

Rakhi bracelets

Setting the context

The Hindu festival of Raksha Bandhan takes place in August. It is a festival which celebrates the relationship between brothers and sisters. Traditionally, during the festival, girls tie a rakhi (a bracelet made from interwoven red and gold threads) around their brother's right wrist and pray for his well-being. Brothers usually give a gift in return and pledge to

take care of their sisters. Nowadays, rakhis are also often adorned with different coloured stones and beads.

Problem

Design and make a rakhi bracelet with three green, three blue and three red beads. Beads of the same colour must not be placed next to each other.

Objectives

- To solve mathematical problems or puzzles.
- To explain methods and reasoning.

You will need

A copy of photocopiable page 74 for each child; counters and small coloured circles or sequins (blue, green and red); glue; different coloured wool; thin card; circle templates; nine large paper circles (three red, three green, three blue); a hoop.

Preparation

Prepare a rakhi bracelet following the instructions on photocopiable page 74.

Solving the problem

- Tell the class about the festival of Raksha Bandhan. Show the children a picture of a rakhi bracelet. Ask: *What materials do you think the bracelet is made out of? Can you describe the pattern on the bracelet?*

- Show the children the rakhi bracelet you have made. Choose a boy and a girl to come

out to the front. Help the girl to tie the bracelet around the boy's right wrist to demonstrate the Hindu custom that takes place during the festival of Raksha Bandhan.

- Tell the children that you would like them each to design and make a rakhi bracelet. Explain that there are some special rules to follow when they are designing the pattern on their bracelet.

- Read the problem and ask the children to explain, in their own words, what they have got to do and what the special rules they must follow are (they must use nine beads,

