

London's burning! – The Great Fire of London

The old city of London was very different from today's city. It had narrow, crooked streets and most of the buildings were made of wood. It was a dirty and dangerous city, too. People threw all their rubbish into the streets, and there were rats everywhere. However, in 1665 everything changed.

A The assistant, however, fell asleep, and when he woke up at about two o'clock in the morning, the bakery was on fire. From the bakery the fire spread to the next house and then the next. A strong wind was blowing from the river and it blew the fire from house to house. After a hot, dry summer the buildings caught fire very easily, and in the narrow streets the fire spread quickly.

B Today near London Bridge you can see the Monument to the Great Fire of London. It's thirty-three metres high, because it's thirty-three metres from the bakery in Pudding Lane where the fire started.

C In the evening of 2 September, 1666, Thomas Farynor, a baker, was in his bakery in Pudding Lane near London Bridge. He was making some bread. He put the loaves of bread into the oven and then he went to bed, while his assistant looked after them.

D The fire burned for four days and it destroyed most of the city. Amazingly, only six people died, but almost everyone lost their home. The people of London had to build a new city.

E Soon several streets were on fire. Some people tried to save their houses, but was no good. The fire was too strong, so they grabbed their children, money and clothes and they ran. The streets were full people, horses and carts, as everyone tried to escape from the fire.

F They decided to build a better, more modern city with wide, straight streets. It was cleaner and safer, too. The people didn't want another fire, so all the buildings were made of bricks or stone, not wood. Sir Christopher Wren built a new St Pauls's Cathedral. Everyone agreed that it was more beautiful than the old cathedral.

Read the paragraphs and put them in the correct order.

(Olvasd el a bekezdéseket és tedd helyes sorrendbe!)

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th

Match the two parts of the sentence. (Kösd össze a mondatok elejét és végét!)

The people of London	blew the fire from house to house.
Their houses	tried to escape from London.
The fire	designed the new Saint Paul's Cathedral.
A strong wind	had to build a new city.
Many people	usually built wooden houses.
Almost every house	started in a bakery in Pudding Lane.
After the fire people	were very close together.
Sir Christopher Wren	burnt down but only six people died.

Fire facts

The Great Fire of London in 1666 started on 2nd September and finished on 6th September. The number of people living in London at that time was 600,000 and about one sixth of them lost their houses. Many buildings burned down. London lost more than 87 churches, including the beautiful old cathedral of Saint Paul's. The fire was very bad but only 6 people lost their lives. The cost of the fire was about 30 million euros. (London made about 18,000 euros a year at this time.)

Read the 'Fire facts' and do the quiz.

1. How many people lived in London in 1666.
a) 600,000 b) 1 million c) 2 million
2. How many people lost their houses in the fire?
a) 20,000 b) 100,000 c) 300
3. How many churches burned down?
a) 10 b) 45 c) 89
4. How many people died?
a) 500 b) 6 c) 2,000
5. How long did the fire burn?
a) 2 weeks b) 10 days c) 4 days