Calendar Activities

Diwali



'Diwali (Divali, or Deepavali) is the Hindu festival of lights. One of the most popular festivals of Hinduism, Diwali symbolizes the spiritual "victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance".

Diwali is celebrated by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Newar Buddhists. The five-day celebration is observed every year in early autumn after the conclusion of the summer harvest and coincides with the new moon, known as the amāsvasya – the darkest night of the Hindu lunisolar calendar.

Discussion

Whenever you look to another culture for inspiration it is respectful and also very interesting to understand and recognise the symbolism and meaning behind it's icons and imagery.

https://thefactfile.org/diwali-facts/

Before doing any creative activities on the theme of Diwali discuss the importance of this tradition and celebration to Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Newar Buddhists.

Ask your residents what traditions and celebrations are important to them and why?

For Further Research

SOMETHING TO INVESTIGATE - In British culture we mostly associate fireworks night on the 5th November each year. Diwali, the festival of lights, is another popular occasion for fireworks to be used. Fireworks are an integral part of the festival of light. WIth less focus on effects and volume, the vibrancy and the range of colours are crucial to a good Diwali display.

Consider how you can mark Diwali, it's close in the year to Bonfire night so it's an interesting topic for fireworks, and colourful artworks.



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Inspired by Diwali Lanterns

Paper lanterns are seen all over India and other parts of the world, particularly during Diwali.
Kandeels are traditional lanterns, hung for up to a month from the start of Diwali. Kandeels come in all shapes and sizes, including stars, lanterns, cubes and globes. Often referred to as Diwali lanterns, these have evolved over the years and are now commonly used with electric lights.



Indian Dyes

Indigo is the dye most often associated with India, and the dye and the country were so inseparable in the ancient world that the Greeks named the dye after the country, giving us the English word 'indigo'.

'Natural dyeing' is a technique that uses colorants derived from plants, invertebrates or minerals.



Henna Tattoos (Mehndi)

Mehndi is a ceremonial art form which originated from ancient India. It is typically applied during weddings for Muslim and Hindu brides. In Rajasthan, the grooms are given designs that are often as elaborate as those for brides.

The henna, a dye produced from a henna plant, would be delivered by the groom's relatives on a silver tray containing two burning candles. Before applying Henna the guests would throw coins over the bride's head to symbolise fertility.

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