

Diwali: The Festival of Lights

Learning objective: To understand the significance and traditions of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Ensure you use full sentences for your explanations.

Diwali is a vibrant and joyous festival celebrated by millions of people across the globe. Known as the 'Festival of Lights', it symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness and good over evil. During this time, families clean their homes from top to bottom, believing that a tidy space welcomes prosperity and happiness. One of the most beautiful traditions involves lighting small clay oil lamps, called divas, which are placed in rows around homes and temples. These warm, flickering flames guide goodness into the lives of those who celebrate.

Zara the zebra loves to walk through the streets during Diwali. She admires the colourful rangoli patterns made on floors using vibrant coloured powders, flowers, and rice. Families also enjoy exchanging sweet treats and wearing their finest clothes to visit friends. For many, it is a time of reflection and renewal. Just as the lamps banish the shadows of the night, participants focus on kindness and sharing joy with their community. It is a spectacular occasion where history and modern celebration blend together to create a sense of unity and peace.

Word bank: Diwali · festival · diva · tradition · celebration · rangoli · prosperity

1. According to the text, what do the flickering divas symbolise? (2 marks)

2. List two ways that families prepare their homes for the festival of Diwali. (2 marks)

3. Why do you think families go to the effort of cleaning their entire house before the festival begins? (2 marks)

4. How does the author convey the atmosphere of the festival through their choice of vocabulary? (2 marks)

5. Do you agree that light is an effective symbol for 'goodness'? Justify your answer using examples from the text or your own knowledge. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a colourful rangoli pattern made of flowers and geometric shapes, surrounding a glowing diva lamp.



Extension challenge: Greater Depth Challenge: 1. Explain why cultural festivals like Diwali are important for community unity. 2. Compare and contrast the act of 'cleaning' to 'renewal'. 3. What might happen to the significance of the festival if people stopped lighting divas? 4. Justify why Diwali is described as a festival of 'reflection'. 5. How would you describe the mood of the passage to someone who has never heard of Diwali? 6. Design a modern 'rangoli' pattern that incorporates a mathematical sequence or pattern.