

Bonfire Night

What Is Bonfire Night?

Bonfire Night remembers the failed attempt to kill the King of England and the important people of England as they gathered for the State Opening of Parliament on 5th November 1605.

Bonfires were lit that first night in a joyful celebration of the King being saved. As the years went by, the burning of straw dummies representing Guy Fawkes was a reminder that traitors would never successfully overthrow a king.

The Gunpowder Plot

After Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603, many Catholic people in England hoped that the new King, James I, would be more accepting of them. However, he was no more welcoming of Catholic people than the previous ruler which led some people to wish he was off the throne to allow a Catholic monarch to rule the country.

Act of terrorism:

Deliberate attempt to kill or injure many innocent people for religious or political gain.

A small group of Catholic men met to discuss what could be done and their leader, Robert Catesby, was keen to take violent action. Their plan was to blow up the Houses of Parliament, killing many important people who they did not agree with. This was an act of terrorism.

They planned to kill all of the leaders who were making life difficult for the Catholic people. They recruited a further eight men to help with the plot but as it took form, some of the group realised that many innocent people would be killed, including some who supported the Catholic people. This led some of the men to begin to have doubts about the whole plot.



The Letter

One of the Members of Parliament received an **anonymous** letter warning him not to go to the Houses of Parliament on 5th November. He showed it to the King, who believed that the phrase describing 'a terrible blow to parliament' hinted at the use of 'fire and gunpowder'. He immediately ordered his soldiers to search the entire building.

In the cellars, they discovered a man dressed in a cloak and hat, wearing boots

and spurs, carrying a lantern. A search of him revealed a pocket watch, several **slow matches** and **touchwood**. After more searching, the soldiers discovered 36 barrels of gunpowder hidden under piles of **faggots** and coal. The man was arrested and taken to the King early on the morning of 5th November.

Who Was Guy Fawkes?

The soldiers had found Guy Fawkes, who hated the Protestant King. He was born in York but moved to Spain where he fought against other countries and became highly skilled 'in matters of war'. He changed his name to the Italian version, Guido.



He joined the plotters with no hesitation – they were interested in his knowledge of war and gunpowder – and met with them for 18 months, planning what they were going to do. Guy Fawkes got 36 barrels of gunpowder, which they stored in the cellars of the House of Lords (part of the Houses of Parliament). His job was to look after the gunpowder and light the fuse at the chosen time.

Caught in the Act!

Following the arrest of Guy Fawkes, the rest of the gang fled and hid in different parts of the country. For two days, Guy Fawkes would not give his name or any of the names of anyone else involved. He finally confessed and gave the names of everyone involved and was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to a traitor's death along with the eight surviving plotters.

High treason:

The crime of betraying your country by attempting to kill or overthrow the country's king, queen or government.

The Plotter's Legacy

- 5th November – Bonfire Night remembers the foiled gunpowder plot through the lighting of bonfires and fireworks.
- Every year – before the State Opening of the Houses of Parliament – the cellars are checked.

Glossary

anonymous: Not identified by name.

faggots: Bundles of sticks bound together as fuel.

slow matches: The slow-burning cord or twine fuse used to ignite gunpowder.

touchwood: Readily flammable wood used as tinder.

Questions

1. Who was the King of England in 1605? Tick **one**.

- Elizabeth I
 James I
 Robert Catesby
 Guy Fawkes

2. Draw three lines and match the word to the correct definition.

faggots

The slow-burning cord or twine fuse used to ignite gunpowder.

slow matches

Bundles of sticks bound together as fuel.

touchwood

Readily flammable wood used as tinder.

3. What name did Guy Fawkes choose to use?

4. How was the King made aware of the plot?

5. **Find** and **copy** a word from 'The Letter' section which tells you that the letter was not signed.

6. In your own words, explain what is meant by 'high treason'.

7. Why did the soldiers search the cellars?

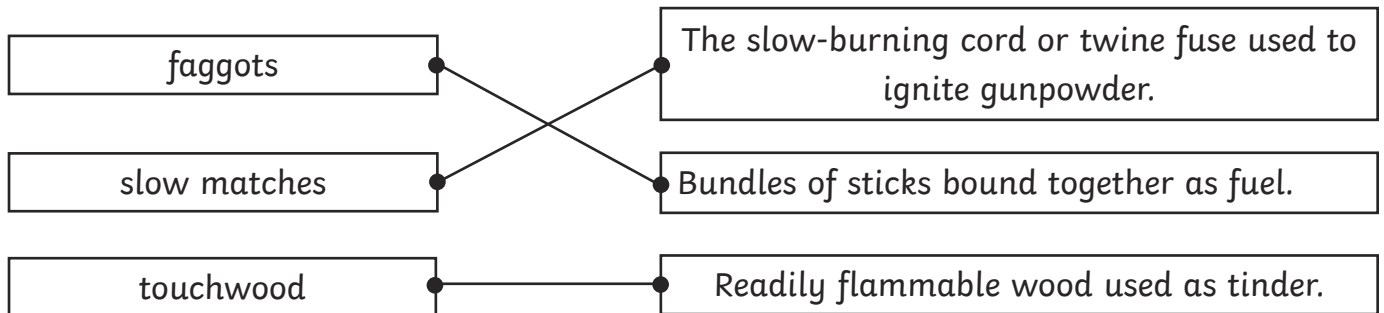
8. Why do you think that the cellars are still checked before the State Opening of the Houses of Parliament each year?

Answers

1. Who was the King of England in 1605? Tick **one**.

- Elizabeth I
 James I
 Robert Catesby
 Guy Fawkes

2. Draw three lines and match the word to the correct definition.



3. What name did Guy Fawkes choose to use?

Guido (Fawkes)

4. How was the King made aware of the plot?

An anonymous letter was sent to one of the Members of Parliament – he showed the letter to the King.

5. **Find** and **copy** a word from 'The Letter' section which tells you that the letter was not signed.

anonymous

6. In your own words, explain what is meant by 'high treason'.

Pupils' own responses, such as: High treason was when a person committed an act that is against the law and tries to overthrow the monarch or government.

7. Why did the soldiers search the cellars?

Pupils' own responses, such as: After being shown the letter, the King realised that there was a plot to use fire and gunpowder against parliament so he ordered his soldiers to search the entire building, which included the cellars.

8. Why do you think that the cellars are still checked before the State Opening of the Houses of Parliament each year?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think they are checked because it is a tradition to search the cellars just in case the same thing happens again.

Bonfire Night

What Is Bonfire Night?

Bonfire Night commemorates the failed attempt to kill the King of England and the important people of England as they gathered for the State Opening of Parliament on 5th November 1605.

Bonfires were lit that first night in a joyful celebration of the King being saved. As the years went by, the burning of straw dummies representing Guy Fawkes (one of the men involved in the plan) was a reminder that traitors would never successfully overthrow a king.

The Gunpowder Plot



After Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603, many Catholic people in England were hopeful that the new King, James I, would be more accepting of them, despite being a Protestant himself. However, he was no more welcoming of Catholic people than the previous ruler. This led some people to wish he was off the throne to allow a Catholic monarch to rule the country..

A group of five Catholic men met to discuss what could be done and their leader, Robert Catesby, was keen to take violent action; their plan was to blow up the Houses of Parliament, killing many important people who they did not agree with. This was an act of terrorism.

They planned to kill all of the leaders who were making life difficult for the Catholic people and recruited a further eight men to help with the plot. However, as the plot took form, some of the group realised that many innocent people would be killed, including some who supported the Catholic people. This led some of the men to begin to have doubts about the whole plot.

Act of terrorism:

Deliberate attempt to kill or injure many innocent people for religious or political gain.

The Letter

One of the Members of Parliament, Lord Monteagle, received an **anonymous** letter warning him not to go to the Houses of Parliament on 5th November. Because he did not know who had sent the letter, he showed it to the King, who believed that the phrase describing 'a terrible blow to parliament' hinted at the use of 'fire and gunpowder'; he immediately ordered his soldiers to search the entire building.

Upon entering the cellars, they discovered a man dressed in a cloak and hat, wearing boots and spurs, carrying a lantern. A search of him revealed a pocket watch, several **slow matches** and **touchwood**. Further searching disclosed 36 barrels of gunpowder hidden under piles of **faggots** and coal. The man was arrested and taken to the King early on the morning of 5th November.

High treason:

The crime of betraying your country by attempting to kill or overthrow the country's king, queen or government.

Who Was Guy Fawkes?



The soldiers had found Guy Fawkes, who hated the Protestant King. He was born in York but moved to Spain where he fought against other countries and became highly skilled 'in matters of war'. He changed his name to the Italian version, Guido.

When asked, he joined the plotters with no hesitation – they were interested in his knowledge of war and gunpowder – and met with them for 18 months, planning what they were going to do. Guy Fawkes obtained 36 barrels of gunpowder, which they stored in the cellars of the House of Lords (part of the Houses of Parliament). His job was to look after the gunpowder and light the fuse at the chosen time.

Caught in the Act!

Following the arrest of Guy Fawkes, the rest of the gang fled and hid in different parts of the country. Guy Fawkes refused to say who he was or give any of the names of anyone else involved. It took two days before Guy Fawkes finally confessed and gave the names of everyone involved. He was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to a traitor's death along with the eight surviving plotters.

The Plotter's Legacy

- Each year, on 5th November, the foiled gunpowder plot is remembered through the lighting of bonfires and fireworks, which are made using gunpowder.
- Every year before the State Opening of the Houses of Parliament, the tradition of checking the cellars of the building continues.

Glossary

anonymous: Not identified by name.

faggots: Bundles of sticks bound together as fuel.

slow matches: The slow-burning cord or twine fuse used to ignite gunpowder.

touchwood: Readily flammable wood used as tinder.



Questions

1. How long did Guy Fawkes spend planning with the plotters? Tick **one**.

- 36 months
 18 months
 5 months
 2 years

2. Draw three lines and match the person to their role.

Robert Catesby	He received the anonymous letter, which he showed to the King.
Guy Fawkes	He was the leader of the plotters.
Lord Monteaagle	He looked after the gunpowder and was to light the fuse at the correct time.

3. **Find** and **copy** a word and a phrase from 'The Letter' section which tells you that the letter was not signed.

- _____
- _____

4. Name **two** things about Guy Fawkes that made the plotters want him in the group.

- _____
- _____

5. Describe **two** things that happen today as a result of the gunpowder plot.

6. Why did someone send a letter to Lord Monteaagle? Why did they not sign it?

7. Why do you think that Guy Fawkes joined the plotters with no hesitation?
Give **two** reasons.

8. Why were bonfires lit that first night and why did people start to burn effigies in the following years?

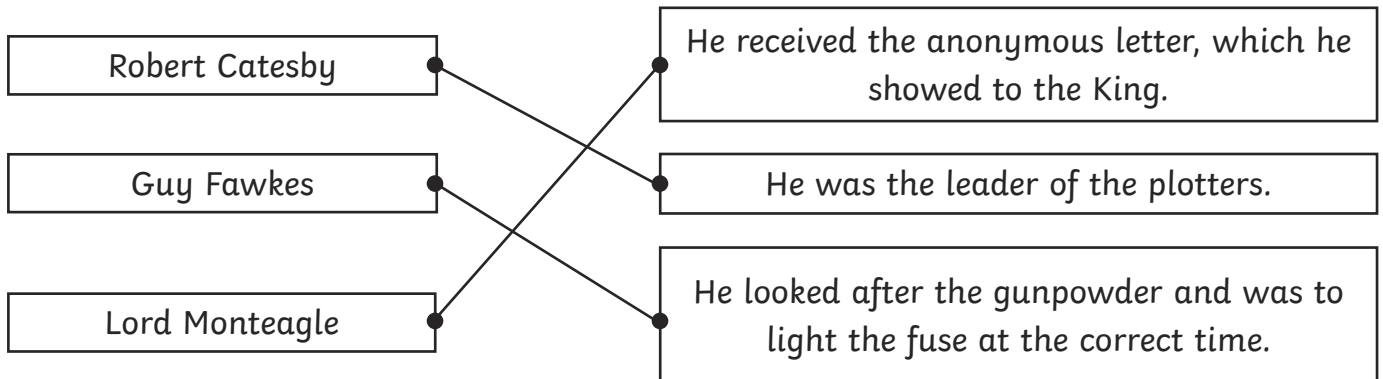
9. Explain in your own words why Bonfire Night is still celebrated today.

Answers

1. How long did Guy Fawkes spend planning with the plotters? Tick **one**.

- 36 months
 18 months
 5 months
 2 years

2. Draw three lines and match the person to their role.



3. **Find** and **copy** a word and a phrase from 'The Letter' section which tells you that the letter was not signed.

Anonymous; he did not know who had sent the letter.

4. Name **two** things about Guy Fawkes that made the plotters want him in the group.

Accept any of the following answers: He hated the Protestant King; he was highly skilled 'in matters of war'; his knowledge of war; his knowledge of gunpowder.

5. Describe **two** things that happen today as a result of the gunpowder plot.

Each year, on 5th November, the foiled gunpowder plot is remembered through the lighting of bonfires and fireworks. Every year before the State Opening of the Houses of Parliament, the tradition of checking the cellars of the building continues.

6. Why did someone send a letter to Lord Monteaagle? Why did they not sign it?

Pupils' own responses, such as: Someone sent a letter because they didn't want innocent people to be hurt; they did not sign it because they would have been arrested for their involvement in the plot.

7. Why do you think that Guy Fawkes joined the plotters with no hesitation?

Give **two** reasons.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Guy Fawkes joined the plotters with no hesitation because he hated the Protestant King and wanted to make life better for Catholic people living in England at the time.

8. Why were bonfires lit that first night and why did people start to burn effigies in the following years?

Pupils' own responses, such as: Bonfires were lit that first night as a celebration that the King was safe; people began to burn effigies to remind others that there was no point in becoming a traitor because you would not succeed.

9. Explain in your own words why Bonfire Night is still celebrated today.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Bonfire Night is still celebrated today because people enjoy seeing fireworks and remembering that the King of England was not killed.

Bonfire Night

Bonfire Night commemorates the failed attempt to kill the King of England and the important people of England as they gathered for the State Opening of Parliament on 5th November 1605. Bonfires were lit that first night in a joyful celebration of the King being saved but as the years went by, the burning of effigies (straw dummies) representing Guy Fawkes, who was one of the men involved in the plan, became a reminder that traitors would never successfully overthrow a king. Nowadays, many people still enjoy celebrating this evening by attending large firework displays.

The Gunpowder Plot

After Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603, the Catholic people in England were hopeful that although her successor, James I, was a Protestant, he would be more tolerant of the Catholic faith especially as he had a Catholic mother. However, he was no more accepting of Catholic people than the previous monarch which led some people to wish he was off the throne to allow a Catholic monarch to rule the country.



A group of five Catholic men met to discuss what could be done and their leader, Robert Catesby, was keen to take violent action; their plan was to blow up the Houses of Parliament, killing many important people who they did not agree with. This was an act of terrorism, which is a deliberate attempt to kill or injure many innocent people for religious or political gain.

The conspirators planned to kill the King, the heir to the throne and all of the Members of Parliament who were making life difficult for the Catholic people. They recruited a further eight men to help with the plot but as it took form, some of the group realised that many innocent people would be killed as well. Many people who supported the Catholic people would also be in the Houses of Parliament that day. This led some of the conspirators to begin to have doubts about the whole plot.

One of the Members of Parliament, Lord Monteagle, received an anonymous letter warning him not to go to the Houses of Parliament on 5th November; he showed the letter to the King, who believed that the phrase describing 'a terrible blow to parliament' hinted at the use of 'fire and gunpowder' and immediately ordered his soldiers to search the entire building. Upon entering the cellars, they discovered a suspicious man dressed in a cloak and hat, wearing boots and spurs, carrying a lantern; a search of this person revealed a pocket watch, several slow matches (the slow-burning cord or twine fuse used to ignite gunpowder) and touchwood (readily flammable wood used as tinder). Further searching of the cellar disclosed 36 barrels of gunpowder hidden under piles of faggots (bundles of sticks bound together as fuel) and coal. The man was arrested and taken to the King early on the morning of 5th November.

The soldiers had found Guy Fawkes, who hated the Protestant King. He was born in York but moved to Spain where he fought against other countries and became highly skilled 'in matters of war' and changed his name to the Italian version, Guido. When asked, he joined the plotters, who were interested in his knowledge of war and gunpowder, with no hesitation and met with them for 18 months, planning what they were going to do. Guy Fawkes obtained 20 barrels of gunpowder then a further 16, which they stored in the cellars of the House of Lords (part of the Houses of Parliament). His job was to look after the gunpowder and light the fuse at the chosen time, hence why he was waiting in the cellars.

Following the arrest of Guy Fawkes, the rest of the gang fled and hid in different parts of the country. Guy Fawkes refused to say who he was or give any of the names of anyone else involved; it took two days before Guy Fawkes finally confessed and gave the names of everyone involved. He was found guilty of high treason, which is the crime of betraying your country by attempting to kill or overthrow the country's king, queen or government, and was sentenced to a traitor's death along with the eight surviving plotters.



The Plotter's Legacy

Each year, on 5th November, the foiled gunpowder plot is remembered through the lighting of bonfires and fireworks, which are made using gunpowder.

Every year before the State Opening of the Houses of Parliament, which now usually happens in the summer, the tradition of checking the cellars of the building continues.



Questions

1. Bonfire Night **commemorates** the failed attempt to kill the King of England...What does **commemorates** mean? Tick **two**.

- remembers
- forgets
- celebrates
- commiserates

2. What was Guy Fawkes found with? Tick **one**.

- a pocket watch
- slow matches
- touchwood
- all of the above

3. Following the arrest of Guy Fawkes, the rest of the gang **fled**... What does **fled** mean?

4. Fill in the missing words in the following sentence.

A group of five _____ men met to discuss what could be done and their leader, _____, was keen to take violent action with his plan being to blow up the Houses of _____.

5. **Find** and **copy** a word from the text which shows that some of the plotters became uncertain of the plan.

6. Why did the Catholic people originally think that James I would be more tolerant of them?

7. Summarise what you have read in paragraph five in 40 words or fewer.

8. Why were the plotters found guilty of high treason?

9. Why are fireworks lit on 5th November?

10. How would things be different today if the plot had succeeded? Give evidence to support your answer.

Answers

1. Bonfire Night **commemorates** the failed attempt to kill the King of England...What does **commemorates** mean? Tick **two**.

- remembers**
- forgets
- celebrates**
- commiserates

2. What was Guy Fawkes found with? Tick **one**.

- a pocket watch
- slow matches
- touchwood
- all of the above**

3. Following the arrest of Guy Fawkes, the rest of the gang **fled**... What does **fled** mean?
ran away

4. Fill in the missing words in the following sentence.

A group of five **Catholic** men met to discuss what could be done and their leader, **Robert Catesby**, was keen to take violent action with his plan being to blow up the Houses of **Parliament**.

5. **Find** and **copy** a word from the text which shows that some of the plotters became uncertain of the plan.

doubts

6. Why did the Catholic people originally think that James I would be more tolerant of them?

Pupils' own responses, such as: Catholic people thought that James I would be more tolerant of them because his mother was Catholic.

7. Summarise what you have read in paragraph five in 40 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: An anonymous letter hinted at the use of fire and gunpowder so the King ordered his soldiers to search the whole building; they found a man (with items linked to fire-lighting on his person) and 36 hidden barrels of gunpowder.

8. Why were the plotters found guilty of high treason?

Pupils' own responses, such as: High treason is the crime of attempting to kill the country's king, which the plotters had been doing, so they were found guilty of this crime.

9. Why are fireworks lit on 5th November?

Pupils' own responses, such as: Fireworks are made with gunpowder so they are lit as a way of remembering the planned use of gunpowder to destroy the Houses of Parliament.

10. How would things be different today if the plot had succeeded? Give evidence to support your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: If the plot had succeeded, there would have been a different King or Queen of England, who might have been Catholic or more tolerant of Catholic people. However, the people involved in the plot would probably still have been discovered and punished so maybe things wouldn't actually be that different.