

The Festival of Lights: Diwali Study Cards

Learning objective: To understand the cultural and historical significance of Diwali and explore the narrative themes within the story of Rama and Sita.

Read the front of each flashcard and test your knowledge of the Diwali story. Use these to help Ellie the elephant revise the key events and vocabulary.

What does the word 'Deepavali' literally translate to in English?	In the story of Diwali, who is the prince that returns home after fourteen years of exile?
A row of lighted lamps.	Prince Rama.
Why did the people of Ayodhya light thousands of clay lamps (diyas) when Rama returned?	What is the name of the traditional, colourful patterns made on the floor to welcome guests and deities?
To guide him home in the darkness and celebrate the victory of light over darkness.	Rangoli.
Explain the significance of the 'victory of light over darkness' as a theme in the Diwali story.	What specific item is often used to light homes during the festival to symbolise inner light?
It represents the triumph of good over evil and knowledge over ignorance.	The diya (a small oil lamp).
Compare and contrast the celebrations of Diwali with other harvest or light festivals you have studied.	Justify why families choose to clean and decorate their homes thoroughly before the festival begins.
Both celebrate community and light, though origins and specific rituals differ based on cultural history.	It is a sign of respect, preparing the home to welcome prosperity and goodness for the new year.
What might happen if the people of Ayodhya had not lit the lamps upon Rama's return?	In the context of the story, what does the 'exile' represent in terms of the hero's journey?
The city would have remained in darkness, symbolising a lack of celebration and a failure to recognise the return of goodness.	It represents a period of hardship, growth, and the testing of character before a triumphant return.