

The Spark of History: Bonfire Night

Learning objective: To develop reading comprehension skills by retrieving information, making inferences, and evaluating historical context within a non-fiction text.

Read the passage carefully about Bonfire Night. Use evidence from the text to answer the questions below, ensuring your answers are written in full sentences.

Every year on the 5th of November, the night sky across the United Kingdom erupts with colourful displays. Families gather around crackling bonfires to stay warm, while fireworks hiss and whistle, painting the darkness with brilliant patterns. This tradition, known as Bonfire Night, commemorates the failure of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605. A group of men, including Guy Fawkes, attempted to destroy the Houses of Parliament in London. Fortunately, the plot was discovered before any harm could occur. To celebrate the safety of the King, people lit bonfires across the city. Today, we continue this historic custom to remember the events of that night. In many towns, people build an effigy, often called a 'guy', to place on the bonfire. As we watch the embers glow, we reflect on how history shapes our modern celebrations. It is a time for community, toastie treats like jacket potatoes, and enjoying the spectacular light shows that bring our chilly autumn evenings to life.

Word bank: commemorate · tradition · treason · parliament · spectacular · effigy

1. Identify two specific activities that people do to celebrate Bonfire Night according to the text. (2 marks)

2. What happened in 1605 that led to the creation of this tradition? (2 marks)

3. Why might the organisers of a Bonfire Night display choose to use a 'guy' effigy? (2 marks)

4. Explain why the author describes the fireworks as 'painting the darkness'. (2 marks)

5. Do you think it is important to continue celebrating events from over 400 years ago? Justify your answer using reasons. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene of a chilly November evening featuring a bonfire, with sparks rising into a starry sky. Include a small, friendly owl like Nova watching from a nearby branch.



Extension challenge: Max the monkey is helping to organise a community bonfire event. He has a budget of £50. If firework packs cost £12 each and he needs to buy three packs, plus £8 for hot chocolate supplies, how much money will he have left? Justify whether he has enough money to buy an extra pack of sparklers for £7.