

Drama Vignette: “Opening fact” in the Case of Cheema v Thompson

Setting: An elementary school playground at recess time. Four boys in the fourth grade are hustling out to the court with a basketball so that they can claim a hoop.

Matt: Glad we got the court; we only have a few minutes so let’s get started. Come on David, Rajinder and I will go against you and Chad.

David: Great, you don’t stand a chance!

Rajinder: Okay David, you and Chad can start with the throw in.

Chad: I’ll take it out.

ACTION: *Chad takes the ball out on the sideline and throws it in to David and the boys begin to play basketball...after a few seconds with all of them involved in the game, David “fouls” Rajinder as he is ready to make a shot. A playground supervisor walks up to watch as Rajinder is ready to take his free throw.*

Matt: Come on Rajinder ~ make this shot!

Rajinder: I’ll give it my best! *Rajinder jumps to make a free throw and the supervisor stops the game.*

Supervisor: **Hey, wait a minute** (boys keep playing) **I said, STOP the game.**

Chad: What’s the problem? We only have a few minutes to play.

Supervisor: Come here, Rajinder ~ whats that underneath your jacket? Is that a KNIFE?

Rajinder: No, this is a kirpan...I always wear it.

David: Come on, let’s play ~ recess is almost over.

Supervisor: No way! Rajinder, you can explain this “kirpan” to the principal, come with me. (Rajinder walks off with the supervisor).

Matt: Geez, he would have made that shot too! (Bell rings, boys start walking back to class, disappointed about the game being “called”.)

David: Did he really have a knife? I thought I saw it once before.

Matt: It’s a kirpan; something Sikh’s wear all the time, he never takes it out of the sheath – it’s part of his religion.

Chad: Well, whatever...it sure messed up our basketball game.