

Language Lizard Lesson: Diwali

Learning about Diwali

Language Lizard Materials Used:

Deepak's Diwali (Gujarati/English)

<http://www.language lizard.com/Deepak-s-Diwali-p/diw.htm>

Focus Language: Gujarati

Focus Country: India

Grades: 3-5

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Diwali

This lesson has been designed to help students:

- hear and see new languages and texts;
- learn about the physical and human geography of India (location and people/culture);
- build an appreciation of the diverse languages present in the world and in the United States;
- introduce important concepts of: India, Gujarati, Diwali, patterns;
- build positive relationships among students in the classroom to promote the acceptance of diversity among students as a part of the classroom environment while demonstrating teacher support of linguistic diversity.

Dual Language Materials Used: The Language Lizard materials used in this lesson include: [*Deepak's Diwali*](#) in Gujarati/English.

Alignment with State, National Standards: These lessons are easily aligned with state standards, in Social Studies, Language Arts and Mathematics. They can be adapted to include additional standards—state or national—and Common Core English/Language Arts or Mathematics Standards. The National Council for the Social Studies Themes that these lessons support include: Culture, People, Places and Environment, Individual Development and Identity, Global Connections and Individuals, Groups and Institutions.

Rationale and Goals: This lesson was developed to help students become aware of the world languages spoken in India, the holiday of Diwali and its significance in Indian culture. By learning about culture, nations and world languages, children can learn about themselves, their peers and their world.

Vocabulary:

Rama: husband of Sita

Sita: wife of Rama, captured by Ravana
Hanuman: monkey worrier
Ravana: ten headed, evil king who captured Sita
Rangoli Patterns: decorations put on front walkway to welcome guests
Lakshmi: a goddess who keeps bad spirits away
Ladoo: yellow, sweet, ball-shaped food
Kurta-Paijama: traditional outfit worn by people celebrating Diwali
Tika: red mark put on the forehead to represent good luck
Aarti Praising: song to show love and respect for Gods
Deepaks: clay lamps burned to show the triumph of good over evil

State Standards:

Common Core Standards for Language Arts and Math, Grades 3 and 4:

Grade 3: Key Ideas and Details

2. Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text

Grade 3: Comprehension and Collaboration

2. Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally

Grade 3: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase

Grade 3: Geometry

1. Understand that shapes in different categories (e.g., rhombuses, rectangles, and others) may share attributes (e.g. having four sides), and that the shared attributes can define a larger category (e.g. quadrilaterals). Recognize rhombuses, rectangles, and squares as examples of quadrilaterals, and draw examples of quadrilaterals that do not belong to any of these subcategories

Grade 4: Geometry

3. Recognize a line of symmetry for a two-dimensional figure as a line across the figure such that the figure can be folded along the line into matching parts.
Identify line-symmetric figures and draw lines of symmetry

PA State Standards for Reading and Math, Grade 3:

PDESAS.R3.A.1.3.1: Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from the text.

PDESAS.R3.A.2.1.2: Identify and/or interpret the meaning of content-specific words used in text.

PDESAS.R3.A.2.5.1: Summarize the major points, processes, and/or events of a nonfictional text as a whole.

PDESAS.M3.C.1.1.1: Name/identify/describe geometric shapes in two dimensions (circle, square, rectangle, triangle, pentagon, hexagon, octagon).

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to make text-to-self connections between the holiday Diwali to holidays they celebrate in their own cultures.
2. Students will be able to give a general explanation of what Diwali is, and why people celebrate it, using vocabulary they acquire from the PowerPoint presentation and the story itself.
3. Students will be able to create their own Rangoli Patterns using only geometric shapes. Design should be symmetrical. On the back of their Rangoli Patterns students will write a description of the characteristics (number of sides, vertices, angles, etc.) of three geometric shapes they used in their pattern.

Lesson Introduction/Anticipatory Set:

Show the cover of the book, “Deepak’s Diwali” by Divya Karwal and Doreen Lang to the students. Ask them if they see anything interesting on the cover. Be sure to point out that the title is written in two languages, English, and Gujarati. Show students a few pages of print so they see what the print of Gujarati looks like. Explain to them that Gujarati is spoken in India, specifically in Gujarat, India. Show the students where India is and where Gujarat is on a world map. About 46 million people speak Gujarati as their first language, and about 70% of the Indian population speaks Gujarati. Discuss the population of India as a country compared to the amount of people in India who speak Gujarati. Then tell the students that you are going to be reading a story to them about the Indian holiday Diwali. In order to help students acquire background knowledge of the human characteristics of India and of the key terms from the story that they need to know in order to comprehend the story, prepare a PowerPoint presentation with vocabulary words, definitions, and supporting images.

Procedures:

1. Begin reading the story, [*Deepak’s Diwali*](#), to the students.
2. Stop on the third page of the book after the story of Rama and his wife Sita. Ask for volunteers to summarize the story in their own words, so that the students understand the history of Diwali.
3. Pause on the page that says, “Perhaps things wouldn’t be so bad after all.” Ask the students how they can tell this is a special holiday for Deepak. What events have occurred in the story so far that help the listener know that it is a special day? Allow students to think to themselves, talk to a partner, and then share with the class.
4. On the page that mentions a “tika”, review with the students what a “tika” is based on the vocabulary activity and the context of the story. A tika is a red mark people from India put on their foreheads for good luck. Ask the class to think of

- things they use to represent good luck. Allow them to share with a partner and/or the whole class.
5. After reading the page about the foods the characters ate during dinner, ask the students if they have ever had Indian food. Ask them what kinds of foods they have when they celebrate holidays with their families.
 6. When the story is over, have the students mix-freeze-pair-share to tell their partner in their own words what Diwali is based on the information about the holiday that they learned from the story. Have the pairs write a 2-3 sentence summary collaboratively after sharing their ideas. Why do people celebrate the holiday? What do they do to celebrate? What kinds of foods do they eat? What kinds of decorations do they use? What are some of their customs?
 7. Next, tell the students that they are going to create their own Rangoli Pattern like the patterns that were used in the story to decorate Deepak's doorstep. Show the class the examples of the Rangoli Patterns in the back of the book, and if you have an example that you made, share that with the class as well. Explain the guidelines to the class and write them on the board so the students can refer to them as they work. Tell the students that they must use at least 3 different geometric shapes to create their Rangoli Patterns. As long as they included 3 geometric shapes, they can use other shapes too. Their designs should be symmetrical. When they are finished drawing and coloring their patterns, they need to write 5 sentences describing the characteristics of the geometric shapes they used.

Closure:

After providing students with enough time to work on their Rangoli Patterns, bring the class back together as a whole group. Ask them to share one thing they have learned about the holiday Diwali or the language Gujarati with the person next to them. Then allow some students to share their Rangoli Patterns with the class if they are finished. Decorate a bulletin board, wall, or the ceiling with the completed Rangoli Patterns.

Assessment:

While having the students share their connections with a partner, listen to their conversations to assess whether or not they are able to make text-to-self connections. They should be comparing events from the story to customs, traditions, foods, decorations, etc. that relate to holidays they celebrate. Collect the summaries that the pairs create about what Diwali is in order to assess if they understand the holiday and why it is celebrated or if they were unable to comprehend that part of the story. Pausing after the author first describes the history of Diwali should help the students comprehend why the holiday is celebrated by the Indian culture. After reading the summaries, if you find that the students still do not understand Diwali, review some of the key aspects of the holiday covered in the story. Collect the Rangoli Patterns that the students created and make sure they met all of the requirements. They had to use at least 3 geometric shapes,

they had to write at least 5 sentences explaining characteristics of the geometric shapes they used, and their designs should be symmetrical.

Differentiation: Provide a hand out of the new vocabulary words and their definitions to struggling readers who will need that visual to refer to throughout the lesson. Picture cards may be used. If the students are having a difficult time comprehending the story because of the difficult vocabulary, pause more often throughout the read aloud to clarify the meaning of words. For students who are more advanced in geometry, require them to use transformations of shapes, such as scaling, reflecting, rotating, etc.

Enrichment/Extensions:

Graph the various languages spoken in India. India has a large population, and over fourteen official languages are spoken throughout the country.

Identify percentages of languages spoken in India, comparing the languages based on population statistics.

Choose between five and ten languages from India and have the students research how many people speak those languages, or provide this information for the students depending on resources and time, and then have the students graph the data.

Materials:

Deepak's Diwali

Vocabulary sheet with definitions or vocabulary picture cards

Writing paper

Graph and chart paper

Rulers

References:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>