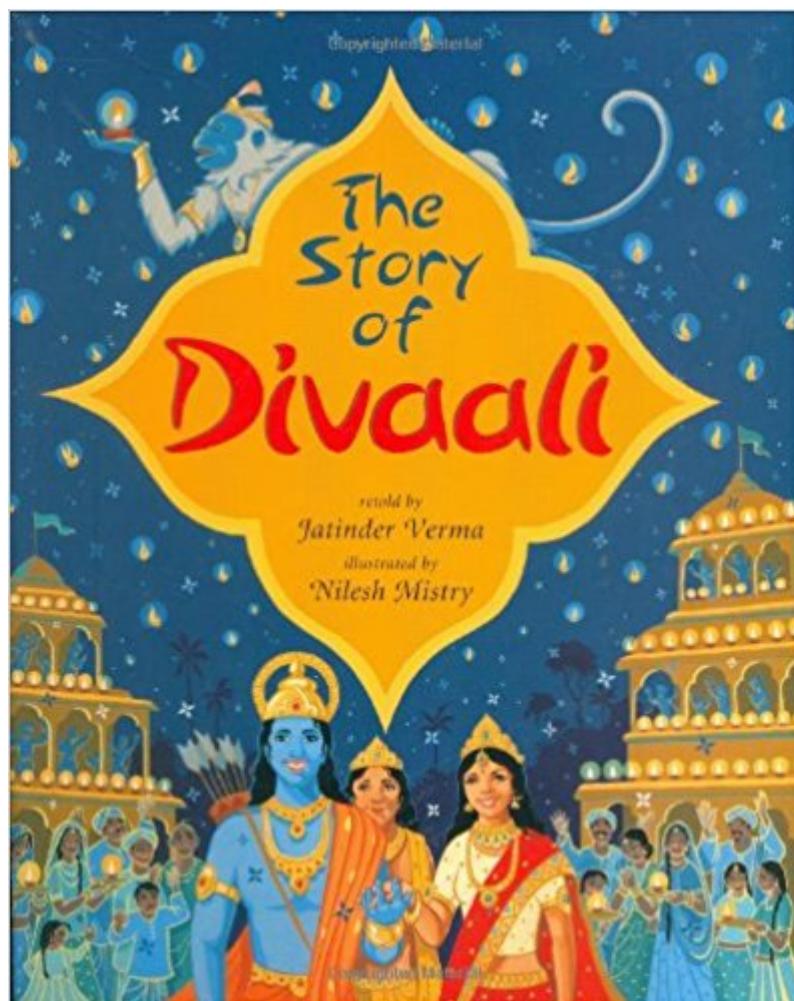


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Story Of Divaali



Synopsis

The Story of Divaali is a wonderful rendition of the "Ramayana," an age-old Hindu epic filled with magic, miracles and adventure. The compelling story tells of a young prince Rama who overcomes Ravana the Demon King. Out of his triumph, Divaali, the Indian festival of lights, is born. The powerful narrative is perfectly complemented by the jewel-like illustrations of Nilesh Mistry. Drawing on the versions told to him in childhood by his parents, Jatinder Verma brings the essence of this great Indian epic to life for a new generation.

Book Information

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: Barefoot Books (September 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1846861314

ISBN-13: 978-1846861314

Product Dimensions: 10.4 x 8.4 x 0.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #649,101 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #37 in Books > Children's Books > Religions > Eastern #132 in Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Religious #6017 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths

Age Range: 6 and up

Grade Level: 1 and up

Customer Reviews

Based on the Hindu epic The Ramayana and exploring the events celebrated during the festival of Divaali (in late October/early November), this handsomely designed volume addresses the dearth of attractive children's books about Hindu beliefs and celebrations. Unfortunately, Verma and Mistry may not make enough concessions to Western readers. The relatively lengthy narrative recalls an oral tradition ("In the beginning, long ago, long before you were born") and the pacing presumes some familiarity; readers new to the culture may have a hard time keeping up with the rapid procession of protagonists, especially because they enter the story with little characterization.

References (e.g., to "Shiva the Destroyer") go unexplained. Mistry's (Tales from the Silk Road) airy, detailed gouaches, inventively laid out to punctuate the text, may likewise raise questions (Why is Rama blue?). An endnote describes the contemporary Indian celebration of the holiday. Ages

Grade 2-4-Verma has based his retelling of the Sanskrit epic from ancient India, The Ramayana, on the translation of the 15th-century Hindu poet Tulsidass. The story, which scholars feel may date from as early as 3000 B.C.E., tells of the birth of Prince Rama, his marriage to the Princess Sita, and the adventures and trials that follow. Displaced as rightful heir to the throne because of a promise made by his father, Rama is banished to the forest for 14 years, accompanied by Sita and his brother Lakshmana. During their exile, Sita is captured by the evil Lord Ravana. With the aid of Lord Hanuman, a monkey/human with marvelous powers, and his monkey army, she is rescued and Rama slays Ravana. The celebration that follows, in which numerous oil lamps are lit, is said to be the origin of the Hindu holiday Divaali. Verma's tightly written text does an excellent job of bringing the story to children without sacrificing meaning. Unfortunately, the accompanying illustrations look as if they stepped directly out of a Disney feature and detract from the epic grandeur of the tale. With little else available, the book is an appropriate addition to folklore shelves but would work best as a read-aloud. Grace Oliff, Ann Blanche Smith School, Hillsdale, NJCopyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

my granddaughter in MA just loved this little book!

This book is decently written, but isn't what I expected. I purchased it in preparation for a Diwali party with friends (to educate our kids about the holiday) and for a Diwali celebration at my daughter's school. This book mostly focuses on the tale from the Ramayana about the kidnapping of Sita by the demon Ravana, and her subsequent rescue by Rama. The celebration that follows is said to be the origin of the holiday of Diwali. I'm a big fan of the Ramayana, but I would have liked a little more on Diwali to complement the storyline. As it was, there wasn't much about the traditions of celebrating Diwali. For that, I prefer Lighting a Lamp: A Diwali Story (Festival Time), by Zucker. For lots of details about the holiday and some nice photographs, I recommend Holidays Around the World: Celebrate Diwali, by Deborah Heiligman.

I purchased this for my daughter. She is only 3 and has heard different versions. I have grown up listening to this story, reading, watching the TV program, attending various plays and I am in the process of reading a version by Manon. Unfortunately, I can no longer read the original in Sanskrit. Ram was born, he was mortal and didn't leap out the sacrificial fire. This is a very important part of

the story without which the rest of the story doesn't work. I must say that the illustrations are beautiful but I was turned off by the fact the story doesn't quite follow the original. I have not gone much further than Ram appearing from the sacrificial fire. Having read various versions of Ramayan, which Diwali is part off, this version lacks much of the details that are essential to the story. A much more suitable versions for younger audiences are available. I will this book mostly to show the illustrations to my daughter. I have found "Rama and the Demon King: An Ancient Tale from India" is more suitable for younger audiences. I have found "The Ramayana: A Modern Retelling of the Great Indian Epic" has been very satisfying to read for myself.

I wonder why the publisher chose to spell the well-known festival as Divaali in the title - a spelling I have never seen before, even if it may be phonetically correct. The festival is commonly spelled as Diwali or Deepavali, and I suspect it would have sold far more copies online with one of those spellings in the title. As it is, I ran across this book only in 2009, while I have been looking and shopping for Diwali books since 2002, when this book was published! The text is well constructed, and the illustrations are sweeping and gorgeous, full of eye-pleasing and authentic details. The choice of a digital, Disneyfied style for these illustrations is unfortunate, because the book could have been a timeless treasure otherwise. On the other hand, perhaps this will help its appeal to American kids.

Diwali is the 4th July, and Christmas rolled in one for Hindu kids. This book is a wonderful description of the most universal of Hindu festivals. Great artwork and lucid story are definite plus. A must buy for anyone interested in teaching kids about India and Hinduism.

As a teacher of young children, it was nice to find a decent, appropriate, and nicely done book about the story of Ramayana. I agree with other reviewers that the title is misleading and the book does not serve the purpose of giving information about the holiday of Diwali. The book does tell the Ramayana story beautifully and adheres to the original epic with the exception of one mistake! Rama did not aim at the moving fish with the special bow and arrow before marrying Sita! It was Arjuna in the epic Mahabharata that aimed at the moving fish before marrying Draupadi! I don't know how this well known "mythological fact" got mixed up by the author and publisher. I would like to give this book as a gift to my young nieces and nephews as a part of knowing their heritage but feel reluctant to give out wrong information! Hopefully, it can be corrected for the other editions. We need correct and interestingly depicted books about wonderful, ancient Hindu stories. Overall

though, this book meets that expectation.

The story is totally wrong! It talks about Ravana wanting to marry Sita.. so he comes to the swayamwar of Sita - THIS IS WRONG. RAVANA NEVER CAME FOR SITA's SWAYAMWAR. It talks about Ravana not able to lift the bow and how Sita laughed at him. The story spins around this as the reason for Ravana abducting Sita. THIS IS NOT TRUE! The real story is : Ravana abducted Sita cos Lakshman cut off Ravana's sister's nose (Soorpanaka's nose). Soorpanaka complaints about Rama and Lakshman to Ravan and Ravan takes revenge for this by abducting Sita. Am totally disappointed that such false information is being taught to kids. PLEASE DO NOT BUY THIS BOOK.

Title: The Story of Diwali
Author: Retold by Jatinder Verma
Illustrations: Nilesh Mistry
Format: Hard Cover Print
ISBN: 1-84148-936-0
Publisher: Barefoot Books
Review By: Diana Rohini LaVigne, Indian Life & Style Magazine
This timeless tale, The Story of Diwali is honored by extraordinary illustrations by Nilesh Mistry and beautifully crafted text by Jatinder Verma. Readers will enjoy the simplicity in the story and layout beginning with a trouble-free guide to the characters in the story. The complexities of this age old Hindu legend are presented in a way that is easy for young readers to understand. The use of visuals in this book in order to support the story line is superbly executed. Pages jump with color and images that beg readers to turn the page and discover why this story has lasted the test of time and the modern world. The pages come alive with the character's acts of bravery, the forces of evil trying to ruin the day and the stunning love story that shines throughout the book. Barefoot Books has created a book gem with the 'The Story of Diwali'. The epic retelling is compelling, riveting and a visual superstar. 'The Story of Diwali' honors the epic and continues the long standing history of its text.

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