Bonfire Night: A Sensory Recount

Learning objective: To write a vivid, atmospheric recount of a historical event, using expanded noun phrases, sensory language, and varied sentence structures.

Use the prompts below to structure your recount of a Bonfire Night celebration. Focus on 'showing, not telling' by using your five senses to describe the evening. Refer to the historical context of the Gunpowder Plot to add depth to your writing.

The crisp November air bit at my cheeks as the first firework whistled into the velvet sky, shattering the silence with a brilliant explosion of colour.

Word bank: cacophony · silhouette · phosphorescent · hissing · translucent · subsequently · nevertheless · consequently · amidst · vibrant

1. Introduction: Establish the setting and the historical significance. Begin with: 'As the bonfire crackled into life, I reflected upon the events of 1605 that inspired this tradition...' Explain why we continue to remember this night. (3 marks)

2. Sensory Details (Sight and Sound): Describe the display using powerful imagery. How could you describe the movement and noise of the fireworks? Use a metaphor or simile. (4 marks)

3. Sensory Details (Smell and Touch): Focus on the atmosphere around the bonfire. Use the word bank to describe the scent of the woodsmoke and the feeling of the temperature. (3 marks)

4. Reflective Conclusion: Summarise your thoughts on the event. Justify your answer: Is it important for us to celebrate historical events like this, or should they remain strictly in history books? (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the experience of a modern firework display with the atmosphere in London during the 17th century. What might happen if we stopped observing historical traditions? Write a persuasive paragraph justifying why we should or should not continue to celebrate Bonfire Night in schools.