

The Great Fire of London (1666)

1 London in the 17th century

Match the sentence parts to find out about some of London's history.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. During the 16th and 17th century, the population of London | a) so the narrow streets were very dirty. |
| 2. Many villages near London | b) grew from about 60,000 to about 500,000 people. |
| 3. There were no toilets, | c) broke out in London and killed about a quarter of the people. |
| 4. In 1665 the Great Plague | d) became parts of London. |

2 Facts about the fire

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Er3GKw8Z3R4>

a) Watch the video about the Great Fire of London. Tick ✓ the correct boxes.

	true	false
1. The fire started in a bakery in Pudding Lane on 2nd September 1666.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. At that time, most houses were made of stone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The fire burnt for four days.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. St Paul's Cathedral was destroyed in the fire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The Lord Mayor had a great idea to stop the fire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. They used water to stop the fire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b) Correct the false sentences from above.

population [ˌpɒpjəˈleɪʃn] Bevölkerung ○ the Great Plague [ðə ˌɡreɪt ˈpleɪɡ] die Große Pest ○ bakery [ˈbeɪkri] Bäckerei ○ despite [dɪˈspaɪt] trotz ○ to spread [sprɛd] sich ausbreiten ○ to be destroyed [biː dɪˈstrɔɪd] zerstört sein ○ Lord Mayor [ˌlɔːd ˈmeɪə] Oberbürgermeister/-in ○ to explode sth [ɪkˈspləʊd] etw. sprengen ○ livery company [ˈlɪvri ˌkʌmpəni] Zunft

3 Myths about the fire

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRdxK7T7pxs>

Watch the video. Look at the bottom of this page for help with some of the words. Complete the sentences on the left. Then find the truth for each myth and write down one or more letters on the right.

Myths	Truth
1. The fire spread so fast because _____	_____
2. The Great Fire of London put an end to _____	_____
3. Fewer than ten people _____	_____
A. The Great Plague was already on the wane. Also, people were suffering from this illness in a much wider area than London.	
B. In Pudding Lane there were warehouses full of things that burnt very quickly.	
C. Many poor people weren't recorded as Londoners so they weren't seen as missing.	
D. There was a strong wind.	
E. Lots of people lost their homes. For them it was hard to survive the winter. They didn't die in the fire but as a result of it.	
F. The fire started at night, when people were sleeping.	
G. Many people's bodies were burnt and couldn't be found.	

4 Find out more

 <http://www.fireoflondon.org.uk/game>

Go to the website and play the game. Take notes and find the answers to these questions:

- How can we know today what exactly happened during the Great Fire of London?
- What did people do to try and stop the fire?
- How did people try to get away from the fire?
- Why did the fire stop in the end?

5 After the fire

You are a reporter in the year 1666 and the fire has just ended. Choose one of these tasks.

- Write a newspaper article about the Great Fire of London.
- Write an interview with an eyewitness of the fire: First, collect the questions, then find the answers together with your partner.

to suffer from an illness [ˌsʌfə frɒm ən ˈɪlnəs] an einer Krankheit
leiden ○ warehouse [ˈweəhaʊs] Lagerhaus ○ thatch [θætʃ]
Stroh-/Reet(dach) ○ tar [tɑː] Teer ○ rope [rəʊp] Seil ○ brandy
[ˈbrændi] Weinbrand ○ to be on the wane [ˌbiː ɒn ðə ˈweɪn] im
Abnehmen sein; nachlassen ○ to incinerate sb [ɪnˈsɪnəreɪt] jmdn.
verbrennen

Tip

Remember to answer these questions:
What? Who? When? Where? How? Why?

Useful phrases

What happened when ... ? |
What happened next? |
What did you do / see / hear / smell ... ? |
Can you explain why ... ? |
First ... | Later ... |
I was shocked / scared ... |
I couldn't believe ... | We tried to ...