

## Diwali Festival Artefacts Collection

### Guidance Notes for Teachers

*Diwali celebrates the dramatic return from exile of Rama and Sita and one of the most important Hindu holidays. Develop a hands-on approach and put faith learning into context with these real-life artefacts. Create opportunities for cross-curricular learning.*



#### Contents:

- 1 x Pair of Musical Sticks (*Dandiya Sticks*)
- 2 x Greetings Cards
- 2 x Rangoli Patterns
- 1 x Ramayana
- 1 x Ganesh
- 1 x Lakshmi
- 3 x Diya Lamps
- 1 x Diwali Storybook
- 1 x Bag

*Please note contents and designs may vary.*



The resources in the Diwali Festival Artefacts Collection shown in the pictures on the left can be used in KS1 and KS2 classrooms.

- Provide an engaging artefact handling opportunity with high-quality resources.
- Create cross-curricular links and cover elements of the RE, Geography, Art and Design and PE curriculum.
- Introduce the resources during whole class teaching and provide time for hands-on exploration in small groups.
- Enhance classroom displays and promote discussion by displaying the items.
- Add the resources to tabletop areas and promote independent investigation.



### Activity 1 – Artefact Identification

- Use the information below to identify and name each of the artefacts.
- Give time for pupils to explore the artefacts.
- How are the artefacts used and what do they represent?

### Activity 2 – Fact Sharing

- Use the information below and the *Explore further* suggestions, to create fact files about Diwali.
- Put the fact files together to create one shared piece of information.
- Find out if someone in the school or wider community would like to visit and share their experiences of Diwali.

### Activity 3 – Geography Investigation

- Hinduism originated near the Indus River in India. Use a world map to locate India.
- How did Hinduism evolve and spread?
- Research India further. Think about the flag, culture, food, history and significant landmarks.

### Activity 4 – PE

- Use online resources to view videos of how to perform traditional Indian dance steps.
- Use online resources to view videos of how to use the musical sticks (*dandiya sticks*) when dancing.
- Create an opportunity for a dance to be performed to an audience.

### Activity 5 – Art and Design

- Create rangoli patterns using chalks, coloured sand and flowers.
- Design and make a clay diya lamp.
- Use hand templates to design mehndi patterns.

### Information Points to be used for demonstration and discussion

#### ➤ Rangoli

Rangoli is a decorative folk art from India that is created on the ground during celebrations, and especially Diwali. Hindus believe that rangoli brings good luck and welcomes gods and goddesses. The details in rangoli decorations can include lotus flowers, mango leaves and geometric shapes. The elaborate designs can be made with rice, coloured sand, chalk and flower petals.

*Explore further* – Use online resources to show videos of rangoli patterns being created.

#### ➤ Diya Lamps

The word Diwali means ‘rows of lighted lamps’. In the story of Rama and Sita lamps were lit to guide them home and welcome them back. During the Diwali celebrations people light their homes and outside areas with clay diya lamps. The lighting of a diya is a symbolic action in itself; Hindus believe that by lighting a diya, you are removing the darkness and bringing in light, removing the negative energies that could be present in a space and bringing in positivity.

*Explore further* – 13 diya lamps should be lit during the Diwali celebrations. Find out what each of the 13 diyas represents.



Dandiya are decorated wooden sticks used in traditional Indian dances. They often have a ghungroo (small bell) attached to the end. One interpretation of the use of the sticks is that the dancers represent the warriors in the battle between Lord Rama and Ravana in the Ramayana, the story of Rama and Sita.

Explore further - Make dandiya sticks to use when dancing.

➤ Ramayana

The Ramayana is an ancient Sanskrit epic about Rama. Sanskrit is the classical language of India. The story of the Ramayana is about Prince Rama and tells of his childhood through to the rescue of Sita and the battle with Ravana. The Ramayana artefact shows Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman.

Explore further – What are the seven parts of the Ramayana epic?

➤ Lakshmi

Lakshmi is Goddess of Wealth and Beauty. Hindus believe that Sita is an incarnation of Lakshmi. Particularly worshipped during the festival of Diwali, Hindus believe that worshipping Lakshmi sincerely and not in greed, will bring fortune and success. It is believed that Lakshmi resides in places of hard work, virtue and bravery, but leaves when these qualities are no longer present.

Explore further – On which day of Diwali are candles lit to guide Lakshmi to Hindu's homes?

➤ Ganesh

*Also known as - Ganesha*

Ganesh is considered as the God of Intellect, Remover of Obstacles and Lord of Beginnings. Hindus pray to Ganesh when embarking on something for the first time, as they believe he bestows wisdom and good fortune. Hindus traditionally worship Ganesh and Lakshmi together at Diwali; as it is believed that to have good fortune one must also acquire knowledge.

Explore further – Why is Ganesh depicted with one broken and one unbroken tusk? Can you find other stories relating to Ganesh?