# Reading 2 – The great fire of London



**Read this text twice and answer the questions.**

In 1666 London was a busy city. It was very crowded. The streets were narrow and dirty. Fires were quite common at that time. Homes didn't have electricity, so real flames were used for lighting, cooking, and heating homes. That year, a huge fire burned down most of London – because it was so big, it was called the Great Fire of London. The fire lasted four days. There are many reasons why the fire was so large, but the main reason was that houses were made of wood, and were very close together. In those days there were no firemen to stop a fire. Another reason was that the summer of 1666 had been very dry, with no rain for months.

The fire started in a baker's shop early in the morning. The shop belonged to the king's baker, Thomas Farynor. Thomas was asleep, when a servant woke him. The bedroom was full of smoke. Thomas Farynor and his wife got out of their bakery in time, but their maid was too scared to jump from the roof. She was the first to die. Surprisingly, only nine people died as a result of the fire. With strong winds, the fire spread quickly. By Monday, 300 houses had burned down. Everybody was in a panic. People tried to leave town on foot or in carts pulled by horses. Others tried to get away on boats on the river.

Famous buildings including St Paul's Cathedral were completely destroyed, as well as 13,200 houses, and 87 churches. One hundred thousand people lost everything and became homeless.

At that time, people didn't know nearly as much about stopping fires as we do today. They just used buckets of water to stop the fire. This time a plan was suggested. They destroyed the houses to stop the fire. By Wednesday, they had the fire under control. Many people wrote at the time about the fire. They all described how dramatic and scary the fire was.

Not everyone at the time thought that the fire was an accident. Some said foreigners caused it. Others felt that the fire was started by those who were not free to follow their own religion. Some even saw the fire as a punishment from God. However, the fire was probably an accident, not a deliberate act.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

**20. London in 1666 was a city…**

**A.** clean and quiet.

**B.** full of people.

**C.** where firemen had to work a lot.

**D.** where there were not many fires.

**21. The Great fire of London was bigger than others because in the whole summer there had been no _____.**

**22. Thomas Farynor worked in a _____.**

**23. In the Great Fire of London...**

**A.** 300 families died.

**B.** few people died.

**C.** many people died.

**D.** Thomas Farrinor and his wife died.

**24. All people tried to leave London…**

**A.** by boat.

**B.** in different ways.

**C.** on foot.

**D.** riding their horses.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

**25. List three jobs mentioned in this text:**

_____ ; _____ and _____.

**26. What's the paragraph in which is described how they stopped the fire?**

**A.** Paragraph 2.

**B.** Paragraph 3.

**C.** Paragraph 4.

**D.** Paragraph 5.

**27. At that time <u>all</u> people thought that the fire was…**

**A.** a punishment from God.

**B.** an accident.

**C.** caused by someone who wanted to set fire to London.

**D.** scary and frightening.

**HELP!**
Punishment: castigo / zigor

**28. This fragment could be part of…**

**A.** a history book.

**B.** a book of legends.

**C.** a graphic novel.

**D.** a geography book.



LIVEWORKSHEETS