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

2. Many villages near London

3. There were no toilets,

4. In 1665 the Great Plague

a) so the narrow streets were very dirty.

b) grew from about 60,000 to about 500,000 people.

c) broke out in London and killed about a quarter of the people.

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.	✔	
2. At that time, most houses were made of stone.		✔
3. The fire burnt for four days.	✔	
4. St Paul's Cathedral was destroyed in the fire.	✔	
5. The Lord Mayor had a great idea to stop the fire.		✔
6. They used water to stop the fire.		✔

b) *Correct the false sentences from above.*

2. Most houses were made of wood.

5. He didn't know what to do. / King Charles II sent the Duke of York with the Army.

6. They exploded buildings.

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

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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 **the houses were covered in thatch.**   **B, D, F**

2. The Great Fire of London put an end to **the Great Plague.**   **A**

3. Fewer than ten people **died during the Great Fire of London.**   **C, E, G**

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. It was hard for people who lost their homes to survive the winter. Many of them died. 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:

a) How can we know today what exactly happened during the Great Fire of London?
b) What did people do to try and stop the fire?
c) How did people try to get away from the fire?
d) 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.

a) *Write a newspaper article about the Great Fire of London.*

b) *Write an interview with an eyewitness of the fire: First, collect the questions, then find the answers together with your partner.*

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 …

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

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