

Diwali: The Festival of Lights

Learning objective: To understand the significance and traditions of Diwali within Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism.

Read each flashcard carefully to learn about the key aspects of Diwali. Use these facts to help you answer the deeper thinking questions provided.

What is Diwali?

Diwali is the five-day 'Festival of Lights' celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains, symbolising the spiritual victory of light over darkness and good over evil.

What are Diyas?

Diyas are small oil lamps, usually made from clay, that are lit during Diwali to represent the light of knowledge and to welcome prosperity.

What is Rangoli?

Rangoli is a colourful and intricate art form created on the floor near entrances using coloured sand, rice, or flower petals to welcome guests and bring good luck.

Why is Goddess Lakshmi important during Diwali?

Hindus worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, believing that she visits clean and well-lit homes to bring blessings for the year ahead.

What is the story of Rama and Sita?

It is a famous epic story where Lord Rama and his wife Sita return home after 14 years of exile; villagers lit rows of lamps to guide their path in the darkness.

How do Sikhs celebrate Diwali?

For Sikhs, this time is known as Bandi Chhor Divas, celebrating the day Guru Hargobind Ji was released from prison, symbolising freedom and justice.

What does the light represent in Diwali?

The light represents the inner 'light' of goodness, wisdom, and truth, which helps to drive away the 'darkness' of ignorance and hatred.

Why do people wear new clothes during Diwali?

Wearing new clothes signifies a fresh start, purity, and the celebration of new beginnings as the festival coincides with the start of a new lunar year.

How is Jains' celebration of Diwali different?

Jains celebrate Diwali to mark the anniversary of Lord Mahavira attaining Moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and death).

What is the significance of sharing sweets (Mithai)?

Sharing sweets is a tradition that strengthens community bonds, expresses gratitude, and shares the joy and sweetness of life with friends and family.

Why is it important to clean homes before Diwali?

Cleaning is a way to prepare the home to invite Goddess Lakshmi, symbolising the removal of negativity and the welcoming of positive energy.

What does 'Festival of Lights' imply about the atmosphere?

It implies a sense of warmth, hope, and collective joy, where the illumination of thousands of lamps creates a shared feeling of unity.