



JANET HARDY-GOULD

The Great Fire of London | Worksheet

Part 1: Reading texts

The Great Fire of London happens in 1666. What is the city like at this time?

- Around 500,000 people live in London in the 1660s. It is one of the biggest cities in the world. Only Paris and Constantinople (now Istanbul) are bigger.
- London is very crowded with narrow, dirty streets. Many of the houses are made of wood.
- At home, people use fires to cook with, and they use 1 candles for light.
- There is no 2 fire brigade to stop fires.
- There are a lot of rats and these animals spread illnesses like the plague. In the years 1665 and 1666, around 100,000 people die from the plague.



Samuel Pepys Factfile

Samuel Pepys is the most famous person from the time of the Great Fire of London. We know many things about the Great Fire from his diary.

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Name: | Samuel Pepys |
| Date of birth: | 1 December 1633 |
| Place of birth: | London |
| Jobs: | 3 Administrator, 4 MP |
| Famous for: | His diary – he writes about daily life in London for nearly ten years. The diary has more than a million words! |
| Interests: | Theatre, music, books and science |
| Character: | Curious, sociable, clever, lively |
| Favourite thing: | His collection of interesting and rare books – over 3,000 of them! |
| Died: | 30 November 1703, aged 70 |

Glossary

1 candle this burns and gives out light **2 fire brigade** if your house is on fire, you call the fire brigade **3 administrator** this person helps to organise things for the government **4 MP** Member of Parliament **5 plaque** a special sign on a wall **6 viewing platform** you can stand on this high place and look out across a city **7 exhibition** you can walk around this and learn information about history, science etc

Five things you can see today about the Great Fire of London

- 1** Visitors to London can go to **Pudding Lane**. The great Fire starts here in 1666 in a baker's shop and there is a **5** plaque to show the shop's location.
- 2** You can also visit **The Monument** near Pudding Lane. This tall column commemorates the Great Fire. It is 61 metres high and it has 311 steps to a **6** viewing platform over London. See it online at www.themonument.info
- 3** **The Museum of London** has an **7** exhibition about the Great Fire. There are old things in the museum from around the time of the fire. For example, there is an ancient fire bucket, and a huge painting of the fire.
- 4** One of the most important buildings to visit is **St Paul's Cathedral**. In 1666, the Great Fire destroys the old cathedral and a new one is built in the same place.
- 5** Away from London, go to **The Pepys Library** in Magdalene College, Cambridge and see Pepys' real diary. It is written in code, so it isn't easy to read!



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Part 2: Questions and tasks

1 Before reading

1 Match the words and the definitions

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| a candle | 1 full of people |
| b crowded | 2 not wide |
| c fire brigade | 3 an animal; it looks like a big mouse |
| d narrow | 4 if there is a fire, you call this |
| e the plague | 5 this comes from trees |
| f rat | 6 a very bad illness |
| g wood | 7 you burn this to make light |

2 Look at the words above. Answer the question.

What do you think London is like in 1666?
Think about: the houses, the streets and daily life.

2 Reading task

Read the first text about London in 1666. Complete the sentences with words or numbers from the text.

- The population of London is _____.
- Only two other cities in the world are _____ than London.
- The roads in the city aren't clean and they are very _____ too.
- People have _____ in their houses and they cook with these.
- People use _____ when it is dark.
- Around _____ Londoners die from the plague in 1665 and 1666

3 Reading task

Read the factfile about Pepys. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- Pepys is alive at the time of the Great Fire.
- Pepys has only one job in his lifetime.
- There are over a million words in Pepys' diary.
- The diary has information about daily life in London.
- Pepys is a quiet and shy man.
- Pepys dies before the age of seventy.

4 Reading task

Read *Five things you can see today about the Great Fire of London*. Answer the questions below with the names of these places: **St Paul's Cathedral The Museum of London The Monument Pudding Lane Magdalene College**

Where can you ...

- find Samuel Pepys' diary?
- see a beautiful view across London?
- find some old objects from the Great Fire?
- read information on a wall about the start of the Great Fire?
- find a 'new' building on the place of an old one?

5 Adjective search

Look back at the three texts and find these adjectives. Write them in the grid to reveal the name of the King of England at the time of the Great Fire.

- When a person is very interested in different things.
- Very large.
- Very old.
- Unusual and not common.
- When a person is full of life and is often excited about things.
- Not difficult.
- When a person likes meeting other people.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | |

6 Superlatives

Look at the examples of the superlative. Then complete the sentences with the superlatives of the adjectives in brackets.

London is **one of the biggest cities** in the world.

Pepys is **the most famous person** from the time of the Great Fire.

One of the most important buildings to visit is St Paul's Cathedral.

- Pepys' diary is _____ (interesting) book from that time.
- The Monument is _____ (good) place to look over London.
- The Great Fire starts in one of _____ (hot) weeks of the year.
- London is one of _____ (crowded) cities in the world.
- The Great Fire destroys _____ (old) houses in the city.
- It is _____ (bad) fire in the history of London.