



**“The Diwali Gift”**  
**40 minute Lesson Plans**  
**Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st grade**

# Teacher's Guide to the Diwali Holiday

## About Diwali

### **What is Diwali?**

- Diwali is India's most important holiday of the year
- Its name comes from the lamps that families light outside their homes (called "diyas")
- One translation of Diwali is "the festival of lights"
- Diwali celebrates the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, good over evil, and hope over despair

### **What is the origin of the holiday?**

- Diwali was originally a festival to mark the last harvest of the year
- People ask for blessings from Lakshmi (goddess of wealth) and Ganesh (God of auspicious beginnings) so that they would have financial success in the new year
- Some believe that the light from the diyas directs Lakshmi into their homes, bringing prosperity and happiness

### **Who celebrates Diwali?**

- Diwali began as a Hindu celebration in India, but today people of Indian heritage and non-Indian heritage celebrate Diwali all over the world

### **When is Diwali?**

- Diwali coincides with the new moon, and falls either in October or November depending on the year
- Diwali lasts for 5 days- 2 before Diwali night and 2 after

### **How is Diwali celebrated?**

- Diwali is celebrated through family gatherings, special clothing, lighting candles or lamps, fireworks, drawing rangolis, exchanging gifts, sharing sweets, and prayer

## **Learning Goals for “The Diwali Gift” Lesson**

### **By the end of this lesson, children should be able to:**

- Know that Diwali is an important holiday for people of Indian heritage all around the world
- Know that Diwali is a festival of lights and celebrates the victory of light over darkness
- Know that Diwali is a time for people to be with family and to think about their hopes and wishes for the next year
- Know some of the traditions associated with Diwali
  - Celebrating with family
  - Lighting candles or lamps
  - Wearing special clothes
  - Giving gifts
  - Drawing Rangoli
  - Fireworks or sparklers
  - Eating sweets

### **United States Standards**

- Common Core (CCSS)
  - English Language Arts
    - Kindergarten
      - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1: With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
      - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3: With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
      - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.10: Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
      - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.1: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book
      - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.2: Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.



# “The Diwali Gift” Lesson Plan

## How to use this Lesson Plan

<b>If you have 20 minutes</b>	<b>If you have 40 minutes</b>	<b>If you have 60 minutes</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read “The Diwali Gift” (10 minutes)</li><li>2. Group Discussion (10 minutes)</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read “The Diwali Gift” (10 minutes)</li><li>2. Group Discussion (10 minutes)</li><li>3. Diya writing/drawing reflection (20 minutes)</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read “The Diwali Gift” (10 minutes)</li><li>2. Group Discussion (10 minutes)</li><li>3. Diya writing/drawing reflection (20 minutes)</li><li>4. Rangoli drawing activity (10-20 minutes)</li></ol>

## Preparation and Materials

- **Preparation**
  - **Read** “A Teacher’s Guide to Diwali”, page 1
  - **Read** the pronunciation and definitions of vocabulary words, page 5
  - **Preview** the reading guide, page 5 and 6
  - **Print** the discussion questions, page 7
  - **For the 40 minute lesson, Print** out 1 Diwali Diya worksheet per each child (see page 11 or log on: <http://3curiousmonkeys.com/worksheets>)
  - **For the 60 minute lesson, Color Print** out 1 Rangoli Worksheet per each child see page 12 or log on: <http://3curiousmonkeys.com/worksheets>)
- **Materials**
  - “The Diwali Gift” book
  - Diwali Diya worksheets, if using (1 per student)
  - Rangoli worksheets, if using (1 per student)
  - Crayons/markers/colored pencils

## 1.) Reading “The Diwali Gift” (approx. 10 minutes)

### Pronunciation/Definitions

- **Diwali** (di-wa-li): The Indian festival of lights celebrated by many people from Southeast Asia
- **Suno** (Su-no): one of the three curious monkeys in “The Diwali Gift”
- **Dekho** (Day-kho): one of the three curious monkeys in “The Diwali Gift”
- **Jaano** (Jah-no): one of the three curious monkeys in “The Diwali Gift”
- **Dadima** (Dā-dī-mā): the word for “Grandmother”
- **Lehenga** (Leh-en-ga): a type of long skirt
- **Auspicious** (aw-spish-us): something that brings good luck
- **Diya** (dee-ya): oil-based candle
- **Laxmi** (luck-shmi): goddess of prosperity and wealth
- **Ganesh** (Gun-esh): God of new beginnings, has an elephant’s head
- **Bindi** (bin-dee): a decorative mark many Indian women wear on their foreheads
- **Pooja Thali** (Pū-jā thā-lī): a plate used to hold items being offered to deities, important people, or special guests
- **Rangoli** (run-go-li): art drawn on the floor with colored rice, dry flour, colored sand, or flower petals

### Reading guide

- **Introduction to students**
  - Where is India? (if possible, show India on a globe or a map)
  - Today we’re going to talk about Diwali, a very important holiday especially in India and all over the world
  - Diwali is the festival of lights, and is about light winning over dark
  - Diwali is celebrated on a very dark night when there’s a new moon, so people light lamps to light up the night
  - Diwali is a very special holiday when people wear their nicest clothes, decorate their homes with lights, and exchange candy and presents
  - During Diwali, people think about the good things they would like to happen in the next year
- **Additional supports to point out during reading**
  - Dekho thinks the box has **sparklers**- many children light sparklers on Diwali night. People also shoot fireworks into the sky.
  - Suno thinks the box has **bangles**- people dress in their nicest clothing for Diwali night. A lehenga (leh-en-ga) is a fancy skirt.
  - Jaano thinks the box has **diyas**- small oil lamps that people light on Diwali night

- Talk about the pictures engraved on the coin
  - **Laxmi** (luck-shmi): goddess of prosperity and wealth
  - **Ganesh** (Gun-esh): God of new beginnings, has an elephant's head
- Point out the **rangoli** (run-go-li)- colorful floor art- that Jaano is putting the diyas around
- Explain how the **coins** will bring Suno, Dekho, and Jaano good luck in the next year. The friends will hold their coins, and wish for something that they hope will come true.

## **2.) Group Discussion of “The Diwali Gift” (approx. 10 minutes)**

- **Q: What is Diwali about?**
  - **A:** festival of lights, making wishes for the next year, light winning over dark, good winning over evil
- **Q: Who can tell me one thing that happens during Diwali?**
  - **A:** lighting lamps, wearing special clothes, exchanging presents, lighting sparklers, drawing a rangoli, spending time with family, etc.
- **Q: What happened in the story?**
  - **A:** Three monkeys were celebrating Diwali and got a gift from their grandma. They guessed what was inside and then opened it. They celebrated Diwali night with their coins, which will bring them good luck.
- **Q: Who sent the three monkeys the present?**
  - **A:** Dadima, their grandmother
- **Q: What did Dekho think was in the present?**
  - **A:** sparklers
- **Q: What did Suno think was in the present?**
  - **A:** bangles/bracelets
- **Q: What did Jaano think was in the present?**
  - **A:** diyas (lamps/lights)
- **Q: What was the present Dadima actually sent?**
  - **A:** coins
- **Q: What was so special about these coins?**
  - **A:** they would bring good luck for the next year, the monkeys' names were on them, Laxmi and Ganesh were on them

### 3.) Diwali Diya writing and coloring activity (approx. 10 minutes)

1. **Ask** students to share some things that make them happy or some wishes they hope will come true.
2. **Distribute** one Diwali diya worksheet to each student
3. **Distribute** crayons/markers/colored pencils around the classroom
4. **Tell** children to write or draw things that make them happy or wishes they hope will come true. (they can also color the diya designs too)

(See page 11 for the printable worksheet)

#### Diwali Diya Worksheet

Write or draw your wish, or something that makes you happy!



## **Additional Diwali resources**

### **Videos**

- The origin Story of Diwali for kids (4 minutes, 30 seconds):
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pp59n0So-XE&feature=youtu.be>
- National Geographic: What is Diwali like in India? (3 minutes)
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrrW3rO51ak&feature=youtu.be>
- Learn about Ganesh
  - <http://3curiousmonkeys.com/videos>

### **Music**

- Listen to songs about Diwali
  - <http://bit.ly/sv3cm>

### **Worksheets/Printables**

- Diwali coloring pages, word searches, and a paint-by-number Rangoli: <http://3curiousmonkeys.com/worksheets/>

### **Craft activities**

- Make Diwali floating candle holders
  - <http://3curiousmonkeys.com/activities/>
- Easy Diwali Activities to do with toddlers for Diwali
  - <http://3curiousmonkeys.com/activities/>
- Make Ganesh out of clay: (link to video here)
  - <http://3curiousmonkeys.com/activities/>

# Diwali Diya Worksheet

Write or draw your wish, or something that makes you happy!

