

Excerpts from Student Journals:

The Guru who died violently so the Hindus could practice their own faith also made a big impression on me. I definitely want to keep thinking about the idea that the householder lives the most holy life, and that experiencing life gives you more opportunities to remember god than living a celibate monk type life.

I feel as if I learned today, that while many religions include doctrines about being kind and selfless, the sikhs seem to take that to another level by aspiring to be as selfless as some of their Guru's who gave their lives for people they had nothing in common with and didn't even know. They were so open and accepting to everyone and seemed genuinely excited about sharing their faith with all the students. I think that's kind of an amazing standard to try and live up to and their commitment to really living in as loving a way as possible was very clear. I had a lot of fun hearing about some of their history, and then getting a chance to actually practice and engage with some of the concepts that Mrs. Khalsa talked about, like martial arts and yoga, and overall I thought this was a really great way of getting to learn about a religion, and I feel as though the rest of the world might benefit from similar experiences.

I absolutely adored the field trip and learning about this religion. . . . I felt extremely accepted and respected while in the ashram. I found it so amazing to respect the religion and ashram by covering my hair and taking my shoes off. I felt connected to what I was doing and it managed to ground me to what was going on. The history lesson was very educational and covered everything that I may have had questions about. I was very engaged and pleasantly surprised to see the massive appreciation for women. I admire the Gurus' dedication to their religion and people, but I was honestly in shock about how much they cared about other religions as well. I

enjoyed the bits of culture and Sikh life now that were woven into the lesson. I am really glad that the Sikhs are so connected to their history and willing to share. The yoga lesson that followed allowed me to have a little bit of time to sit with what I had learned in the lesson. It felt good to have some control over my breathing and the things that entered my brain. I feel like I will use a lot of what was taught to help deal with anxiety and how to take energy, harness it and turn it into an energy I can use positively. I could feel the other people around me, and it was very comforting. I felt very connected to myself as well as my fellow classmates. The controlled exertion of my body and brain calmed me and made me feel like my purpose is to spread the good in life if I can. In contrast, the martial arts class made me feel in control of my body. I felt so much respect for my body as well as my partners. I do not normally enjoy physical exertion, but I loved being able to move and laugh as I learned something important and useful to others. The instructor laughed and joked with us while making sure we were all safe and comfortable with what we were doing. I left the field trip feeling revived and with a new appreciation for religion.

I appreciated the Sikh religion, particularly its openness to other faiths and its advocacy for religious freedom and equality. Guru Simran shared the story of the ninth guru, who fought for the rights of oppressed Hindus, not just for Hindu justice, but for the universal right to practice any religion. The focus on equality between women and men emphasized that women can perform the same roles as men. I appreciated the song celebrating that everyone comes from a mother, and I admired the gurus' perseverance in protecting equality and religious freedom during difficult times.

I liked the trip to the Sikh Temple, the history in front of the religion and how she explained each of the Guru's and gave us their stories. I really liked it. I think it was the fourth(?) Guru who

went out at night to help the homeless, and the ninth(?) Guru who sacrificed himself to allow the Hindu's to keep their religious freedom. I also liked how they invited us into their place of worship to teach us about it, and taught us yoga and how they do it and what they believe about yoga. The martial arts lessons were fun and I liked how patient all the teachers were. Each teacher had a lot of information and was really patient and really walked us through it. I also like how they provided lunch for us and didn't hold anything back from us, they told us their beliefs and really let us participate in their faith with them. I really enjoyed the history of their faith, that the Guru's had included women and really wanted to help people. I really liked the poem/song/writing(?) that said everyone comes from women so why treat them poorly. I think my favorite thing about Sikhism is that no matter who you are, what you are, what you've done, they're respectful.