Exploring Festivals Around the World

Learning objective: To understand the significance, traditions, and shared human values behind various religious and cultural festivals.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of world religions and cultures to answer. Think about why people celebrate and how they show their beliefs through actions and symbols.

Festivals are special times when communities come together to mark important events, religious milestones, or changes in the seasons. Whether it is through the lighting of lamps, the sharing of special meals, or giving gifts, festivals allow people to express their values and connect with their history and faith.

Word bank: Diwali · Easter · Eid-ul-Fitr · Hanukkah · Lunar New Year · symbolism · community · tradition · reflection · gratitude

1. Max the monkey is curious about why festivals often involve sharing food. Explain two reasons why sharing a meal is an important tradition in many religious festivals. (2 marks)

2. Choose one festival (e.g., Diwali, Eid-ul-Fitr, or Hanukkah). Describe one specific action or symbol used during this festival and explain what it represents to the people celebrating. (2 marks)

3. Nova the owl is stargazing and notices how many festivals are linked to the moon or the seasons. Why might ancient societies have created festivals based on the natural world? (2 marks)

4. Many festivals involve 'giving'—whether it is money for charity (Zakat) or presents for family. How does the act of giving strengthen a community during a festival? (2 marks)

5. Compare two festivals you have studied. Identify one way they are similar and one way they are different. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing a festival celebration. Include at least two symbols (like lights, specific patterns, or food) and explain in a sentence below your drawing what these symbols mean to the people celebrating.

Extension challenge: Research a festival that is new to you. Create a 'Festival Fact File' including the date, the religion or culture it belongs to, and a description of one special ritual performed by families.