

Diwali: The Festival of Lights

Learning objective: To understand the cultural significance, key narrative elements, and themes of the Diwali story.

Read the front of each flashcard carefully. Try to explain the concept or answer the question before checking the answer on the other side.

Who is the hero of the Diwali story who returns home after fourteen years of exile?

Prince Rama.

Why did the people of Ayodhya light thousands of clay lamps (diyas)?

They wanted to illuminate the path home for Rama and Sita and celebrate the victory of light over darkness.

What is the primary theme celebrated during Diwali?

The victory of good over evil and light over darkness.

Define the word 'exile' in the context of the story.

Being forced to live away from one's home or country, often as a punishment.

What are 'diyas' and what do they represent?

Diyas are small clay oil lamps; they represent the inner light that protects from spiritual darkness.

Who is the princess that Rama rescues from the island of Lanka?

Princess Sita.

Explain why Rangoli patterns are created at the entrance of homes during Diwali.

They are created to welcome guests and invite good fortune and prosperity into the home.

Compare and contrast the atmosphere in Ayodhya before and after Rama's return.

Before, the city was in mourning and darkness; after, it was filled with celebration, light, and joy.

Justify why Diwali is often called the 'Festival of Lights'.

Because of the tradition of lighting lamps, candles, and lanterns to symbolise knowledge and hope conquering ignorance and despair.

What might happen if the people of Ayodhya had not lit their lamps?

The city would have remained in darkness, symbolising a failure to recognise or welcome the return of goodness and righteousness.

Explain the significance of the 14-year period mentioned in the story.

It represents a long, arduous journey of patience, devotion, and moral testing before a triumphant return.

How does the story of Diwali influence modern celebrations?

It encourages families to clean their homes, decorate with patterns, share food, and light lamps to foster community and hope.