The Festival of Lights: Diwali

Learning objective: To understand the significance and traditions of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights.

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions. Ensure you use full sentences for your answers.

Diwali, often called the Festival of Lights, is a significant celebration observed by millions of people across the world. For Ellie the elephant, who loves learning about different cultures, Diwali is one of her favourite topics because of its message of hope. The festival symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Families prepare for the event by thoroughly cleaning their homes and decorating them with intricate rangoli patterns made from coloured sand or flower petals. As evening falls, rows of small clay lamps called divas are lit and placed around the home to guide positivity inside. It is a time for families to gather, share delicious traditional sweets, and exchange gifts. During the festivities, many people wear new clothes to mark a fresh start. Whether it is enjoying a spectacular firework display or sharing a meal with friends, the spirit of Diwali is rooted in kindness and joy. For many, it is also a time to reflect on the past year and set intentions for prosperity and peace in the year ahead.

Word bank: Diwali · festival · diva · tradition · celebrate · rangoli · prosperity · symbolise

1. According to the text, what three things does the victory of light over darkness symbolise? (2 marks)

2. What are rangoli patterns made from, and where are they typically displayed? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think families choose to wear new clothes during the Diwali celebrations? (2 marks)

4. Based on the passage, what is the purpose of placing lit divas around the home? (2 marks)

5. Why is it important for communities to have celebrations like Diwali? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a colourful rangoli pattern in the centre of your page, surrounded by small, glowing clay lamps (divas) to light up the design.

Extension challenge: Research one other festival of light celebrated in a different culture. Write a short paragraph comparing its traditions to those of Diwali.