

❦ 2011 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: Basic Knowledge of Sikhism (Previously entitled: Basic Principles of Sikhism).

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):

- i) Briefly explain some of the important basic principles of Sikhi.
- ii) What is the importance of Guru Ka Langar in Sikhi? Why is it essential for everyone to sit together in Langar?
- iii) Do Sikhs believe in the caste system? Why or why not?

II Presentation (40 points):

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

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.

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: II (9 to 10 years)

Time allotted: 6 minutes

Book: The Sikh Sakhis.

Author: Dr. Gurbakhsh Singh

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):

- i) What role did Baba Banda Singh Bahadur play in Sikh history? Rather than losing their lives, why did he, Kaka Hakikat Rai and other Sikhs not accept the offer of the emperor and live a comfortable life?
- ii) What kind of torture and hardships did Sikh women suffer at Shaheed Ganj, Lahore and why? Did these Sikh women not love their children to save them from painful death?
- iii) Except for the Sakhis described in the above two questions, which other Sakhi in the book motivates you the most to live by the principles of Sikhi in your life? Why?

II Presentation (40 points):

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

III Punjabi Presentation and Maintenance of Sikhi Saroop:

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: III (11 to 13 years)

Time allotted: 6 minutes

Book: Banda Singh Bahadur

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):

- i) Describe the role and achievements of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur as a successful military leader and a just political administrator.
- ii) What lessons does the life of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur teach us about being a true and devoted follower of one's Guru?
- iii) Describe injustices done by Mugal, Hindu, English and even Sikh historians in describing Baba ji's life and aims of his actions. What, if anything, do you suggest to avoid such distortions in the future?

II Presentation (40 points):

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

III Punjabi Presentation and Maintenance of Sikhi Saroop:

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Age Group: IV (14 to 17 years)

Time allotted: 7 minutes

Book: The message of Gurbani (The sections on Japji Sahib, Rehras Sahib and Sohila Sahib).

Author: Dr. Gurbakhsh Singh

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):

- i) Japji Sahib has many important messages to lead a happy, peaceful and gainful life. Describe some of these messages that you feel are important to your personal way of life?
- ii) Discuss some of the greatneses of our Creator (So Purukh) described in Rehras sahib. How can we appreciate these greatneses, and what prevents us from doing so? What happens if we forget our Creator? How can we stay on course to achieve the aim of our existence?
- iii) Please explain, according to Sohila Sahib, why and in which company should we sing Waheguru's praises? How are these praises sung by the whole universe in a natural way? What are the obstructions in this path, and what path should we take to gain strength to sing His praises so that we can live happily here and hereafter?

II Presentation (40 points):

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

III Punjabi Presentation and Maintenance of Sikhi Saroop:

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GUIDELINES FOR CONTESTANTS AND JUDGES

Age Group: V (16 to 22 years)

Time allotted: 8 minutes

Book: Shabad Guru and False Gurudom.

Publisher: Sikh Missionary College, Ludhiana.

The theme for discussion this year is the current proliferation of personalities and organizations that are misleading Sikhs away from the Shabad Guru into the fold of 'babas', 'saints' and even 'Living Gurus'. Before we can reverse this trend, we must carefully analyze and understand its root-cause. Where do we stand today with respect to the message of our Gurus? Do we even understand their message and how it is being misrepresented by the 'Living Guru Gurudoms'? Taking guidance from Guru Granth Sahib, and inspiration from our history and heritage, discuss ways and means to get out of the current situation into a gurmat-oriented living that can be a model for the world to embrace.

Keep in mind that the purpose of this competition is to encourage an open discussion on areas that will define our community and its future in the Diaspora. Discussion and debate will also promote the habits and methods of critical thinking while imparting useful life-skills.

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.

While competition at the International level would involve discussions around the above theme and related issues, 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):

- i) What is the significance of bestowing Guruship to Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji? How can one achieve real understanding of Guru's message without having a living person as a Guru?
- ii) In today's world, if a person explains the meaning of Gurbani and if with his guidance we are able to live by the principles taught to us by our Gurus, what is wrong in considering him as our Guru?
- iii) Discuss some practices followed by the 'Living Guru Gurudoms' of Radha Soamies, Nirankaris, Namdharis or other such Gurudoms, that are inconsistent with Gurmat. How can we say that the followers of these traditions are misguided? Doesn't everybody have the freedom to believe in what they like, and doesn't Sikhi teach us to respect all traditions and faiths?

II Presentation (40 points):

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

III Punjabi Presentation and Maintenance of Sikhi Saroop:

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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 for the competition at the International level. ***The Regions may, if they so desire, implement these guidelines at the Regional level also.***

- A. Hold the presentations in a setting like a hotel convention room or a college auditorium, although there is no reason why this could not also be done in a gurduara.
- B. Arrange the participants in a circle. The audience can sit in a wider circle behind and around the participants. Appoint a moderator whose job is to stimulate discussion, in case it is flagging, and to keep it focused.
- C. **Phase 1.** Each participant will have two minutes to make an opening statement. The order of the participants is to be chosen at random.
- D. After each opening statement, another participant chosen at random will be asked to respond to the opening statement. Time allotted for the response would be one minute.
- E. After each opening statement and the response to it, there will be an open discussion among the participants for about five minutes.
- F. **Phase 2.** Each participant, chosen at random, will be asked a question by the moderator. The participant will have one minute to answer the question.
- G. After the participant has answered the question asked by the moderator, there would be an open discussion among the participants for about five minutes.
- H. During the discussion mentioned in E and G 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 hog the show
- I. **Phase 3.** Following the discussion, each participant will get one and a half minute to make a closing statement. The order of presentations is to be chosen at random.

The competitive part of the program will conclude here and judges will complete their evaluation at this point. What follows is equally useful but not part of the competition.

- J. **Optional Phase 4.** Following the program detailed above, if time permits, there will be an open discussion (20 to 30 minutes) on the subject but it will also allow the audience to participate. This will keep the audience interested and awake. The adults will learn, as will the young.

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