

Festival Traditions and Symbolism

Learning objective: To understand the significance, symbolism, and community importance of diverse religious and secular festivals.

Read the following questions carefully. Use your knowledge of religious practices and community celebrations to provide thoughtful, detailed responses. Ensure you use appropriate terminology.

Max the monkey has been busy calculating the dates of various global festivals, while Ellie the elephant is busy remembering the history behind why these special days are celebrated. Across the world, festivals often involve gathering with family, sharing specific foods, and reflecting on core values such as gratitude, peace, or the changing of the seasons. Festivals act as a calendar for our communities, marking moments of joy and historical remembrance.

Word bank: Ritual · Symbolism · Community · Observance · Tradition · Pilgrimage · Reflection · Celebration · Significance · Values

1. Identify two common features that many religious festivals share, regardless of the faith being celebrated. Explain why these features are important for a community. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast a festival that focuses on 'light' (such as Diwali or Hanukkah) with a festival that focuses on 'harvest' (such as Sukkot or Harvest Festival). What do these symbols represent? (3 marks)

3. Max is planning a festival budget and needs to buy items for a community feast. If a decorative banner costs £4.50 and a set of traditional candles costs £3.75, how much change would he get from a £10 note? Show your working. (2 marks)

4. Explain why many festivals include periods of fasting or self-reflection before a day of celebration. What might be the purpose of this balance? (2 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Why do you think it is important for people who do not share a specific faith to learn about the festivals of others? (3 marks)

6. What might happen if a community stopped celebrating their traditional festivals? Predict the impact this would have on the younger generation. (2 marks)

Draw: Design your own original festival that celebrates a positive value, such as 'Kindness' or 'Nature'. Draw a central symbol for your festival and include one traditional food or garment that people would wear or eat during the event.



Extension challenge: Research a festival you know very little about. Create a 'Festival Fact File' that includes the origin of the festival, the key rituals performed, and the specific values or historical events the festival commemorates. Present your findings to the class.