Bonfire Night: History and Reflection

Learning objective: To understand the historical origins of Bonfire Night, the significance of the Gunpowder Plot, and the importance of community safety and shared traditions.

Read each question carefully. Use your historical knowledge about the events of 1605 and the traditions surrounding the 5th of November to answer in full sentences.

In 1605, a group of plotters attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London to change the government of King James I. The plot was discovered before it could be carried out, and it has been marked annually ever since. Today, Bonfire Night is celebrated with fireworks, bonfires, and a focus on community safety.

Word bank: Gunpowder Plot · Guy Fawkes · Parliament · Treason · Safety · Tradition · Commemoration · James I

1. Explain why the events of 5th November 1605 are remembered today. What were the plotters hoping to achieve? (2 marks)

2. Max the monkey is helping his friends stay safe. List three safety rules that should be followed during a community fireworks display. (3 marks)

3. Nova the owl is researching the history of the date. Why was the discovery of the gunpowder considered a significant moment for King James I and the government? (2 marks)

4. Bonfire Night is a long-standing tradition. In your own words, why do you think it is important for a community to have shared celebrations or traditions? (2 marks)

5. If a pack of sparklers costs £2.50, calculate the total cost for 6 packs. If you pay with a £20 note, how much change should you receive? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing a community celebration of Bonfire Night. Include a bonfire, colorful fireworks in the night sky, and people standing at a safe distance.

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a reporter in 1605. Write a short diary entry (50–80 words) describing the atmosphere in London after the news of the discovery of the plot spread through the city.