

The History and Science of Bonfire Night

Light up your knowledge and explore the history behind the spark!

- In 1605, a group of individuals attempted to destroy the Houses of Parliament in London to influence religious and political change.
- The event is commemorated annually on the 5th of November, often involving the lighting of large bonfires and the display of fireworks.
- Fireworks rely on a rapid chemical reaction called combustion, where an oxidiser and a fuel react to create heat, light, and sound.
- Nova the owl observes that the 'crackle' sound of a firework is caused by the sudden expansion of hot gases moving faster than the speed of sound.
- Historical traditions, such as the burning of an effigy, have evolved over four centuries into a community celebration of safety and history.

Did you know? Did you know? The vibrant colours seen in fireworks are created by specific metal salts! For example, strontium salts produce a deep red, while copper compounds create a brilliant blue. It is a spectacular display of chemistry in the night sky.

Key vocabulary: Gunpowder Plot · Parliament · Pyrotechnics · Combustion · Oxidation · Tradition