

# Remember, remember the fifth of November...

## Why do we celebrate Bonfire Night?

Every year, on 5<sup>th</sup> November, we light bonfires and set off fireworks to remember the **Gunpowder Plot** of 1605, when a group of men tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London. Some people burn a 'guy' – a man made out of old clothes and stuffed with paper. He is named after Guy Fawkes who was one of the men who took part in the plot.

The plotters were unhappy about the way people who belonged to the Catholic Church were being treated. So,

they decided to blow up the Houses of Parliament and kill everyone inside, including the King. But one of the plotters sent a warning letter to his friend, Lord Monteaagle. Lord Monteaagle warned the Chief Minister who ordered some soldiers to search the building. They caught Guy Fawkes in the cellar with 36 barrels of gunpowder.

All the men who took part in the plot were caught. Some were executed. Others were killed while trying to escape.

Happy that the King's life had been saved, bonfires were lit all over the country. People still celebrate in this way every Bonfire Night.



The Japanese word for firework is *hanabi*, which means 'fire-flower'. Firework shapes are often named after flowers or trees – for example, *chrysanthemum*, *dahlia*, *willow* and *palm*.

The very first fireworks were used in China. People believed they would scare away bad spirits.

## From bone fires to bonfires

Some people think that the word **bonfire** comes from 'bone-fire'. In medieval times, people sometimes burned human and animal bones to scare off dragons! Others say that the word **bonfire** comes from the Scottish word **bane**, which means 'beacon' or 'signal'.



## Firework feasts

On Bonfire Night, people like to eat:

**Parkin** (a cake made with oatmeal and black treacle)

**Treacle toffee**

**Baked toffee apples**

**Toasted marshmallows**

**Baked potatoes**



Did you know? The sparks made by burning sparklers are flakes of heated metals, such as aluminium, iron, zinc or steel.

## How to KEEP SAFE on Bonfire Night

Go to an organised fireworks display, stay with a grown-up, and follow these rules:

**KEEP well back** from bonfires and fireworks and NEVER, EVER go back to a firework that has already been lit;

**KEEP sparklers at arm's length and wear gloves** - always stand still when you are waving a sparkler and don't wave them towards anyone else;

**KEEP a bucket of water nearby** and put used sparklers straight into the water – even when they have gone out they can still be hot enough to burn you;

**KEEP pets indoors** – the loud bangs can frighten them.

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