

Diwali: The Festival of Lights

Learning objective: To analyse the significance of Diwali within Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism, and to evaluate how light serves as a symbolic representation of spiritual triumph.

Read each question carefully. Use your knowledge of religious traditions and symbolism to provide detailed, thoughtful responses. Ensure your explanations justify your conclusions.

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is celebrated by millions of people across the globe. While the historical narratives vary between traditions—such as the return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya, the worship of the goddess Lakshmi, or the celebration of Mahavira's nirvana—the core theme remains the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil. Families prepare by cleaning their homes, creating intricate rangoli patterns, and lighting rows of clay lamps known as diyas to welcome prosperity and goodness.

Word bank: Diyas · Lakshmi · Rama · Rangoli · Dharma · Symbolism · Triumph · Spiritual · Community

1. Explain why the act of lighting diyas is considered a central symbolic action during Diwali. How does this represent the internal journey of an individual? (3 marks)

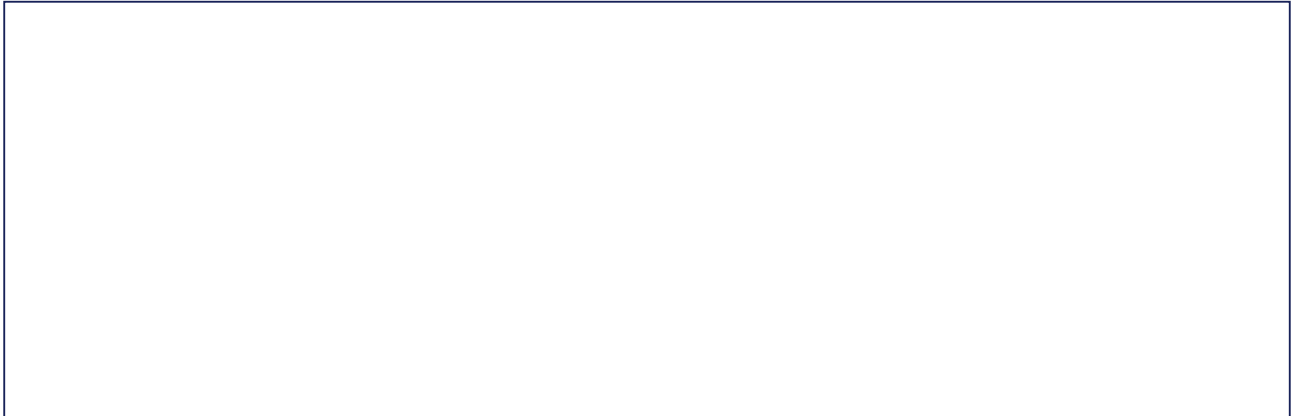
2. Compare and contrast how Diwali is observed in Hinduism versus its significance in Jainism. What common values do these two traditions share despite different historical origins? (4 marks)

3. Max the monkey believes maths is everywhere. If a family creates a rangoli pattern using 450 coloured grains of rice, and they want to share the cost of the materials (£12.60) equally among 3 family members, how much does each person contribute? Why might the communal effort of creating art be important in religious festivals? (3 marks)

4. Justify the importance of 'cleaning the home' as a spiritual practice rather than just a physical chore. What does this suggest about the relationship between one's environment and one's inner state? (3 marks)

5. What might happen if the practice of lighting lamps was removed from the festival? Would the core message of Diwali remain the same? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Nova the owl is designing a symmetrical rangoli pattern to place outside her library. Sketch a complex, geometric design using repeating shapes and patterns that represents the concept of 'inner light'.



Extension challenge: Research the story of Rama and Sita. Write a short poem from the perspective of an inhabitant of Ayodhya waiting for their return. How would you describe the atmosphere of the city as the lights are first lit? Use rich, evocative vocabulary to convey the sense of anticipation and relief.