

CELEBRATIONS

Diwali

Teacher's notes

Age: Adults/teenagers

Level: Intermediate–Upper-intermediate (B1–B2)

Time: 60–90 minutes

Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. read a short text about the festival of Diwali, looking at the language used;
2. discuss Diwali and other celebrations they have attended that involve fireworks;
3. discuss and design an information poster for a local Diwali celebration.

Language focus: vocabulary related to Diwali, and the language involved in advertising a festival and issuing safety warnings

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student and one sheet of paper per group for designing a poster

Procedure

1. Warmer

- a. Students read the captions and write them below the images they relate to. Even if they haven't heard of *rangoli* before, they will be able to complete the task by first matching the things they know and then seeing what's left.
- b. Next, students read the text to find out how these things are connected with the festival of Diwali and write the day each image is most connected with next to its caption.

Key:



Lights and lamps
Day 2



Rangoli
Day 2



Brothers visiting sisters
Day 5



Giving gifts
Day 4



Cleaning and
decorating the home
Day 1



Buying kitchen items,
new clothes and gold
or silver
Day 1



Fireworks and
firecrackers
Day 3



Family parties
Day 3

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2. Key words and talking about the festival

a. Students search for the key words in the text and write them next to the definitions.

Note: the definitions are in the order that the words appear in the text.

b. Next, students note how the words are used in context and then use the words to talk about the festival. Tell them not to just read out bits of the article but instead use the words to paraphrase or reword what they have read.

Key:

1. significant
2. despair
3. consequently
4. glow
5. held captive
6. coincide
7. utensils
8. prosperity
9. dedicated to
10. lavish
11. bond
12. peak

3. Discussion – festivals, fireworks and lights

If students have ever attended or taken part in Diwali celebrations, they should tell others about their experiences. If they haven't yet had the opportunity to attend Diwali festivities, tell them to talk about another festival or celebration they have attended which involved lights and/or fireworks.

4. Group task – staying safe at Diwali

Students read the information. Then working in small groups, building on what they discussed in the previous task and what they have read so far, students discuss the health and safety aspect of organizing and attending a festival of this sort.

When they have brainstormed and discussed their thoughts and ideas, they should make a poster advertising their Diwali festival. The purpose of the poster is not only to advertise the festivities with factual information but also to advise people of how to conduct themselves around fireworks, open flames, etc. It should also suggest any health precautions attendees might want to take before and during the celebrations (e.g. *take ear plugs, stay away from the fireworks, leave dogs at home, ...*).