A Bright Celebration with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To develop reading comprehension skills by exploring the cultural significance and traditions of Diwali.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions below. Think carefully about the meaning of the words to help you explain your answers.

Ellie the Elephant loves learning about different traditions. This week, she is excited to share the story of Diwali, the beautiful Festival of Lights. Diwali is celebrated by millions of people all over the world. It marks the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. To prepare, families clean their homes until they sparkle. They decorate their floors with Rangoli, which are colourful patterns made from sand or flower petals. The most important part of the festival is lighting small clay oil lamps called divas. These are placed in rows along windowsills and paths to welcome happiness and prosperity into the home. Families also share delicious sweets and exchange gifts wrapped in bright paper. Some people might even buy a new outfit for £25 or a special toy for £12 to mark the occasion. Fireworks often light up the night sky, creating a spectacular show for everyone to enjoy. Ellie thinks it is a wonderful time for families to come together, share kindness, and look forward to a bright future filled with joy and hope.

Word bank: festival · tradition · celebration · divas · rangoli · prosperity

1. What are the small clay oil lamps used during Diwali called? (1 mark)

2. What do families use to create colourful Rangoli patterns? (1 mark)

3. Why do you think families spend time cleaning their homes before the festival begins? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, what might happen if a family did not light their divas during Diwali? (2 marks)

5. Ellie says Diwali is a 'wonderful time'. Do you agree with her? Justify your answer using reasons from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a welcoming home decorated for Diwali. Include a bright Rangoli pattern on the floor and rows of glowing divas on the windowsill.

Extension challenge: Compare and contrast Diwali with another celebration you know. Explain why festivals are important to communities. If you were planning a Diwali party, how would you use £50 to buy decorations, food, and gifts? Justify your spending choices.