

Diwali: The Festival of Lights

Learning objective: To develop reading comprehension skills by identifying, inferring, and evaluating information about the cultural significance of Diwali.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions provided. For the extension task, think critically about the themes presented.

Diwali, often called the Festival of Lights, is a vibrant celebration observed by millions of people across the globe. For Ellie the elephant, who loves learning about world traditions, Diwali is a fascinating time of unity and hope. The festival signifies the victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. During the five-day celebration, homes are decorated with colourful rangoli patterns made from sand or flower petals. Families light small clay lamps, known as divas, and place them in rows along windowsills and doorways to guide prosperity into their homes. It is a time for exchanging gifts, sharing delicious sweets, and enjoying spectacular firework displays. Max the monkey particularly enjoys the mathematical precision required to create symmetrical rangoli designs. Beyond the excitement, Diwali is a period of reflection and renewal. It encourages people to forgive past grievances and look forward to the future with a positive heart. As the night sky glows with warmth, communities come together, proving that even the smallest light can make a significant difference in the world.

Word bank: Diwali · diva · festivities · tradition · celebration · symbolise · prosperity · community

1. Identify two ways in which families decorate their homes during Diwali, according to the text. (2 marks)

2. What is the spiritual significance behind the lighting of the divas? (2 marks)

3. Why might Max the monkey be particularly interested in the creation of rangoli patterns? (3 marks)

4. Explain why the author describes Diwali as a time for 'reflection and renewal'. (3 marks)

5. Do you think the tradition of sharing gifts and sweets is essential to the meaning of Diwali? Justify your answer. (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a symmetrical rangoli pattern using geometric shapes, surrounded by glowing clay lamps (divas).



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the themes of Diwali with other festivals that celebrate light. What might happen to the community spirit of a festival if these traditions were to disappear? Justify your perspective.