

The Great Fire of London: Social Studies / History Assessment

Learning objective: To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the causes, events, and impact of the Great Fire of London (1666).

Read each question carefully. Use your historical knowledge to answer in full sentences where required. Ensure your spelling and grammar are accurate.

In September 1666, London was a city made mostly of narrow streets and wooden houses. After a long, dry summer, a spark in a bakery on Pudding Lane ignited a fire that would change the city forever. For four days, the flames spread rapidly across the city, destroying homes, shops, and grand buildings alike. Our friend Ellie the elephant has been studying the diaries written at the time, which help us understand exactly how the people of London reacted to this event.

Word bank: Pudding Lane · Thomas Farriner · 1666 · St Paul's Cathedral · Samuel Pepys · timber-framed · firebreaks · catastrophe

1. In which year did the Great Fire of London begin and where was the bakery located? (2 marks)

2. Explain two reasons why the fire was able to spread so quickly through the city. (2 marks)

3. Who was the famous diarist who recorded his observations of the fire, and why are his writings important to historians today? (3 marks)

4. What method did the fire-fighters use to try and stop the fire from spreading further, and how did they carry it out? (3 marks)

5. Name one major landmark that was destroyed during the fire and explain how the city changed during the rebuilding process. (4 marks)

6. The fire caused people to lose their belongings and homes. If a baker in 1666 lost their shop, they might have had to spend £5 to buy basic supplies to start over. If they had £12 saved, how much money would they have left after buying their supplies? Show your working. (2 marks)

7. Imagine you are living in London in 1666. Write a short diary entry describing what you see, hear, and feel as you watch the fire from the river. Include your thoughts on how the city might look in the future. (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of the London skyline in 1666, showing the difference between the cramped, wooden buildings and the flames of the fire.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Imagine you are an architect in 1666. Write a list of three rules you would suggest for the new houses to ensure they are safer from fire than the ones that burned down.