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# Lesson Plan: A Diwali Festival of Lights Celebration

## Materials Needed:

- **Book:** *Amma, Tell Me About Diwali!* by Bhakti Mathur, or another age-appropriate picture book about Diwali.
- **For Diyas:** Air-dry clay (or salt dough), washable paint (bright colors), paintbrushes, craft gems, and glitter.
- **For Light:** Battery-operated tea lights (one for each child).
- **For Rangoli:** A large tray for each child, black construction paper, white school glue in a squeeze bottle, and small bowls of colorful materials (colored rice, lentils, flower petals, or sand).
- **Optional:** Upbeat Indian music for background atmosphere.

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## Learning Objectives (What Viviana, Reggie, Allegra, and Florence will do):

- **Create:** Sculpt and decorate a small clay lamp (diya).
- **Design:** Make a colorful pattern (rangoli) using glue and sensory materials.
- **Engage:** Listen to a story about Diwali and identify key elements like lights and family.
- **Develop Skills:** Practice fine motor skills through pinching, painting, squeezing glue, and sprinkling.

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## Lesson Activities

### 1. Introduction: The Wonder of Light (5 Minutes)

- **Goal:** To spark curiosity and introduce the central theme of Diwali.
- **Activity:**
  1. Gather the children in a cozy spot and dim the lights slightly.
  2. Present a single, unlit battery-operated tea light. Ask, "What is this? What do you think it does?"
  3. Turn it on. Watch their faces light up! Ask, "Wow! What happened? How does the light make you feel?"
  4. Explain, "Today, we are going to learn about a very special celebration called **Diwali**, the Festival of Lights! It's a happy time when people fill their homes with light."

### 2. Story Time: Welcome to the Celebration (10 Minutes)

- **Goal:** To introduce the story and vocabulary of Diwali in a gentle, engaging way.
- **Activity:**
  1. Read your chosen Diwali picture book together.
  2. As you read, point to the pictures and emphasize key ideas:
    - "Look at all the little lamps! These are called **diyas**."
    - "See the beautiful patterns on the floor? Those are called **rangoli**. They are like a big

welcome mat made of colors!"

- "Notice how families are together, sharing sweets and celebrating."
3. Keep it interactive by asking questions like, "What colors do you see in the rangoli?" or "Can you count the diyas on this page?"

### 3. Main Activity Part 1: Making Our Own Diyas (15 Minutes)

- **Goal:** To create a tangible object from the story while practicing fine motor skills.
- **Activity:**
  1. Give each child a ball of air-dry clay. Say, "Now we get to make our very own diya lamps, just like in the book!"
  2. Demonstrate how to roll the clay into a ball and then gently press a thumb in the center to create a small bowl shape. This is a great "pinching" exercise for little fingers.
  3. Set out the paints, brushes, glitter, and gems. Let the children decorate their diyas freely. Encourage bright, happy colors.
  4. When they are finished, set the diyas aside to dry. Explain that later, you will put a special "flame" inside.

### 4. Main Activity Part 2: Creating Colorful Rangoli (15 Minutes)

- **Goal:** To explore patterns and textures in a fun, sensory-based art project.
- **Activity:**
  1. Place a piece of black construction paper on a tray for each child. The tray helps contain the mess!
  2. Show them pictures of rangoli from the book again. Say, "Let's make a beautiful, colorful welcome pattern for our home!"
  3. Using the squeeze bottle of glue, help each child draw a simple design on their paper (a flower, a sun, or just happy squiggles). Squeezing the bottle is excellent for building hand strength.
  4. Place the bowls of colored rice, lentils, or sand in the middle of the table. Let them use their fingers to pinch and sprinkle the materials over the glue.
  5. Once the glue is covered, show them how to carefully pick up their paper and tip it to let the extra materials fall back onto the tray. The reveal of the final design is magical!

### 5. Conclusion: Our Festival of Lights (5 Minutes)

- **Goal:** To bring all the elements of the lesson together in a memorable, celebratory way.
- **Activity:**
  1. Gather the decorated diyas (even if they are still damp).
  2. Place one battery-operated tea light inside each child's diya.
  3. Dim the lights in the room again. Turn on all the little diyas together.
  4. Admire the beautiful glow. Say, "Look at the wonderful light we made! Happy Diwali!"
  5. You can play some festive music and admire your rangoli art while the diyas glow. This is a perfect moment for a special snack or a little dance.

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### Differentiation and Notes for the Teacher:

- **For a child needing extra support:** Offer to guide their hand while they squeeze the glue. Provide larger materials for the rangoli, like colored pasta, which are easier to grasp.
- **For a child seeking a challenge:** Encourage them to create a specific pattern on their diya or to

try and draw a symmetrical design with the glue for their rangoli. Ask them to retell their favorite part of the Diwali story.

- **Focus on the Process:** Remember that for 3-year-olds, the joy is in the making! Don't worry about perfect results. The goal is exploration, creativity, and feeling the happy spirit of the celebration.

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