



# The Great Fire of London Lesson Plan

## Description

The Great Fire of London is one of the largest and most devastating fires in British history. In this lesson, students will embark on a journey back to 1666 to learn about the Great Fire of London - an event that reshaped the city and its approach to fire safety. Through our resources, students will discover the challenges faced by firefighters in the past and the advancements in firefighting equipment that have made our lives much safer today.

## General Information

### Lesson Focus

The Great Fire of  
London

### Recommended Key Stage

KS1

### Curriculum Focus

History - The Great Fire of  
London

### Timings

25-30 minutes

## Preparation

Resource - "The Great Fire of London - KFRS Firefighting Then and Now" PowerPoint presentation

(Optional)

Resource - "Then and Now Sorting Activity" - separate plan provided

## Learning Objectives

- Understand the significance of The Great Fire of London.
- Identify the tools and methods used by firefighters in the past.
- Compare historical firefighting techniques with modern methods and equipment.
- Recognise the importance of fire safety and the role of firefighters in our communities.

## Introduction

This lesson can be delivered by the class teacher/teaching assistant as a history lesson. The presentation explains the history of firefighting - specific to the Great Fire of London - and the difference of modern-day firefighting.

## PowerPoint Presentation

**Title Slide/Slide 1** - Introducing the topic and Fire Service

### **Slide 2 - Learning Objectives**

**Introduce** the objectives for the session.

### **Slide 3 - Starter Task**

**Explain** the task and set the scene. **Ask** students to close their eyes and imagine what they would see, smell, feel and hear.

**Prompt** the students with questions such as,

- What would you smell in the bakery?
- Would you see people throwing buckets of water?
- Would you hear sirens?
- Would you hear alarms? (**emphasise** importance of smoke alarms in our homes)
- Would you feel hot or cold?

#### **Slide 4 - “Firefighting in 1666” - Use information on slide**

A brief introduction to the Great Fire of London.

**Explain** how London experienced a drought, so all of the houses were very dry, making it easier for the fire to spread.

**Explain** how there was no fire service, so civilians had to try and help put out the fire together.

#### **Slide 5 - “Firefighting Tools in 1666” - Use information on the slide**

**Explain** how houses in 1666 were built very close together making it hard to tackle the fire.

**Encourage** students to guess the firefighting equipment used in 1666.

**Talk** through each piece of equipment explaining what each piece was used for (refer to firefighter speech bubbles)

#### **Slide 6 - “Firefighting Tools Today” - Use information on the slide**

**Explain** how different tools are used today and they help firefighters to put out fires more efficiently.

**Talk** through each piece of equipment explaining what each piece is used for (refer to firefighter speech bubbles)

**Fire hooks** are used today to move debris and obstacles that might be in their way or to pry doors and windows open.

#### **Slide 7 - “What did the fire do to London?” Use information on the slide**

**Explain** how a lot of buildings were destroyed in the fire. A large part of the city had to be rebuilt. **Discuss** that there are now 44 fire services in England and in Kent we have 55 fire stations.

**(Optional) Use the link on the slide** - A cartoon video from the London Museum showing how London was rebuilt after the Great Fire.

**Ask** the students what number to call in an emergency.

**Reinforce** calling 999.



### **Slide 8 - “Firefighting Today” Use information on the slide**

**Explain** how the modern-day fire service have advanced firefighting tools and equipment

**Explain** how firefighters are safer and can put out fires more efficiently, so they are less likely to spread like the Great fire.

**Encourage** students to think of equipment that they know or have seen firefighters use

**Explain** what a breathing apparatus set is - Use an **example** such as “it’s similar to what a scuba diver wears underwater so they can breathe. Firefighters need them to breathe in smoke.”

### **Slide 9 - “Kent Fire and Rescue Service” - Use information on the slide**

**Explain** that modern-day fire services are very different to the past and fire services don’t just put out fires.

**Click the link on the slide** (KFRS video) and **discuss** the jobs that KFRS do today and how KFRS help people

### **Slide 10/Final Slide - Re-cap - “Sorting Game”**

**Explain** the game. Students identify which equipment belongs in which box. Guide students through each piece of equipment in order. Once discussed, **click** the mouse and each piece animates into the correct box.

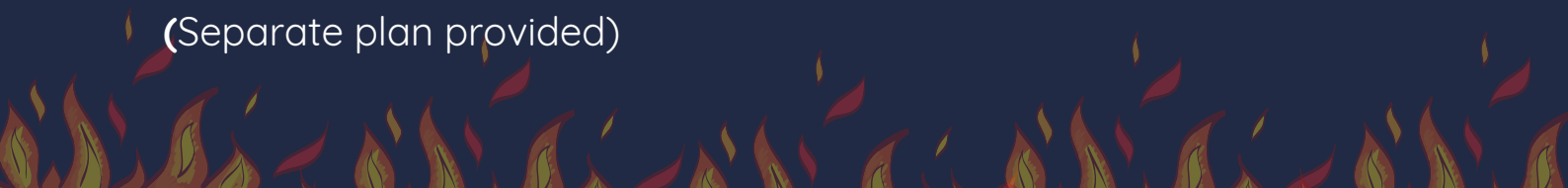
**Discuss** how firefighters have more equipment to use now that can help rescue people and also keeps them safe when tackling fires.

## **Resources**

### **Firefighting Then and Now - Sorting Activity**

An activity to help reinforce learning and allow students to visually sort firefighting equipment from the past and present.

(Separate plan provided)



## Plenary

Assess knowledge by asking questions from the presentation.

- Name a piece of equipment they would have used to put out the fires in 1666?
- Which piece of equipment from 1666 do you think worked the best? Why?
- What's different about the equipment firefighters use today?
- What other jobs do the fire service do today?

(Optional)

Assess understanding through our Then and Now Sorting Activity. Discuss with students which pieces of equipment are from the past and which are present.

## Assessment for Learning

Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding through the answers they give.

