

# Diwali: The Festival of Lights

*Learning objective: To understand the significance, symbolism, and cultural practices of Diwali, and to critically evaluate how different traditions share a common theme of light triumphing over darkness.*

Below is a list of symbolic elements and concepts associated with Diwali. Your task is to act as a cultural historian. Categorise each item under the correct heading: 'Symbolism', 'Tradition', or 'Significance'. Once categorised, use your knowledge to justify why these elements are central to the celebration.

*Word bank: Diya lamps · Victory of good over evil · Rangoli patterns · New beginnings · Family reunions · Light vs Darkness · Cleaning the home · Goddess Lakshmi*

**1. Choose three items from the word bank and explain why they are categorised as 'Symbolism' rather than 'Tradition'. (3 marks)**

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**2. Compare and contrast the practice of lighting Diya lamps with the practice of creating Rangoli patterns. How do both contribute to the atmosphere of the festival? (4 marks)**

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**3. Justify why Diwali is often described as a 'new beginning' for many families. Refer to the tradition of cleaning the home in your answer. (3 marks)**

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**4. What might happen to the cultural significance of Diwali if the 'light vs darkness' theme were removed? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)**

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5. Max the monkey is trying to calculate the cost of a display. If one decorative clay Diya costs £1.25 and he needs 12 for his family gathering, what is the total cost in pounds and pence? (2 marks)

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6. Nova the owl is curious about the science of light. Explain why the flickering flame of a Diya might have been considered a powerful metaphor for human consciousness in ancient times. (3 marks)

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**Draw:** Design an intricate Rangoli pattern for the entrance of a house. Use geometric shapes and symmetry to represent the balance of nature and the warmth of the festival.



*Extension challenge: Research a different cultural festival that also celebrates light. Write a short comparative essay (200 words) discussing how both festivals use light to convey a message of hope or renewal, and evaluate which common values they share.*