

Ellie's Historical Report: The Great Fire of London

Learning objective: To recount the events of the Great Fire of London, 1666, using historical vocabulary and chronological structure.

Use this scaffold to organise your report. Ellie the elephant is helping you remember the key facts! Ensure you explain not just what happened, but why the fire spread so rapidly across the city.

In the early hours of Sunday 2nd September 1666, a small spark inside a baker's shop on Pudding Lane ignited a blaze that would forever change the landscape of London.

Word bank: consequently · furthermore · devastating · combustible · timber-framed · catastrophic · nevertheless · subsequently · inhabitants · cathedral

1. The Beginning: Describe the initial conditions of London in 1666. Why were the houses so vulnerable to fire? Start your paragraph with: The city of London was particularly susceptible to fire because... (3 marks)

2. The Spread: Explain how the fire travelled across the city. Mention the weather and the materials used for building. Start your paragraph with: As the strong easterly winds blew, the flames... (3 marks)

3. The Human Impact: How did the people of London react to the emergency? Start your paragraph with: Panic gripped the inhabitants as they scrambled to save their belongings by... (2 marks)

4. The Turning Point: What methods were used to eventually stop the fire? Start your paragraph with: To prevent the inferno from consuming the entire city, officials ordered that... (3 marks)

5. The Aftermath: Compare London before and after the fire. Why was the rebuilding process so significant? Start your paragraph with: Following the destruction, the city underwent a dramatic transformation when... (3 marks)

6. Justification: Why do you think the fire is considered one of the most significant events in British history? Justify your opinion using evidence from the text. (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a reporter in 1666. Write a diary entry detailing one item you would choose to save from your home and explain why it is valuable to you. Then, compare and contrast the safety measures of 17th-century London with modern fire safety regulations. What might happen if the fire had occurred during a period of heavy rain instead of a dry, windy summer?