Diwali: The Festival of Lights with Zara

Learning objective: To understand the significance of Diwali, the Festival of Lights, and identify how it is celebrated by millions of people across the world.

Use your knowledge of world religions and celebrations to complete these tasks. Zara the Zebra is looking for detailed answers that show you truly understand the meaning behind the traditions.

Diwali is a vibrant festival celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains. It symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Families prepare by cleaning their homes, decorating with intricate patterns, and lighting oil lamps. Zara the Zebra loves the colourful patterns of Rangoli art and the warm glow of the lamps that guide the way for new beginnings.

Word bank: Diyas · Rangoli · Light · Darkness · Rama and Sita · Celebration · Good over evil · New beginnings

1. Explain why light, specifically in the form of 'diyas', is such a central symbol during the festival of Diwali. What does it represent? (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast how a family might prepare their home for a special celebration in your own culture versus the preparations made for Diwali. (2 marks)

3. Zara is designing a Rangoli pattern. Why do you think patterns are often symmetrical and colourful in this tradition? (2 marks)

4. If a family wanted to buy a pack of 12 clay diyas for £4.50 and a bag of coloured powder for £2.25, calculate the total cost of their decorations. (2 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Why is Diwali often described as a 'festival of new beginnings'? (3 marks)

6. What might happen if a community decided to stop celebrating Diwali? How would that impact the traditions passed down to younger generations? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a beautiful, symmetrical Rangoli pattern that Zara the Zebra could use to decorate the entrance of her home. Use bright, contrasting colours to make your design stand out.

Extension challenge: Research the story of Rama and Sita. Write a short, creative diary entry from the perspective of one of the characters as they return home to the city of Ayodhya, describing the lights they see along the path.