1. Children will learn the history and significance of Bandī Chor Divas for the Sikhs and its relation to Divālī (ਦਿਵਾਲੀ).

### **Prerequisites**

- None.

### **Materials**

- Story of Bandī Chor Divas (below)
- Avoid showing pictures of Gurūs if you can help it
- Markers/crayons
- Construction paper

### **Advanced Preparation**

- Teacher should be familiar with all details of the story of Bandī Chor.

### **Engagement/Exploration (40-50 minutes) Exploration**

- Begin by asking children if they know what Divālī is. Ask them how they celebrate it. Let children do most of the talking. You will most likely hear from children things like, “We go to parties; we play with firecrackers; we decorate our house with lights.” (This will not be the focus for your class)
- After they are done getting Divālī out of their system, ask them how it’s significant to the Sikhs. Because at least a few of them may have heard of it in Kindergarten, they will be able to tell you part of the story of Bandī Chor.
- Once you have a student who you feel is starting to tell you the details, have him/her stand up and come up to the front of the class and help you tell the story.
- Things to focus on—have detailed discussion on the following points, asking children what they feel about these beliefs and how they can use it in their daily life:
  - Gurū Hargobind’s belief of freedom, not only for himself but for any of the oppressed
  - Someone who is not allowed to live their life in the way they wish and are forced into having to do something by someone who thinks they are greater than them.

- His creativity—he could have given up and said that it is not possible to get all 52 kings on his robe, but instead he came up with a solution.
- The way of celebrating something—It so happened that Divālī happen to fall on the same day, but have a discussion how Sikhs should or should not celebrate it. Is there a way to celebrate it so that it is not confused for celebrating Divālī? Ask them how they would like to celebrate it now that they know it stands for the struggle of freedom.

#### **Explanation/Extension (5-10 minutes)**

- Review the story of Bandī Chor Divas, with the children telling you most of the story.
- Have children discuss how they would like to celebrate Bandī Chor Divas now that they know how it is significant for Sikhs.
- Have children draw a picture of how they would celebrate Bandī Chor Divas. Also make a list of how they want to celebrate it and give it to the fourth and fifth grade classes and see if they can incorporate some of the suggestions into their celebration development plans.

#### **Evaluation (On-going)**

- Have children tell the story of Bandī Chor Divas to their family and suggest ways that they would like to celebrate it.

## **Teacher Resources**

*Ask children who Gurū Hargobind was and what they remember about him (make reference to first two classes on 'Our Gurūs'-Lesson Number 1 and 2+)*

### **Bandī Chor Divas (ਬੰਦੀ ਛੋੜ ਦਿਵਸ)**

Sometime between 1617 and 1619, the sixth Gurū; Gurū Hargobind, was imprisoned at Gwalior Fort by the Mughal Emperor Jahāngīr (ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ). Jahāngīr had kept him under close surveillance. Many devotees came by to see the Gurū on a daily basis but were turned away each time. This did not stop them from returning the very next day.

However, the Gurū's well-wishers such as Bhai Jetha, and the Muslim mystic Hazrat Miām Mir (ਹਜ਼ਰਤ ਮੀਆਂ ਮੀਰ) rallied for Gurū Hargobind to be released. Although Emperor Jahāngīr duly granted such freedom, Gurū Hargobind refused to leave the prison. This is because 52 other rulers were also being held unfairly at Gwalior Fort. In protest, the Gurū insisted on remaining a captive for as long as the other prisoners were held there. At this, the emperor conceded that however many prisoners could hold onto Gurū Hargobind's colā (ਚੋਲਾ / robe) at the emancipation would also be released. So a special colā was stitched, which had 52 strips attached to it, to be held by each prisoner.

To celebrate Gurū Hargobind's freedom, lamps were lit in Amritsar. Gurū Sāhib and this event have come to be known as Bandī Chor, which loosely translates as 'the release of the imprisoned' or 'the grand emancipator' or 'munificent liberator.' When Gurū Hargobind reached Amritsar, his Sikhs had lit lamps to welcome him. Since this occasion is celebrated and commemorated.

There is not any significant reason for Sikhs to celebrate Divālī as this is not a Sikh holiday. However, Bandi Chor Divas falls on the same day as the Hindu festival of Divālī. This is a time of celebration for us because Gurū Jī sacrificed and rejected personal freedom in order to defend the innocent and the exploited.

### Bandī Chor Divas

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