

The History of Bonfire Night: A Historical Diary Entry

Learning objective: To write a recount of the events of 1605 from the perspective of an eyewitness, using historical vocabulary and emotive language.

Imagine you are living in London in November 1605. Use this diary template to recount the events surrounding the Gunpowder Plot. Use the word bank to help you include descriptive language and historical terms. Aim to use varied sentence structures and show your understanding of the atmosphere during this time.

Word bank: treason · Parliament · conspirators · suspicious · cellar · flickering · ominous · revelation · uproar · chronicle

1. Setting the Scene: Describe the atmosphere in London on the evening of 4th November 1605. What could you see, hear, or feel in the air? (3 marks)

2. The Discovery: Explain why the authorities became suspicious of the cellars beneath the House of Lords. What did they find? (3 marks)

3. Personal Reaction: How did the people of London react when they heard the news about the failed plot? Justify why they might have felt this way. (4 marks)

4. Historical Significance: Explain why the King ordered bonfires to be lit that evening. What was the intended purpose of these celebrations? (3 marks)

5. Critical Thinking: Compare and contrast the safety precautions taken in 1605 with how we celebrate Bonfire Night today. What has changed? (4 marks)

6. Creative Extension: What might happen if the plot had actually succeeded? Write a short, speculative paragraph describing how the future of the monarchy could have been altered. (5 marks)

Extension challenge: Research the 'Gunpowder Treason Act' of 1606. Write a short argument explaining why this law was introduced and whether you think it was a fair way to ensure national security.