

Home Learning Branches

The Great Fire of London by Emma Adams and James Weston Lewis

Spelling Investigations

Explain to children that sometimes the /s/ sound can be spelt with a 'c'. Can you find these words in Samuel Pepys' diary? Can you notice any patterns?

I had no choice. It was a race to bury each piece of cheese and get out of this city and find a space in the countryside! It was a sacrifice I had to make. I could feel the surface of my face burning from the heat – all I fancied was some ice to cool down. I needed to escape this emergency.

Wider Curriculum Links

History (Y2: Events beyond living memory that are significant nationally or globally): The Great Fire of London

Design and Technology (KS1): select from and use a wide range of materials

Discussion Questions

How was London in 1666 different to London now? How is it the same?

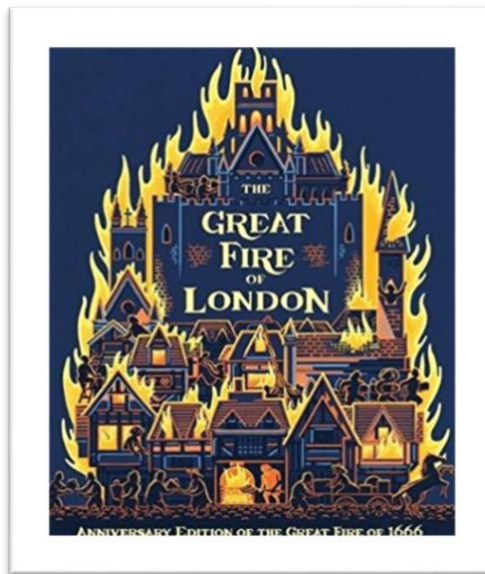
What led to the fire starting?

Why was London so unsafe during these times?

Why is Samuel Pepys' diary so important?

How did the Londoners try to slow down the fire?

How did London change after the Great Fire?



Want to find out more? Why not download our full Planning Sequence:

<https://literarycurriculum.co.uk/planning-sequences/sequence/the-great-fire-of-london/>

Key Vocabulary

How much do you know about the Great Fire of London? Can you find the meanings of new words?

pitch
tar
flammable
population
plague
straw
cobbled
thatched
administrator
equipment
horse-drawn
brigades

Writing Opportunities

1. Show children different pictures of contemporary London and London in 1666. How is old London different to modern London? See link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPY-hr-8-M0>
2. Children use the conjunctions *when*, *before*, *because* and *if* to create warning posters to the citizens of old London about how to be safe from fire.
3. After you have read the section about Tom Farriner, children write questions about what they would ask him in an interview.
4. Children write in role as the cat Samuel Pepys saw being pulled from a building. See link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weEveQ4nz4g>
5. Children describe the pictures from the book.
6. Children finish by writing a report of the Great Fire of London. What facts can you remember? Can you write this report in your own words?

Further Reading

The Great Fire of London Activity Book by Sally Jane Morgan

Vlad and the Great Fire of London by Kate Cunningham

Rosie Revere, Engineer by Andrea Beatty and David Roberts

The Dragon Machine by Helen Ward

The Tin Forest by Helen Ward

A Walk in London by Salvatore Robbino

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Helpful Starting Points

- 1 Read the first section of the book, *The City of London* (pages 4-7) Explain that 1666 was over 350 years ago. Work with children to generate sentences on strips to describe London now and London in 1666. Use different colours for the past and present. See video link above.

Children use the words *but/and* to join sentences together – see opposite.



In 1666 buildings were made of wood, but now they are made of concrete, glass and other materials.

- 2 Read to the end of page 9. What facts do we know about London in the summer of 1666? Look at the text from pages 8 and 9 and highlight the important words and phrases.

How could the citizens of old London have kept safe? What advice would you have given them? Could we use the words *when, before, because* and *if* to give them advice? Write in role as the King, giving advice to Londoners.



Citizens of London

Blow out candles when you leave the room. Before bed, make sure there is no hot ash lying around. If you are cooking, tidy up properly.

- 3 **Talk to the Hand**



Retell what has happened so far in the book. Tell children that Thomas Farriner is coming to visit them. What questions would they like to ask him about what happened? Remind children that questions need a question mark at the end to show that it is a question.

Use Talk to the Hand to generate some questions to ask. Put these questions on post-its to display. *Why were you careless that night? Who was meant to check the fire?*

- 4 Read from page 16 to 21 Ask children what they know about Samuel Pepys from the book? What is a diary? Introduce them to the cat that Pepys saw pulled from a building. Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weEveQ4nz4g>

What words does the cat use to describe the fire? Display and read again, ask the children to write down any words that describe what the fire was like as you read. *What a terrible day this has been! What am I going to do now? I was curled up, sleeping peacefully, in the cosy kitchen when I was rudely awakened by a crackling, spitting noise. At first, I thought it was Thomas Farriner's maid burning some juicy sausages for breakfast, she is not a very good cook. But then I realized that it was still dark outside.*



- 5 Read to page 29. Use the below images to sequence the events. Can children describe what is happening in each picture?



Root word	ly	y	est	er
big				
scare				
hot				
strong				
bright				

Give the children a set of words that can have suffixes added to make them appropriate adjectives

Use the adjectives to describe the pictures.

- 6 Read the rest of the book to the children. What facts do we now know about the Great Fire of London?

Write a fact for the children and discuss what makes it a fact, e.g.:

The Great Fire of London spread quickly because the houses were made of wood.

Children record facts on a grid. Remind them to write in full sentences with full stops and capital letters. Offer some images from the book as prompts and for them to illustrate their fact sheet.

What I know about The Great Fire of London