

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Activity: Diwali Celebrations

Stories are a fantastic way of engaging with the traditions of festivals and celebrations. This week's activity aims to engage children with their understanding of Diwali. This activity should form part of your overall Diwali celebrations.

Learning aims

- Learn about Diwali and how it is celebrated
- Share own experiences of celebrations and family traditions
- Develop vocabulary through retelling a story.

Resources

- A quiet space to read or watch the story
- Tablet, computer or laptop to watch the BBC story link of Rama and Sita or a storybook to read
- A string of fairy lights.



Activity outline

Diwali is an annual festival, lasting for five days, to mark the start of the Hindu New Year and is known as a festival of lights. The festival is usually celebrated during October or November but the exact date changes each year as the date is decided by the position of the moon.

The best way to find out about the festival is to talk to your children's families or local community leaders who can share authentic traditions and experiences:

1. Introduce children to the Diwali festival using information you have sourced from your families or local leaders. Ensure your language and information is appropriate for the children you are working with. Link the festival of light to other celebrations such as fireworks lighting up the sky, lights at Christmas time or Hanukkah, which is also known as a festival of lights. Encourage children to share their own experiences
2. Introduce the story 'Rama and Sita'. You can find video links, such as on the BBC website, choose a book from your local library or ask a parent to come in and tell the story
3. Use fairy lights that you can switch on at the end of the story to reflect the lights leading the way home for Rama and Sita and describe Diwali as the 'festival of lights'

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision.

Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

4. Encourage children to act out the story by choosing roles they wish to play, for example, Rama, Sita, Ravanna, the monkey king, monkeys, a deer or someone to switch on the lights at the end.

Extension ideas:

- Invite children to make finger puppets or sock puppets for each of the characters to retell the story.