

Bonfire Night Teaching notes

Aims

- To present vocabulary related to Bonfire Night
- To stimulate students' interest in festivals in English-speaking countries

Background

Bonfire Night, celebrated on 5th November in the UK, commemorates the attempt by Guy Fawkes to blow up the Houses of Parliament on 5th November 1605.

At that time, the Church of England persecuted non-Protestants. Fawkes led a group of Catholic extremists who planned to kill King James I and the government, but before he could blow up the Houses of Parliament, Fawkes was caught and executed. This is why people make 'guys' – models of Guy Fawkes made of old clothes which they burn on the bonfire.

Vocabulary and reading

Exercise 1

- Tell students they are going to read about Bonfire Night and pre-teach the words *bonfire*, *fireworks* and *sparklers*.
- Ask students when they usually have or see these.
- Pre-teach the words *try (tried)*, *blow up*, *discover*, *kill*, *burn*.
- Ask students to answer the question.

Answer

People in the UK celebrate Bonfire Night to remember when Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London.

Exercise 2

- Ask students to read the text again and to decide if the sentences are true or false.
- Ask them to correct the false sentences.

Answers

- 1 F (Claire always goes to a bonfire.)
- 2 F (Claire never has fireworks at home.)
- 3 T
- 4 F (She doesn't like toffee apples / them.)
- 5 T

Exercise 3

- Ask students to complete the fact file.

Answers

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------|
| 1 5 th November | 5 | make a guy |
| 2 go to a bonfire | 6 | toffee apples |
| 3 watch fireworks | 7 | baked potatoes |
| 4 have sparklers | 8 | hot dogs |

Project: A web quiz

What do you need?

- Paper and coloured pens or pencils.

Class organization

- For this project, students work in groups of four.

Exercise 1

- Ask students to read the quiz and to answer the questions about the dates.

Answers

13th June – St Anthony's Day in Portugal
5th November – Bonfire Night in the UK
24th June – St John's Day in Portugal

Exercise 2

- Ask students to complete the quiz in pairs.

Answers

1 b 2 c 3 a 4 b

Exercise 3

- Divide the class into groups of four. Ask students to choose a festival of fire that they know about.

Exercise 4

- Ask students to answer the questions about their festival. This will help them to plan their quiz.

Example answers

St Anthony's Day: go to street parties (e.g. Alfama) with fireworks and bonfires; dance, sing, jump over the bonfires, have marching competitions; barbecued sardines

St John's Day: go to street parties; jump over bonfires, see fireworks with music, set off paper balloons, hit people on the head with plastic hammers or leeks; barbecued sardines and meat

Exercise 5

- Students create their web quiz in groups.



Bonfire Night

Vocabulary and reading

1 Read Claire's website about Bonfire Night. Why do people celebrate Bonfire Night?

Bonfire Night

Hello! I'm Claire. Welcome to my website about Bonfire Night.

In Britain, we celebrate Bonfire Night on 5th November. I always go to a bonfire with my family. We watch the fireworks there – we never have them at home because they can be dangerous. Well, except sparklers – we usually have them. I sometimes make a guy with my friends. We use old clothes. On Bonfire Night, we often eat hot dogs and baked potatoes. Toffee apples are traditional too, but I don't like them.

Why do we celebrate Bonfire Night? Well, on 5th November 1605, Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London. He wanted to kill the king and everyone in the government, but King James I's men discovered his plan and killed him. On Bonfire Night we make a 'guy' – a model of Guy Fawkes – and burn it on the bonfire!



2 Read the website again. Are the sentences T (true) or F (false)? Correct the false sentences.

Bonfire Night is on 5th December.

F – Bonfire Night is on 5th November.

- 1 Claire never goes to a bonfire.

- 2 Claire always has fireworks at home.

- 3 She sometimes makes a guy.

- 4 She loves toffee apples.

- 5 Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605.

3 Complete the fact file.

Why?

Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605.

When?

(1) _____

Activities

(2) go to a b _____

(3) watch f _____

(4) have s _____

(5) make a g _____

Food

(6) t _____ a _____

(7) b _____ p _____

(8) h _____ d _____

Bonfire Night

Project: A web quiz

1 Look at the quiz from Claire's website. What is special about these dates?

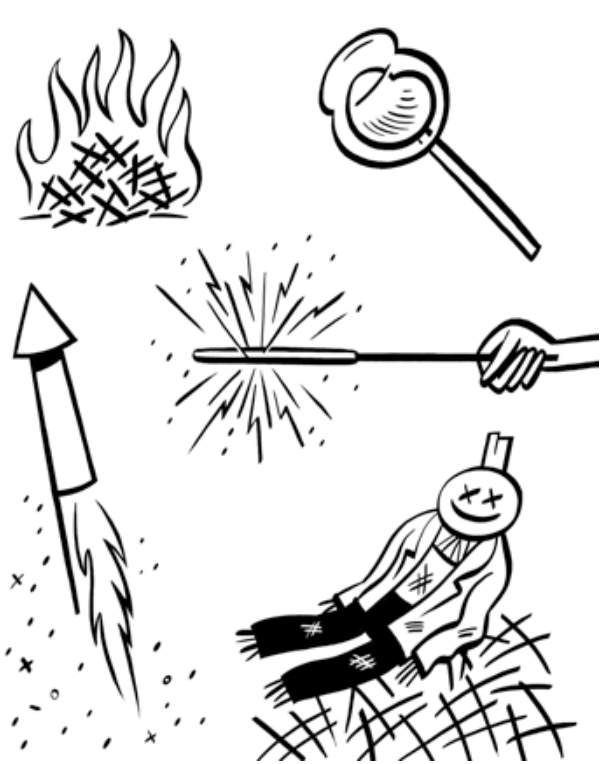
13th June 5th November 24th June

2 Answer the questions in the Bonfire Night quiz. What is your score?

Bonfire Night quiz

- When is Bonfire Night?
a 13th June ☐
b 5th November ☐
c 24th June ☐
- What do people do?
a Dance ☐
b Wear costumes ☐
c Watch fireworks ☐
- Where do people usually go?
a To a bonfire party ☐
b To London ☐
c To the beach ☐
- What food is traditional?
a Fish and chips ☐
b Hot dogs ☐
c Curry and rice ☐

Your score: _____



3 Work in groups. You are going to design a quiz for the website about a festival of fire in your country. Choose a festival.

Festival of fire

Our festival is _____

4 Answer the questions about your festival.

- When is it?
- Where do people usually go?
- What do people do?
- What is the traditional food?

5 Design and decorate your web quiz.

Your Turn



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