Why Do People Light Lamps on Diwali?

Visual lesson



Why so many lamps?

On Diwali night, Jai holds up a little clay lamp. "Nani, why do we light so many lamps? We already have lights in the house!" Mei nods. "Yes, why?" Nani smiles and lifts the star lantern. "Because of some very old stories," she says. "Hold hands!"





A city waiting

The lantern's light opens into a round doorway, and they step through into a city from long ago, called Ayodhya. Many Hindu families tell this story. Prince Rama, Princess Sita and Rama's brother have been far away for fourteen years. Tonight, at last, they are coming home.

> **TALK ABOUT IT**
> Rama is coming home on a dark night with no moon. How can the people help him find the way?

A row of lamps

The people light rows and rows of little clay lamps, called diyas, along every road and roof. The lamps light the way home! Far down the road, Rama, Sita and his brother arrive, and everyone cheers. In some places, Diwali is called Deepavali, which means "a row of lamps".





Little footprints

Back through the doorway, Nani points to her own front step. Many Hindu families also welcome Lakshmi on Diwali night. Lakshmi stands for good luck and plenty. Families clean, light lamps and paint tiny footprints at the door.

TALK ABOUT IT

Look at the little painted footprints. Which way do they walk?

The Golden Temple

The lantern opens again, onto a golden building in the middle of a pool. This is the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Sikh families remember a day called Bandi Chhor Divas. A Guru is a great teacher. Long ago, Guru Hargobind was set free from a fort, and he helped 52 kings go free too.





Light for a wise teacher

When Guru Hargobind came home, people lit lamps all around the Golden Temple, and they still do. Then the lantern shows a white stone temple. Jain families remember Mahavira, a wise teacher from long ago. They light lamps for the light of his teaching, which helps people be kind and wise.

What is the same?

Pop! They step back home. Jai counts the stories on his fingers. "Rama came home. Lakshmi brings good luck. Guru Hargobind set people free. Mahavira taught kindness." Asha thinks hard.

TALK ABOUT IT

What is the same in all of these stories?





Light wins over dark

In every story, the lamps mean something good wins. Light wins over dark. Kindness wins over meanness. Home wins over far away. That is why one tiny diya means so much.

Room for everyone

Some families remember Rama. Some remember Guru Hargobind or Mahavira, and many remember more than one story. Friends like Mei join in too. Diwali has room for everyone.





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Stronger than dark

Nani lights a whole row of diyas on the step. "Each little lamp," says Asha, "says that light is stronger than dark." Which Diwali story would you like to hear again?

Check your wonder

1 **Why did the people of Ayodhya light rows of lamps?**

- **A.** To light the way home for Rama and Sita
- **B.** To keep warm on a cold night
- **C.** To scare animals away

2 **What does the word Deepavali mean?**

- **A.** A row of lamps
- **B.** A big party
- **C.** A sweet

3 **Which day do Sikh families remember with lamps at the Golden Temple?**

- **A.** Bandi Chhor Divas
- **B.** A birthday party
- **C.** The first day of school

4 **What is the same in all the Diwali stories?**

- **A.** Light means something good wins
- **B.** They all happened in one city
- **C.** They are all about kings

ANSWERS 1-A 2-A 3-A 4-A

1. Yes! The lamps lit the way home. 2. That's it: a row of lamps. 3. Yes! Bandi Chhor Divas, when Guru Hargobind was set free. 4. Yes! Light wins over dark in every story.

THE END

Visual lesson

Put your child in this story

Free to try. Scan the code or visit

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