

Bonfire Night: An Assessment of History and Descriptive Writing

Learning objective: To analyse the historical context of Bonfire Night and demonstrate advanced descriptive writing skills through the lens of sensory imagery.

Read the passage carefully and answer all questions in full sentences. Ensure your SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) is accurate. Max, our maths-loving monkey, suggests you keep an eye on your time allocation!

On the 5th of November, the night sky across the United Kingdom is illuminated by the vibrant hues of fireworks. This tradition, known as Bonfire Night, commemorates the failure of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. A group of conspirators, including Guy Fawkes, sought to undermine the government by placing gunpowder beneath the Houses of Parliament. Their plan was thwarted when the authorities were alerted, leading to the arrest of the plotters. Today, families gather around roaring bonfires to ward off the November chill, often burning an effigy atop the wood, while the rhythmic booming of fireworks creates a symphony of light and sound.

Word bank: treason · pyrotechnics · parliament · conspiracy · phosphorescence · cacophony · effigy · commemoration

1. Identify the primary historical event that Bonfire Night commemorates. Explain why this event is significant to British history. (2 marks)

2. Using the text as a guide, explain how the mood of a traditional Bonfire Night celebration is established through sensory details. (3 marks)

3. Compare and contrast the perspective of someone living in 1605 to a child celebrating in the present day. How might their feelings towards the 'night sky' differ? (4 marks)

4. What might happen if the Gunpowder Plot had been successful? Justify your answer using your understanding of historical consequence. (4 marks)

5. Find and copy one word from the passage that describes the bright colours of fireworks. Then, use that word in a new sentence of your own. (2 marks)

6. Write a descriptive paragraph (approx. 80-100 words) capturing the atmosphere of a bonfire display. You must include at least two examples of onomatopoeia and one metaphor. (5 marks)

7. If a box of 12 sparklers costs £4.50, calculate the total cost for 60 sparklers. Show your working out. (5 marks)

Draw: Sketch a scene of a bonfire display as viewed through the eyes of Nova the owl, ensuring you capture the contrast between the dark night sky and the bright light of the pyrotechnics.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Extension Task: Research a different historical commemoration celebrated in another country. Create a comparison table identifying the similarities and differences between that event and Bonfire Night. Explain which event you believe has a greater impact on national identity and why.