

What do you know about Diwali? Read this article to find out what people do at this special time of year.

## Instructions

Do the preparation exercise first. Then read the article and do the other exercises.

## Preparation

Match the definitions (a-h) with the vocabulary (1-8).

| Vocabulary                 | Definition   |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. ...d... gold and silver | a. when there is very little or no light   |
| 2. .... powder             | b. something extremely bad and unkind  |
| 3. .... a pattern          | c. to add something to a place to make it look special                                   |
| 4. .... to decorate        | d. <del>expensive yellow and white metals, often used for jewellery</del>                |
| 5. .... darkness           | e. a design made from repeated lines, shapes, colours, etc.                              |
| 6. .... evil               | f. a loose, dry substance made of very small pieces                                      |
| 7. .... a god or goddess   | g. things that explode with loud noises or coloured lights                               |
| 8. .... fireworks          | h. someone who people believe has power over nature or a particular part of the universe |

## Diwali

Diwali is one of the most popular festivals in India. It is celebrated by millions of people not just in India but in many other countries across the world.

### When is Diwali?

The date of Diwali changes every year, because the Hindu calendar depends on the position of the moon. In the Western calendar, it's usually sometime in October or November. Diwali lasts for five days, but the main celebration is on the third day. This is the darkest night of the month in the Indian calendar.

### The meaning of Diwali

Diwali is also known as the Festival of Lights. In the very old Indian language, Sanskrit, *Diwali* (or *Deepavali*) means 'row of lamps'. People light lamps at Diwali to show that light is more powerful than darkness, and good is more powerful than evil. Diwali also celebrates new beginnings.

## Preparing for Diwali

To prepare for this very special festival, people often clean and decorate their homes. They go shopping for food and new clothes for Diwali. It's also an important time of year for buying gold and silver.

### *Rangoli*

*Rangoli* are colourful patterns that people make on the floor out of coloured powder, rice and flowers. Some of the most popular patterns to make are flowers. People make *rangoli* to welcome the gods into their homes and to bring good luck.

### *Diyas* and fireworks

People often decorate their homes with small lamps called *diyas*. They light lamps and leave the windows open so that the Indian goddess, Lakshmi, will enter their home and bring good luck. They often watch big, colourful firework displays and also enjoy shows of music and dancing.

## A time for families

At Diwali, people spend time with their family and friends. They pray to the goddess Lakshmi to bring peace and good fortune to their homes. They wear their best clothes, give and receive presents, and eat delicious food and sweets together.

Diwali has a different meaning for different religions, and their Diwali stories are different. But for everyone, Diwali is a time for good and happy things, and it's a beautiful, colourful festival of lights. Happy Diwali!

## Tasks

## Task 1

Circle the correct answer.

- Diwali is on ... every year.  
a. 1 October                      b. 15 November                      c. different dates
- Diwali celebrations last for ... days.  
a. three                              b. five                                      c. seven
- Diwali is also known as the Festival of ...  
a. Lights.                              b. Fireworks.                              c. Flowers.
- Rangoli* are special Diwali ...  
a. sweets that you eat.              b. clothes that you wear.              c. patterns that you make.
- Diyas* are special Diwali ...  
a. lamps.                              b. fireworks.                              c. sweets.
- Diwali stories are ... for different religions.  
a. the same                              b. different

## Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

|           |       |                    |       |                 |          |
|-----------|-------|--------------------|-------|-----------------|----------|
| fireworks | homes | family and friends | lamps | food and sweets | presents |
|-----------|-------|--------------------|-------|-----------------|----------|

- People clean and decorate their homes.
- They light special .....
- They watch .....
- They spend time with .....
- Families give each other .....
- They eat special .....

## Write and draw

Are there Diwali celebrations where you live? Do you watch fireworks at a different time of year? Write about it and draw a picture.

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## Answers

### Preparation task

1. d
2. f
3. e
4. c
5. a
6. b
7. h
8. g

### Task 1

1. c
2. b
3. a
4. c
5. a
6. b

### Task 2

1. homes
2. lamps
3. fireworks
4. family and friends
5. presents
6. food and sweets