

Reporting on the Great Fire of London

Learning objective: To write a newspaper report about the events of the Great Fire of London in 1666, using historical facts and formal language.

Use the prompts below to structure your newspaper report. Remember to include the '5 Ws' (Who, What, Where, When, Why) in your opening paragraph and use historical vocabulary to describe the scene.

In the early hours of Sunday 2nd September 1666, a small fire began in a bakery on Pudding Lane, which would soon change the face of London forever.

Word bank: catastrophic · conflagration · fanned by the wind · tinder-dry · Pudding Lane · inevitably · devastation · furthermore · consequently · in the meantime

1. The Opening: Who was involved, where did it start, and what time of day was it? Start your report by saying: 'The city of London is in a state of shock after...' (2 marks)

2. The Cause and Spread: Why did the fire spread so quickly across the city? Consider the weather and the building materials. Start with: 'The flames spread rapidly because...' (2 marks)

3. The Human Impact: Describe how the citizens felt and what they had to do to escape. Start with: 'Terrified families were forced to...' (2 marks)

4. The Firefighting Efforts: What methods were used to try and stop the fire (e.g. firebreaks)? Start with: 'In a desperate attempt to halt the blaze, citizens...' (2 marks)

5. The Aftermath: What was the scene like once the fire was finally extinguished? Start with: 'As the smoke clears, the city lies in ruins, but...' (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are Ellie the elephant, who has a brilliant memory. Write a diary entry from the perspective of someone living in 1666, describing one item you would choose to save from your home before fleeing to the river.