Festivals of Light and Community

Learning objective: To understand the significance of festivals in various cultures and reflect on how they bring communities together.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences.

Festivals are a vibrant part of human culture, acting as a bridge between the past and the present. Across the world, people gather to celebrate events that hold special meaning, whether they are rooted in historical milestones, seasonal shifts, or religious beliefs. For instance, many winter festivals focus on the theme of light overcoming darkness. During these times, families might light candles, share special meals, or exchange small gifts to show appreciation for one another.

Ellie the elephant explains that festivals are more than just parties; they are an opportunity for communities to reflect on shared values. When people participate in these events, they often perform age-old traditions passed down through generations. These acts of commemoration help individuals feel a sense of belonging. Whether it is through the colours of a parade, the sounds of traditional music, or the quiet contemplation of a ceremony, festivals remind us that we are part of a larger story. By taking time to celebrate, we honour our collective history and build stronger connections with our neighbours, ensuring that these meaningful traditions continue to flourish for years to come.

Word bank: tradition · significance · community · commemoration · symbolic · festivity

1. According to the text, what common theme do many winter festivals share? (1 mark)

2. List two examples of activities that families might do to show appreciation during a festival. (2 marks)

3. Why does Ellie suggest that festivals are 'more than just parties'? (2 marks)

4. What does the author mean when they say festivals act as a 'bridge between the past and the present'? (2 marks)

5. Do you think it is important for communities to keep ancient traditions alive? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene representing a festival of light, including lanterns, decorations, or symbols that represent community and joy.

Extension challenge: Research a festival you have never heard of before. Write a short paragraph explaining the history behind it and one way it is celebrated today.