Diwali: The Festival of Lights

Learning objective: To understand the significance, traditions, and symbolism of Diwali within Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism.

Read each question carefully and provide thoughtful, detailed answers based on your classroom learning about Diwali.

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is a major celebration observed by millions of people across the world. While the historical stories behind the festival vary between traditions, the core themes of light overcoming darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil remain central. Families clean their homes, wear new clothes, and share delicious sweets with friends and neighbours to celebrate prosperity and hope.

Word bank: Diyas · Rangoli · Lakshmi · Rama and Sita · New beginnings · Good over evil

1. Max the monkey is curious about the symbolism of light during Diwali. Explain why Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains light diyas (small oil lamps) during this festival. (2 marks)

2. Ellie the elephant remembers that Diwali is often associated with the goddess Lakshmi. What does she represent, and why do families prepare their homes for her visit? (2 marks)

3. Zara the zebra loves patterns. Describe what a Rangoli is and explain its purpose during the Diwali celebrations. (2 marks)

4. Many people believe Diwali marks a time for 'new beginnings'. Give two examples of how someone might mark a new beginning during this festival. (2 marks)

5. Why is Diwali considered a 'universal' festival of hope? Consider how the theme of 'light over darkness' applies to everyday life, not just the festival itself. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a traditional Rangoli pattern inside a circle. Use symmetrical shapes, flowers, or geometric designs to show how Zara the zebra might decorate a doorway to welcome guests.

Extension challenge: Imagine you are planning a Diwali feast for your friends. If you have a budget of £20.00, create a shopping list for traditional snacks (like barfi or ladoo) and decorative items, ensuring you stay within your budget. Write down your items and their estimated costs.