



2022 Sikh Youth Symposium



(A Division of Sikh Youth Alliance of North America)

GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: I (6 to 8 years)

Time allotted: 5 minutes

Book: My Guru's Blessings, Book Six

Author: Sardar Daljeet Singh

I CONTENTS (Answers to the following questions are expected in your speech. Please be brief and to the point. Contents are worth 60 points: 20 points for each question):

1. When and why should you sing Waheguru Ji's praises?
2. What should you do when you are scared? How can Waheguru Ji help us when we are scared?
3. Who helps you learn? How does Gurbani help you learn?

II Presentation (40 points):

Included in this area are items like style, delivery, poise, eye contact, voice, diction, language and effectiveness.

Time allotted to finish the speech for this group is **5 minutes**. There is no penalty for finishing the speech either earlier than 5 minutes or during the grace period of the next 30 seconds. After the grace period, i.e., after 5 minutes and 30 seconds have elapsed, one point would be deducted for every extra 10 seconds or part of 10 seconds, from every judge's score for the participant.

III Punjabi Presentation and Maintenance of Sikhi Saroop:

Use of Punjabi and maintenance of Sikhi Saroop needs to be encouraged. Participants who use Punjabi and/or maintain Sikhi Saroop will be judged according to the above format. However, it is suggested that such participants be rewarded suitably.

IV Suggestions on preparing youth for the Sikh Youth Symposium:

Given that the primary purpose of the Sikh Youth Symposium is for our children to focus on their learning, we would like to clarify the appropriate levels of support children should receive as they prepare for their speeches. It is our recommendation that it is in the best interest of the children to write their own speeches, with minimal support from parents or other adults.

Parents/Mentors may sit with children to read and discuss the book, as well as review the questions with them. They may write the child's responses as the child verbally answers the questions. The parents may help the children put their answers together in a speech format and further develop their thoughts, as needed.

If your child's speech is prepared in Punjabi, it must still follow the guidelines above. If it is prepared in English, it can be translated into Punjabi after it is created per the above guidelines. However, once the speech is in Punjabi, your child should understand the speech in its entirety.

Although these are only suggestions, in order to make this experience most meaningful and equitable for all children, it is recommended that we adhere to these suggestions as closely as possible.



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GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: II (9 to 10 years)

Time allotted: 6 minutes

Book: Sikh Sakhis for the Youth part II: Sikh Martyrs

Publisher: Sikh Missionary College, Ludhiana

I CONTENTS (Answers to the following questions are expected in your speech. Please be brief and to the point. Contents are worth 60 points: 20 points for each question):

1. What were the basic reasons that prompted numerous Sikh martyrs to sacrifice their lives? How long did these conditions last? Should we watch out for such conditions even today?
2. After reading 9 chapters on Sikh Shaheeds in the book, has your faith in the Sikh way of life changed or not? If yes, how? if not, why not?
3. Is age a factor in one's willingness to sacrifice one's life for the sake of one's principles? When forced to choose between giving up their principles for a comfortable life or sacrificing their life for their principles, why do martyrs choose to sacrifice their life?

II Presentation (40 points):

Included in this area are items like style, delivery, poise, eye contact, voice, diction, language and effectiveness.

Time allotted to finish the speech for this group is **6 minutes**. There is no penalty for finishing the speech either earlier than 6 minutes or during the grace period of the next 30 seconds. After the grace period, i.e., after 6 minutes and 30 seconds have elapsed, one point would be deducted for every extra 10 seconds or part of 10 seconds, from every judge's score for the participant.

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Parents/Mentors may sit with children to read and discuss the book and questions; however the children should write their own answers. Parents/Mentors may verbally support the children develop thoughts, suggest the ways and means to use better language without providing exact language to use in the speech.

If your child's speech is prepared in Punjabi, it must still follow the guidelines above. If it is prepared in English, it can be translated into Punjabi after it is created per the above guidelines. However, once the speech is in Punjabi, your child should understand the speech in its entirety.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: III (11 to 13 years)

Time allotted: 6 minutes

Book: Brief History of the Sikh Gurus

Publisher: Sikh Missionary College, Ludhiana

I CONTENTS (Answers to the following questions are expected in your speech. Please be brief and to the point. Contents are worth 60 points: 20 points for each question):

1. Many sakhis in the book caution us against meaningless rituals. Why do most of us still fall for such rituals? Why is it important that we do not engage in them?
2. What approaches did Guru Nanak Dev Ji and other Gurus use for spreading their message to the masses? Learning from those approaches, how can we spread Sikhi's message of oneness of all humanity in the world?
3. What do the lives of our Gurus teach us about how to get close to Waheguru? Why do we need to be close to Waheguru? How does it benefit us?

II Presentation (40 points):

Included in this area are items like style, delivery, poise, eye contact, voice, diction, language and effectiveness.

Time allotted to finish the speech for this group is **6 minutes**. There is no penalty for finishing the speech either earlier than 6 minutes or during the grace period of next 30 seconds. After the grace period, i.e., after 6 minutes and 30 seconds have elapsed, one point would be deducted for every extra 10 seconds or part of 10 seconds, from every judge's score for the participant.

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The participants should read the books independently, asking parents/mentors for support to understand the text and questions as needed. The participants should independently write their speeches, asking parents/mentors for suggestions, Gurbani references and reference points.

If your child's speech is prepared in Punjabi, it must still follow the guidelines above. If it is prepared in English, it can be translated into Punjabi after it is created per the above guidelines. However, once the speech is in Punjabi, your child should understand the speech in its entirety.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: IV (14 to 17 years)

Time allotted: 7 minutes

Book: The Valiant Jaswant Singh Khalrha

Author: Sardarni Gurmeet Kaur

I CONTENTS (Answers to the following questions are expected in your speech. Please be brief and to the point. Contents are worth 60 points: 20 points for each question):

1. Jaswant Singh Khalrha was born into a newly partitioned Punjab after an arduous fight for freedom that left many families suffering through separation and poverty. Many of his own family members made great sacrifices for the Sikh community. Describe how the stories that he heard from his Bapu Ji and the struggles he witnessed during childhood inspired him to commit his life to seeking justice for the Sikh kaum.
2. The Indian government went to great lengths to weaken the economic, social, and moral fabric of Punjab by way of federally instituted policies. Explain how these policies and the resultant geopolitical landscape set the stage for the various Sikh movements discussed in the book to gain momentum.
3. The Sikh people have a longstanding history of fighting injustice and championing social rights, even in the face of incredible odds. What relationships can you draw between the issues and circumstances that laid the foundation for the Sikh movements discussed in the book and those that led to the recent Indian farmers' protest? What lessons can we learn from the challenges and successes of the farmers' protest to help prepare our global Sikh community for any attacks on our rights and liberties in the future?

III Presentation (40 points):

Included in this area are items like style, delivery, poise, eye contact, voice, diction, language and effectiveness.

Time allotted to finish the speech for this group is **7 minutes**. There is no penalty for finishing the speech either earlier than 7 minutes or during the grace period of the next 30 seconds. After the grace period, i.e., after 7 minutes and 30 seconds have elapsed, one point would be deducted for every extra 10 seconds or part of 10 seconds, from every judge's score for the participant

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The participants should independently read the book and answer questions and ask adults for support only as reference points or to ask for guidance on Gurbani references.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: V (16 to 22 years)

Time allotted: 8 minutes

Theme: Sarbat Da Bhala/Social Justice

Book: No book assigned

The theme for this year is "Sarbat da Bhala/Social Justice". Sarbat da Bhala is one of the most important aspects of Sikhi, and is an integral part of our Ardas. The concept of Sarbat da Bhala acquires added significance in today's world when the human society is fragmented in divisions based on many criteria, including religion, caste, skin color, nationality and much else. The aim of thinking about and discussing this seminal concept of Sikhi is to enhance our understanding and practice of this concept in our life. Please research and think about various aspects of the theme and related issues.

The judges will consider the development of the arguments presented. They do not have to agree with the speaker; in fact, the viewpoint presented may be unusual, different or even unpopular. What matters is the logic, its development and its strength.

Competition at the International level will involve discussions around the above theme and various related issues. We hope to encourage an understanding of the Gurmat values based on Gurbani, History and Rehat, as well as promote the habits of critical thinking. This will also help in developing skills to discuss difficult issues with other Sikhs and with non-Sikhs.

For the speech competition at the Center and the Regional levels, the participants should address the three specific questions given below.

I CONTENTS (Answers to the following questions are expected in your speech. Please be brief and to the point. Contents are worth 60 points: 20 points for each question):

1. Every day Sikhs do Ardas for Sarbat da Bhala. How do you define Sarbat and who/what do you think is included in Sarbat as per Gurmat? If the purpose of life is to become one with Akal Purakh Waheguru as taught to us by the Guru Sahibs in Gurbani and as exemplified in their lives, what role does the concept of Sarbat da Bhala play in our journey towards Waheguru?
2. Charity and social justice are important ideals in Western culture. Are these concepts similar to Sarbat da Bhala? Explain why or why not with references from Gurbani, the lives of the Gurus, and Sikh history from the 18th century to present times.
3. Our great and rich Sikh heritage is full of inspiring examples of how Sarbat da Bhala was put into action by the great Gursikhs of the past by following the footsteps of the Gurus. Learning from them, what kinds of projects and platforms are potential avenues in the religious, political, and social spheres for Sikhs, both individually and collectively, to carry forward the mission of Sarbat da Bhala today?

II Presentation (40 points):

Included in this area are items like style, delivery, poise, eye contact, voice, diction, language and effectiveness. Time allotted to finish the speech for this group is **8 minutes**. There is no penalty for finishing the speech either earlier than 8 minutes or during the grace period of the next 30 seconds. After the grace period, i.e., after 8 minutes and 30 seconds have elapsed, one point would be deducted for every extra 10 seconds or part of 10 seconds, from every judge's score for the participant.



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The participants should independently research the theme and answer questions and ask adults for support only as reference points or to ask for guidance on Gurbani references.

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ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION - GROUP V

For group V, the guidelines at the International level are different from those at the Center and the Regional levels. The format at the International level is specifically designed to foster discussion and critical thinking.

What follow next are guidelines that are specific to the competition at the International level. ***The Regions may, if they so desire, implement these guidelines at the Regional level also.***

Phase 1.

1. Each participant has two minutes to make an opening statement. The order of the participants is chosen at random. The opening statement does not necessarily need to cover every specific question and sub-question mentioned within the three questions that are addressed at the local and the regional level, but it needs to cover the overall theme in a competent manner.
2. After each opening statement, another participant chosen at random will be asked to respond to the opening statement. Time allotted for the response is one minute.
3. After each opening statement and the response to it, there will be an open discussion among the participants for about five minutes.
4. During the discussion mentioned in 3 above, the moderator will ask questions from the participants as necessary to keep the discussion alive. The moderator will ensure that the discussion stays on track and that no one participant gets to dominate the discussion.

Phase 2.

Following Phase 1, each participant will get one and a half minute to make a closing statement. The order of presentations is to be chosen at random.

Note:

While it is understandable and acceptable for the participants to come with a prepared closing statement, they are encouraged to incorporate relevant elements from the discussion during Phase 1 into their closing statement. That reflects a participant's ability to comprehend what is being discussed, analyze it, and integrate some relevant points from the discussion into their own statement.

The moderator will carry a critical burden on his/her shoulders