

The Festival of Lights: A Diwali Assessment

Learning objective: To demonstrate understanding of the narrative, symbolism, and cultural significance of Diwali through analytical reading and creative reflection.

Read the passage carefully and answer all questions using full sentences where appropriate. Ensure you use evidence from the text to support your answers.

Diwali, the vibrant Festival of Lights, is celebrated by millions of people across the globe. At its core, the festival marks the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil. The narrative origins vary across regions, but a central theme remains the return of Lord Rama and Sita to their kingdom after fourteen years of exile. To guide them home on a moonless night, the citizens lit rows of clay lamps, known as diyas. Today, this tradition continues as families clean their homes, decorate floors with intricate rangoli patterns, and share delicious sweets. It is a time for reflection, renewal, and the strengthening of community bonds.

Word bank: triumph · symbolism · diaspora · tradition · prosperity · illumination · significance · perseverance

1. Identify two distinct symbolic meanings of light mentioned in the passage. (2 marks)

2. Explain why the citizens of the kingdom lit clay lamps for Lord Rama and Sita. Refer to the setting described in the text. (2 marks)

3. How does the author convey the idea that Diwali is a communal celebration? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. (3 marks)

4. Compare and contrast the historical origin of Diwali with the modern-day activities mentioned. Why do you think these traditions have persisted for so long? (4 marks)

5. Justify why the author describes Diwali as a 'festival of renewal'. Use your knowledge of the text to form your argument. (4 marks)

6. Creative Writing Task: Imagine you are Pip the bookworm caterpillar visiting a Diwali celebration. Write a descriptive paragraph (approx. 80-100 words) using sensory language to describe the sights, smells, and sounds of the evening. Focus on the atmosphere of 'illumination'. (5 marks)

7. What might happen if the tradition of creating rangoli patterns were to be forgotten? Explain the impact this would have on the cultural identity of the festival. (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a traditional diya lamp surrounded by a symmetrical rangoli pattern. Use geometric shapes to represent the patterns Zara the zebra might see.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Extension: Research another festival of light celebrated in a different culture. Write a comparative essay (200 words) explaining the similarities in how different cultures use light to represent hope.