Bonfire Night Traditions and History

Learning objective: To understand the historical origins of Bonfire Night and identify how and why it is celebrated in the UK today.

Read each question carefully. Use your historical knowledge to answer in full sentences. Remember to use capital letters for names and places.

On the 5th of November, many people across the United Kingdom celebrate Bonfire Night. This tradition began after the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, when a group of people tried to destroy the Houses of Parliament. Today, we remember this event by lighting bonfires and watching colourful firework displays. It is a time for communities to gather, but it is very important to follow the Firework Code to keep everyone safe.

Word bank: Guy Fawkes · Parliament · Gunpowder Plot · tradition · celebration · commemoration · fireworks · safety

1. Identify the historical event that happened in 1605. Why do you think people still remember this event over 400 years later? (2 marks)

2. Max the monkey is trying to work out the cost of a sparkler pack. If a pack costs £4.50 and he pays with a £10 note, how much change should he receive? Show your working. (2 marks)

3. Explain why it is essential to follow the 'Firework Code' during a celebration. List two safety rules you should follow. (2 marks)

4. Compare and contrast a bonfire celebration in the 1600s with one today. What is the most significant difference? (2 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Is it better for communities to hold one large, organised firework display or for many families to have small displays in their own gardens? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene of a safe bonfire night celebration. Include Nova the owl watching the fireworks from a tree, and ensure you include a 'safety zone' barrier near the bonfire.

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a historian living in the future. Write a short journal entry explaining why people in the 21st century chose to celebrate Bonfire Night. What might happen if we stopped celebrating historical events like this? Would we lose our connection to the past?