

The Festival of Lights: Rama and Sita's Return

Learning objective: To analyse the narrative structure and themes of the Diwali story, focusing on character motivation and descriptive language.

Read the passage below carefully. Use your best handwriting and full sentences to answer the questions. Consider the emotional journey of the characters as you write your responses.

After fourteen years of exile in the dense, whispering forests, Prince Rama and his wife, Sita, finally turned their faces toward home. Their long odyssey had been filled with challenges, yet their spirits remained unyielding, guided by kindness and honour. As they approached the city of Ayodhya, the moon was hidden behind a veil of clouds, leaving the path dark and treacherous. The people of the kingdom, who had waited patiently through the long years, felt a surge of hope. To ensure their beloved prince and princess could find their way through the gloom, every citizen lit small clay lamps, called diyas. Thousands of flickering flames transformed the night into a landscape of golden warmth, creating a path of radiance that stretched as far as the eye could see. This triumphant homecoming, a victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance, is celebrated today as Diwali.

Word bank: exile · triumph · divine · compassion · radiance · virtue · odyssey · reconciliation

1. Why did the people of Ayodhya feel it was necessary to light thousands of diyas for Rama and Sita's return? (2 marks)

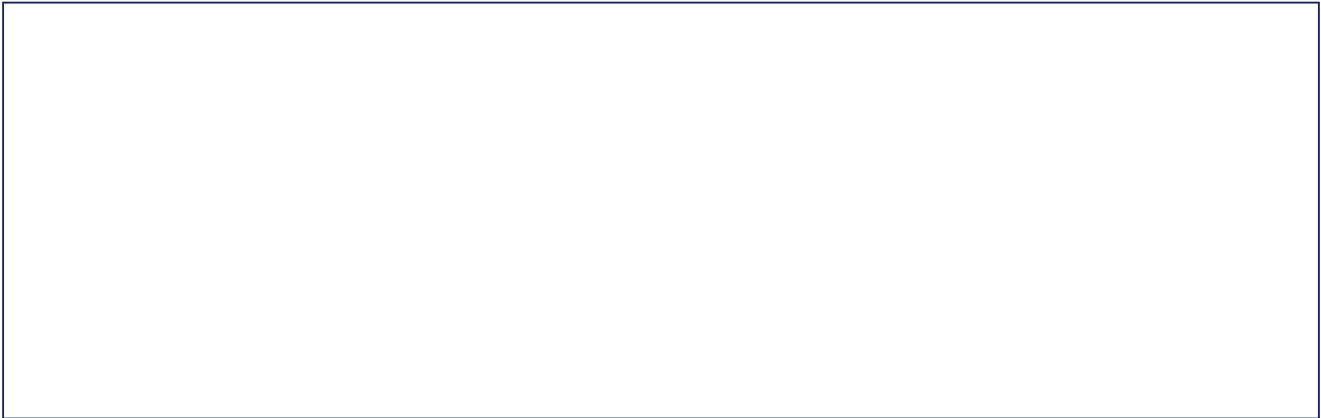
2. Explain why the author describes the forest as 'whispering'. What atmosphere does this word choice create? (2 marks)

3. Compare the challenges Rama and Sita faced in the forest to the warm welcome they received in Ayodhya. How do these two settings contrast? (3 marks)

4. Justify why the story of Diwali is often described as a 'victory of light over darkness'. Provide evidence from the text. (3 marks)

5. What might happen if the citizens had not lit the lamps? How would the tone of the story change? (2 marks)

Draw: Imagine you are standing at the gates of Ayodhya. Draw the scene of the city illuminated by thousands of diyas. Use patterns to show the intricate designs on the clay lamps and use colour to demonstrate the contrast between the dark night sky and the golden light.



Extension challenge: Nova the owl is curious about the physics of light! Write a short diary entry from the perspective of a citizen of Ayodhya, explaining why you chose to place your diya in a specific location and how you felt as the city transformed from darkness into a glowing beacon of hope.