

The Festival of Lights: A Diwali Journey with Ellie

Learning objective: To analyse the narrative structure and cultural significance of the Diwali story, identifying key themes and descriptive language.

Read the passage carefully, reflecting on the sensory details used to describe the celebration. Answer the questions below using full sentences, ensuring you justify your opinions with evidence from the text.

Ellie the elephant, with her vast memory for history and tales from across the globe, stood before the class to recount the story of Diwali. 'Diwali,' she trumpeted softly, 'is the festival of light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance.' The story tells of the return of Lord Rama to his kingdom after fourteen years of exile. To guide him home, the people of Ayodhya lit thousands of clay lamps, known as diyas, creating a golden pathway that shimmered against the night sky. Today, families mark this time by cleaning their homes, decorating floors with intricate rangoli patterns made from coloured powders, and sharing sweets. It is a time of reflection, where the warmth of a candle flame serves as a reminder that goodness and hope will always prevail, even in the deepest shadows.

Word bank: triumph · symbolise · resilience · prosperity · illumination · tradition · benevolence · darkness

1. Explain why the people of Ayodhya lit thousands of clay lamps. What did this action represent to the returning kingdom? (2 marks)

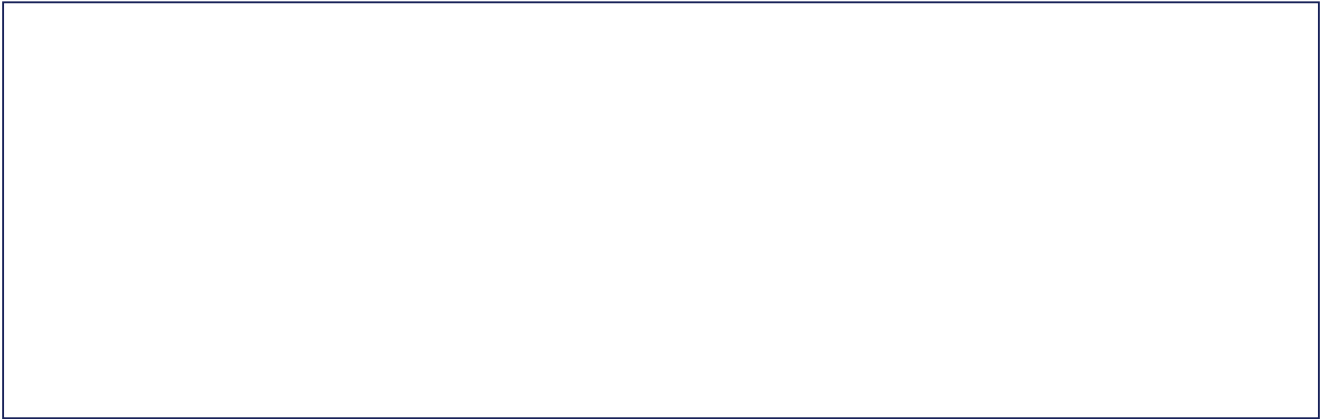
2. Compare and contrast the internal themes of the Diwali story with the physical decorations mentioned in the text. How do they work together? (3 marks)

3. Justify why the author describes the lamps as creating a 'golden pathway'. What does this suggest about the mood of the story? (2 marks)

4. What might happen if the people chose not to light the lamps? How would this change the atmosphere of the narrative? (2 marks)

5. Identify one piece of evidence from the text that shows Diwali is a celebration of community and togetherness. (1 mark)

Draw: Imagine you are designing a rangoli pattern for your own home. Using geometric shapes and symmetry, draw a colourful, intricate design that represents happiness and light.



Extension challenge: Research the importance of 'new beginnings' during Diwali. Write a short, persuasive poem from the perspective of a diya (lamp) explaining why it is proud to lead the way home for others. Use at least three words from the word bank in your poem.