

Diwali



★ By Asha Patel

*Ready
to Read*

Pronunciation guide to the Hindi words

Diwali (dee-va-lee)

rangoli (run-go-lee)

barfi (bar-fee)

Ram (raam)

Sita (see-ta)

Ravan (raa-vun)

diva (dee-va)

Saal Mubarak (saal moo-ba-rik)

Bhai Beej (bai beej)

Sajan (saa-jin)

Note: There may be regional variations in pronunciation or vocabulary.

You can read more about making rangoli patterns in “Rangoli” in *School Journal*, Part Two Number Four, 2005, and about making barfi in “Brothers’ and Sisters’ Day” in *School Journal*, Part One Number Two, 2006.

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Ministry of Education



Diwali is the Indian Festival of Light. It is held in late October or early November and celebrates the beginning of the Indian new year. The celebrations last for five days.



At last Diwali has arrived. Alisha makes a chart to mark off the days.



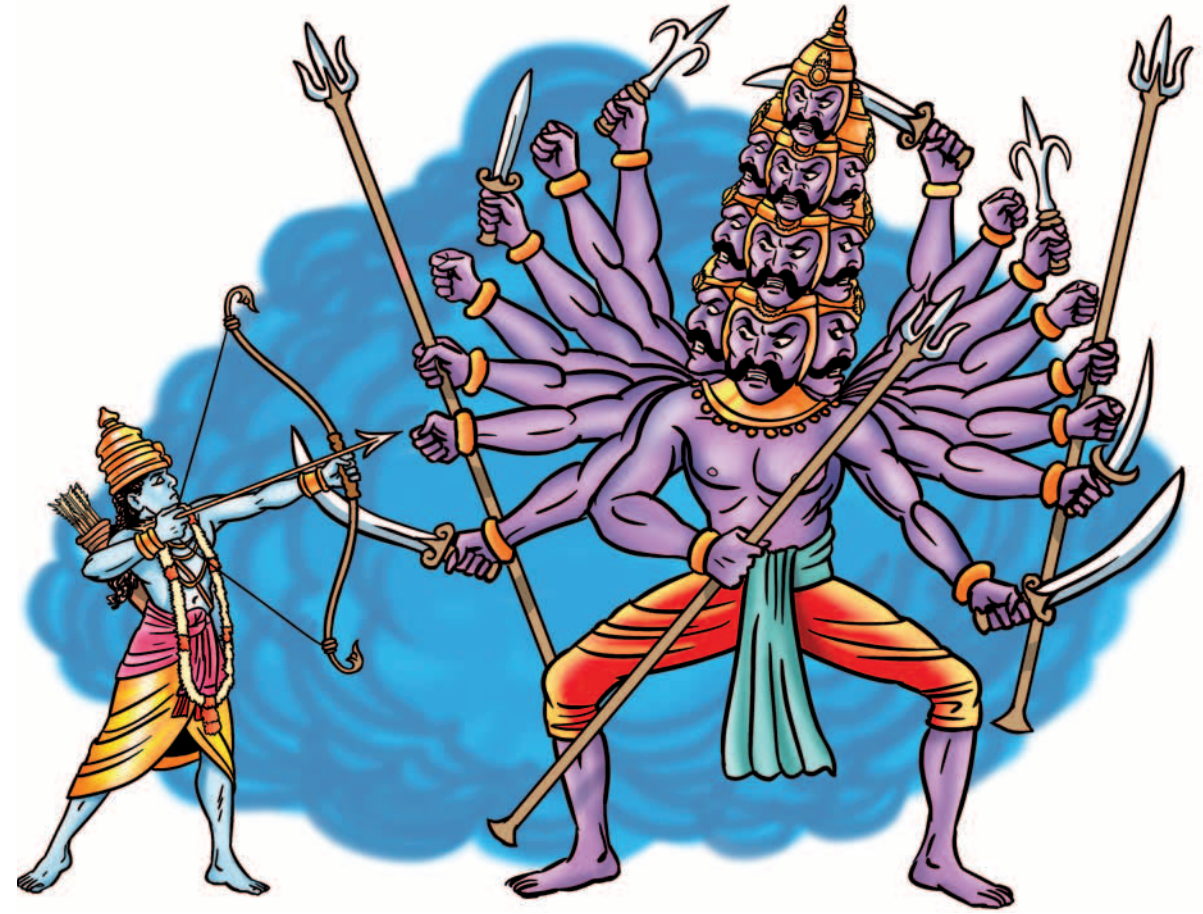
On the first day of the festival, Alisha and her dad make a **rangoli** pattern. They decorate it with coloured powder. Alisha puts the rangoli pattern by the front door to welcome visitors.



Then she helps her mum to make a sweet called **barfi** for their family and friends.



On the second day, Alisha goes to Indian school.
The teacher tells the children a Diwali story
about a prince called **Ram** and his wife, **Sita**.



Alisha's favourite part is when Ram rescues Sita
from **Ravan**, the evil king.

In the story, the people welcome Ram and Sita
by lighting lamps called **diva**.

The third day of the festival is called Diwali.
After breakfast, Alisha makes a card
for her family. On the front, she draws a diva
and writes “Happy Diwali”.



In the evening, Alisha watches her mum
light divas to put around their home.
The lights flicker in the darkness.



After dinner, everyone goes outside
to light fireworks.

The fourth day is New Year's Day.
In the afternoon, Alisha visits Grandma.
Grandma is wearing a brand new sari.
“**Saal Mubarak,**”^{*} says Alisha,
and she gives Grandma some barfi.



*** Saal Mubarak means Happy New Year.**



At night, Alisha and her friends will be performing a dance at a concert. Alisha tries on her beautiful new dress that Grandma has brought her from India.



At the hall, there is a colourful rangoli pattern to welcome everyone to the show.



When Alisha and her friends dance onto the stage, their dresses sparkle under the bright lights. The girls perform the dance perfectly, and everyone claps and cheers.



The last day of the Diwali festival is **Bhai Beej**. It's a special day for brothers and sisters. Alisha makes afternoon tea for her brother, **Sajan**. After they have eaten, Sajan gives Alisha a present.

The next day, Alisha takes down her chart.
The five days of Diwali are over,
and the new year has begun.



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