

The Great Fire of London

A fire began in a bakery on Pudding Lane in London on Sunday 2nd September 1666. The baker had forgotten to put out the fire he had used to bake his bread.

There were no firefighters in 1666 so people had to try to put the fire out with water from the River Thames.



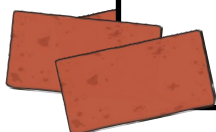
This didn't work very well so people began to run from the fire. The wind had died down by Wednesday and the people used water to fight the fire.



Did You Know...?

The buildings in London were all made of wood in 1666. They were built very close together.

Most of London had burnt down and had to be rebuilt. The new buildings were made out of brick.



Disclaimer: We hope you find the information and resources on our website useful. Please be aware that aspects of an individual's life may be controversial to some. Due to this, we highly recommend that you carefully research the individual before teaching about them to learners. If your learners do independent research about an individual, we advise using only pre-selected, appropriate sources of information and websites appropriate to their age.

Questions

1. When did the Great Fire of London begin? Tick one.

Monday 2nd June 1666

Sunday 2nd September 1666

Saturday 2nd August 1666

2. Where did the Great Fire of London begin? Tick one.

a house on Pudding Lane

a shop on Pudding Lane

a bakery on Pudding Lane

3. What did the baker forget to do? Tick one.

put out the fire he had used to bake his bread

sweep up the coal

turn the lights off

4. Which material were the buildings made out of in London in 1666?

Tick one.

bricks

wood

steel

5. What did people use to put the fires out? Tick one.

water from the tap

water from a pond

water from the River Thames

The Great Fire of London

A fire started in the bakery on Pudding Lane in the early hours of Sunday 2nd September 1666. Thomas Farriner had forgotten to put out the fire that he had made to bake his bread. It was not long until the bakery was alight.



The buildings in London at that time were made of wood and were built very close together. This meant the fire could easily spread from one building to the next.

There were no firefighters in 1666 so the people in the city had to fight the fire themselves. They used leather buckets filled with water from the River Thames but this didn't work very well.

They started pulling down the houses on Sunday evening to stop the fire from spreading. It was spreading fast because of the strong wind. It was not long until people were running from the fire. They took their belonging onto boats on the river.

The fire destroyed St Paul's Cathedral on Tuesday.

The wind wasn't as strong by Wednesday so people could fight the fire with buckets of water. This helped stop it from spreading further and it was soon put out completely. Much of London had been destroyed by the fire and had to be rebuilt. The new buildings were made out of brick.

Did You Know...?

A man named Samuel Pepys wrote about the Great Fire in his diaries. This is how we know so much about the event.



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Questions

1. What was the name of the baker on Pudding Lane? Tick one.

Thomas Pudding

Thomas Lane

Thomas Farriner

2. Who wrote about the fire in his diaries? Tick one.

the Lord Mayor of London

Samuel Pepys

Thomas Farriner

3. Number the statements below from 1-4 to show the order in which they happened in the text. The first one has been done for you.

This meant the fire could easily spread from one building to the next.

It was not long until people were running from the fire.

They used leather buckets filled with water from the River Thames.

1 It was not long until the bakery was alight.

4. Find and copy one word which means 'built again'.

5. Why did the people in the city have to fight the fire?

The Great Fire of London

A fire started in the bakery on Pudding Lane in the early hours of Sunday 2nd September 1666. The baker was named Thomas Farriner and he had forgotten to put out the fire he had used to bake his bread.

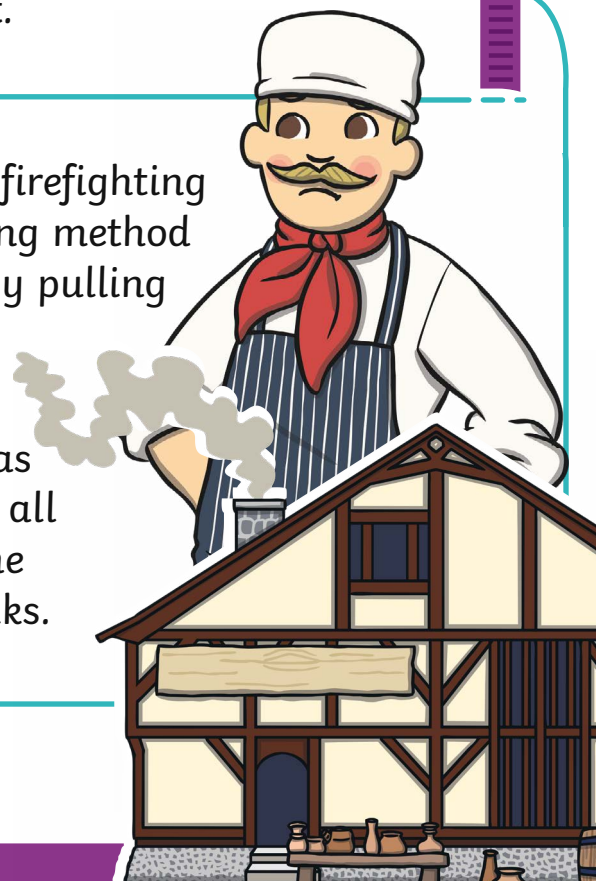
The fire soon got out of control and it was not long until the bakery was alight. Then, the fire quickly spread to nearby buildings.



London in 1666 was very different from how it is today. It had been a long, hot summer and the buildings were very dry. They were made of wood and were built closely together. This led to the fire easily spreading from one building to the next.

There was no formal fire service in 1666 and firefighting methods were very basic. The main firefighting method was to create 'firebreaks'. These were made by pulling down houses in the path of the flames to try to stop the fire from spreading.

The Lord Mayor of London did not like this as he was worried about the cost of rebuilding all the houses. The fire was out of control by the time he gave the order to create the firebreaks.



People of London used leather buckets, axes and water squirts to fight the flames. These were of little use against the fire because the strong wind was fanning the flames quicker than the fire could be fought.



The wind wasn't as strong by Wednesday so people could fight the fire with buckets of water from the River Thames. This stopped the flames from spreading further. It was soon after that the fire was finally put out.

Many different insurance companies set up their own firefighting services to protect buildings after the Great Fire of London. Volunteer groups and parish authorities also set up services as well.

- The buildings had 'fire marks' that were used to identify the buildings that were covered by each company. Several fire brigades would attend if there was a fire but they would only fight it if their company insured it!

Did You Know...?

A man named Samuel Pepys wrote about the Great Fire in his diaries, which is why we know so much about what happened.



Questions

1. What did the people of London use to fight the fire? Tick **two**.

leather buckets

teaspoons

axes

cups

2. Put ticks in the table to show which sentences are **true** and which are **false**. The first one has been done for you.

Sentence	True	False
In the early hours of Sunday 2 nd September 1666, a fire started in the bakery on Pudding Lane.	✓	
Buildings were spread out with lots of space between them.		
There was no fire service in 1666.		
After the Great Fire of London, parish authorities set up their own firefighting services.		

3. Fill in the missing word.

The Lord Mayor of London did not like this as he was worried about the cost of _____ all the houses.

4. What were used to identify which buildings were covered by each insurance company?

5. Who wrote about the fire in his diaries?

6. Summarise what happened in the Great Fire of London in 20 words or fewer.
