

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER...

The largest firework weighed over half a ton and was set off at a festival in Japan in 1988.

The fourth of November is known as 'mischief night' in some parts of the country, when children traditionally play tricks on their neighbours.

The first fireworks were used in China, in the 12th century and were believed to scare away bad spirits.

Quick-FIRE questions

- Why do sparklers make sparks when you light them?**
The sparks come from flakes of heated metals, such as aluminium, iron, zinc or steel.
- Why do we see a path of light left behind when we wave a sparkler?**
The light from the sparkler is so bright it sets off nerve cells at the back of our eyes, which stay triggered for a short time after the sparkler has moved.
- Why do fireworks whistle?**
Carbon dioxide gas from the burning explosive is forced through a hole in the firework shell, making a whistling sound.
- The Japanese word for firework is hanabi, which means 'fire-flower'. Firework shapes are often named after flowers or trees - such as peony, chrysanthemum, dahlia, willow and palm.**
- Fireworks were first used in Britain at the wedding of Henry VII in 1486.**

Gunpowder, treason and plot!

On Bonfire Night on 5th November, we light bonfires, fireworks fly through the air and often a man or 'guy', made out of old clothes and stuffed with paper, is burned on top of the bonfire. These celebrations are a way of remembering the events of the **Gunpowder Plot** of 1605, where a group of 13 men tried to blow up the King, James I, and the Houses of Parliament in London. Guy Fawkes was one of the men who took part in the plot.

barrels of gunpowder in a cellar under the House of Lords and planned to light them, causing an explosion that would blow up the buildings, the King and everyone in parliament. But some of the plotters were worried that innocent people would be killed and one of them sent an anonymous letter to his friend, Lord Monteagle, warning him to stay away on the day that the explosion was planned. Lord Monteagle warned the Chief Minister who sent soldiers to search the building. They caught Guy Fawkes in the cellar with the gunpowder.

The plotters, led by Robert Catesby, were protesting at the cruel treatment of people who were members of the Catholic Church by the King and the Government. They hid 36

All the men who took part in the plot were caught, and were either executed or killed trying to escape. Bonfires were set alight around the country to celebrate the King's safety and the tradition is still going to this day.



Bonfire bonanza

Some people believe that the word *bonfire* comes from 'bone-fire'. In medieval times, people are said to have lit fires containing human or animal bones to scare off dragons!

Others believe that the word *bonfire* may come from the Scottish word *bane*, which means 'beacon' or 'signal'. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, a chain of huge bonfires was lit, all the way from the south coast to London, to warn people of the arrival of the Spanish Armada - a fleet of ships sent by the King of Spain to attack Britain.



Firework feasts

Lots of different types of food are eaten on 5th November. They include:

Parkin: a cake made with oatmeal and black treacle;

Baked toffee apples: an apple on a stick, covered

Toasted marshmallows: heated by the bonfire;

Treacle toffee: made with black treacle, sugar and golden syrup;



in caramel or toffee;

Baked potatoes: wrapped in foil and cooked in the embers of the bonfire.



How to KEEP SAFE on Bonfire Night

Go to a public fireworks display if you can, or one organised by a responsible adult, and follow these rules:

KEEP well back from bonfires and areas where fireworks have been set up 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 to place finished sparklers in - even when they have gone out, the metal can still be hot enough to burn you;

KEEP fireworks in a metal box, well away from any flames;

KEEP pets indoors - the loud bangs can frighten them.

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