

The Great Fire of London with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand the causes and impact of the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Read the story below with Ellie. Use the word bank to help you. Fill in the boxes with your answers.

Ellie the Elephant loves history. She has a great memory for dates and facts. Ellie tells us that in September 1666, a huge fire started in London. It began late at night in a small bakery on Pudding Lane. Back then, houses in London were built very close together. They were made of wood and covered in tar. Because the summer had been very hot and dry, the buildings were like dry kindling. When the fire started, it spread very quickly. Strong winds pushed the fire from house to house. The flames grew tall and orange. Many people had to run to the River Thames to stay safe. They took their belongings with them on boats. The fire lasted for four days. It destroyed many shops, homes, and even the famous St Paul's Cathedral. After the fire, people decided to build new houses out of brick and stone instead of wood. This helped to make the city much safer for everyone who lived there.

Word bank: Pudding Lane · 1666 · bakery · wood · flames · London

1. Where did the Great Fire of London start? (1 mark) (1 mark)

2. In what year did the Great Fire of London happen? (1 mark) (1 mark)

3. Why did the fire spread so quickly between the houses? (2 marks) (2 marks)

4. How do you think the people of London felt when they saw the fire? (2 marks) (2 marks)

5. Do you think building houses out of brick was a good idea? Why? (2 marks) (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a house made of wood next to a house made of brick. Label which one you think is safer.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are a reporter in 1666. Write two sentences to tell people what is happening in London.