



Artefact Collection: **Great Fire of London**





Artefacts Pack Collections: The Great Fire of London

Contents:

- Reproduction Leather Fire Helmet (39cm wide)
- Reproduction Leather Fire Bucket (24cm high)
- Cross-section of wooden water hosepipe
- A1 Wenceslas Hollars Map of the Great Fire of London
- 12 double sided timeline cards (15cm x 15cm)
- Plot, Plague and Fire Frieze (3 sections each 30cm x 100cm)
- Teachers Notes

Teachers Notes

Key words:

Firebreak (noun) – an obstacle to the spread of fire.

Fire hooks – long rod with hooked end used to pull houses down.

Water squirt – used to squirt water in an attempt to put out the fire.

Timber (noun) – wood.

Tinder (noun) – dry material such as wood, used for lighting fire.

Embers (noun) – a small piece of glowing wood.

Demolish (verb) – pull or knock down.

Escaping (verb) – run away from.

Key people:

King Charles II – The King of England who helped the fire fighters by passing buckets of water to try to put out the flames.

Sir Robert Bloodworth - Lord Mayor of London – believed by many to be responsible for the spread of the fire. When the fire started, Bloodworth was summoned to make a decision on how to contain it but he refused to go along with the recommended course of action.

Samuel Pepys – a British Member of Parliament who kept a diary of the events.

Thomas Farriner – A baker whose bakery on Pudding Lane was the source of the fire.

Sir Christopher Wren – An architect who designed St Paul's Cathedral. He also designed a monument to the great fire of London.



Key places:

Pudding Lane – The site of the bakers where the fire started.

Bakers – The King's bakers in Pudding lane where the heat from the ovens is thought to have sparked a fire in the wooden building.

River Thames – Separated two parts of London.

London Bridge – As the fire spread from house to house, street to street, it reached London Bridge. Damaged parts of the bridge had not been replaced so the gaps acted as firebreaks preventing the fire from spreading across the river.

St Paul's Cathedral – Some people went to St Paul's Cathedral to escape the fire because it is made of stone and would not burn. The Cathedral had wood on its roof which burned. Even the lead roof melted because the fire was so hot.

Teaching activities

Role play

Roles:

Thomas Farriner (baker)

Sir Robert Bloodworth (Mayor)

Firefighters

Samuel Pepys

King Charles II

Props:

Large pieces of card or fans

Red or orange blanket or printed images of flames

Fire helmet

Leather bucket

Map of London

- Pupils could be given different roles as the story of the Great Fire of London is told. Begin with Thomas Farriner, the baker, who bakes his buns, thinks he has put out his oven and goes to bed early on Sunday morning, 2nd September. The bakery catches fire and Thomas escapes through an upstairs window. As the fire spreads, pupils can be shown pictures of the wooden houses that are close together allowing the fire to spread. Sir Robert Bloodworth, Lord Mayor of London is informed of the fire but thinks it is nothing to be concerned about. Some big pieces of card could be used to fan the flames whilst describing how the wind blew flames across streets, burning buildings.
- On Monday morning, fire posts are set up to tackle the fire. Pupils could act as firefighters, wearing the helmet, using the bucket and the action of a water squirt to attempt to put out the fires. Pupils could make a human chain to pass the bucket of water along from the river to put the fire out.



- Explain to pupils how the fire reached the Thames river but damage to London bridge meant that the fire could not cross the river. This could be shown on the map. The Mayor (Sir Robert Bloodworth) can then instruct the firefighters to use fire hooks to pull down buildings to create fire breaks (pupils can act this out).
- Samuel Pepys can be given the role of writing events in his diary until he is scared for his life. He hides his belongings (wine and cheese) and escapes to somewhere safe. The fire then spreads towards the Tower of London.
- On Tuesday morning, Robert Bloodworth flees London to be safe. The pupils can be shown on the map how the fire spread to destroy St Paul's cathedral where people had escaped to, thinking they were safe as it was made of stone.
- Samuel Pepys tells King Charles that the Lord Mayor has fled London. King Charles then comes to help the firefighters. He orders them to blow up houses to create more firebreaks. Late on Tuesday evening, the wind changes direction (fan flames from the other side) and explain to pupils how the fire was stopped from spreading any further. By Wednesday evening, Samuel Pepys was able to walk through the embers of London. By early Thursday morning, the last flames were put out.

Alternative / additional teaching ideas

Time line (literacy/ history activity)

Pupils can sort the cards along the timeline, ordering the events to re-tell the story. The cards are in two sets to differentiate for students by ability with more/less information.

Interview a firefighter (speaking and listening activity)

Pupils could use the fire helmet and bucket to take the role of the firefighters. The rest of the pupils could interview the firefighters, generating questions to ask the firefighters (what was the fire like? What were the streets like? Who was there? Why did the fire spread / start? Where was the fire? How did they put out the fire? Etc). This could be a class or group activity where technology could be used to film the students as they carry out the interview.

Freeze frame (drama activity)

Small groups of pupils are given the props of fire helmet and bucket to create a freeze frame of a scene from the Great Fire of London. The rest of the class then describe what the scene shows.

Fire prevention (cross curricular activity)

Pupils could write a list /draw a poster/act out the things that were put in place to try to stop the fire. Use of the helmet, bucket, pictures of water squirts and fire hooks can all act as prompts.

Diary entry (writing activity)

Pupils could write their own version of Samuel Pepys diary. When the fire had started, what did it smell like? Feel like? Sound like? Taste like?

Make a model of the streets of London (design technology activity)

Pupils can use cardboard boxes to design and make houses of London before they were destroyed by the fire. Straw could be used for roofing material and pupils can consider how close together they put their houses to make streets. What changes do they think were made to the streets when they were rebuilt? Why?



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