

1. The Gunpowder Plot

Over four hundred years ago, a group of thirteen men devised a plan to blow up the British parliament, killing the king and all the politicians. They may have succeeded in their plot had it not been for one man who just couldn't keep a secret. This event is still remembered in Britain by the annual burning of bonfires on 5th November. The burning of bonfires is also connected to the Celtic origins of Halloween, celebrated on 31st October; your students may like to discuss the origins of the two festivals.

Level

Intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Give one copy of Worksheet A to each student in the class. Focus their attention on the newspaper story on the left-hand side. Give students a couple of minutes to read through the story and answer the question in Exercise 1.
2. Direct students' attention to the questions on the right of the page. Ask them to read the questions. Give out Worksheet B and ask them to work in pairs to find the answers to the questions.
3. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

He wanted to blow up the king and the government.

Exercise 2

1. Guy Fawkes
2. York
3. thirty-six
4. Robert Catesby
5. Francis Tresham
6. thirteen
7. They were captured.
8. Four were shot. The rest were hanged.
9. Families build bonfires, light fireworks and eat potatoes.
10. A model of Guy Fawkes which is burned on a bonfire.

2. Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/civil_war_revolution/

All about the gunpowder plot from the BBC's history website. Includes a computer animation of the parliament buildings in 1605, an interactive game and texts. Texts are challenging for Intermediate level.

<http://www.history.com/topics/halloween>

The US History channel's Halloween section. With text and videos. Challenging for Intermediate level.