

Ellie's Historical Enquiry: The Great Fire of London

Learning objective: To analyse the causes, events, and long-term consequences of the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Step into the shoes of a historian! Use your knowledge of the events of 1666 to complete this enquiry sheet. Ellie the elephant has provided these sections to help you organise your research. Ensure you use specific historical vocabulary and justify your reasoning where requested.

Word bank: Pudding Lane · catastrophe · timber-framed · conflagration · Samuel Pepys · reconstruction · King Charles II · St Paul's Cathedral

1. Identify the primary cause of the fire and explain why the city's architecture made it difficult to contain. (3 marks)

2. Compare and contrast the living conditions in London before the fire with the building regulations introduced after the reconstruction. (4 marks)

3. Justify why primary sources, such as the diary of Samuel Pepys, are essential for historians studying this event. (3 marks)

4. Explain why the fire, although a tragedy, is often described by historians as a 'turning point' for London's urban development. (3 marks)

5. If you were a city planner in 1666, what is one specific safety measure you would have implemented immediately and why? (2 marks)

6. What might have happened if the wind had been blowing in a different direction on the night of 2nd September 1666? (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a reporter in 1666. Write a short, formal newspaper article (a broadside) describing the scene at the River Thames as citizens attempted to escape the flames. Include at least three historical facts and maintain a tone of urgent gravity.