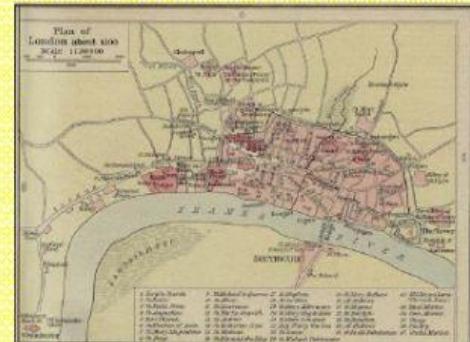# FIRE ! LONDON   IS ON FIRE !

This children's song commemorates a real historical event, the Great Fire of London. On September 2nd, 1666, a fire started in London. In four days, it destroyed 80 per cent of the medieval city-today's financial district, called the City-and it permanently changed Britain's capital.

London's burning !

London's burning !

Fetch the engines !

Fetch the engines !

Fire ! Fire !-Fire !Fire !

Pour on water !

Pour on water !

This map shows the medieval city and the part of it that was destroyed in the Great Fire.

At that time houses were made of wood and very close to each other. People used wood for heating and cooking, and candles or oil lamps for light, there was also hay in the courtyards. So fires were common, but the Great Fire in 1666 was bigger than any before or after.

It began at about 1.30 a.m. in the royal bakery situated in Pudding Lane, the baker's family woke up but could do nothing to stop the fire! By 7 a.m. 300 houses were destroyed and the fire was out of control. The wind was very strong and sent sparks and flames everywhere :Wood, hay , alcoholic –drink barrels helped the fire to spread. Moreover at that time, there was no fire brigade. The method for stopping fire was « bucket chains »(a line of people passing buckets of water from the river Thames to the burning buildings), but they couldn't contain the fire and it got out of control. The king's brother used explosives to demolish buildings to try to stop the fire, but it continued for four days. It finally stopped near Westminster, not because Londoners found a solution, but because the wind stopped!!. The cost of the fire was £ 10 million at a time when the town council had £ 12, 000 a year.
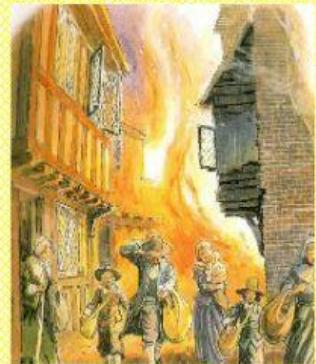
The great fire caused enormous material damages(13, 500 houses, 87 churches, 4 bridges, some theatres, a prison and 52 Guildhalls)Thousands of people found themselves homeless and ruined, they had to live in tents or temporary homes in the ruins or the countryside in the long cold winter of 1666. Yet very few people died, chronicles say that about 8 people died. In fact, many historians think that the fire saved thousands of lives. Like other medieval cities, London had regular epidemics of the bubonic plague (because of infected rats and their fleas).. A particular terrible epidemic killed 70,000 Londoners the year before the fire.

King Charles II ordered to redesign the city, and with the incredible energy of the Londoners to rebuild their city, with a new street plan including wider streets and buildings made of brick, not wood. By 1700, London was the biggest city in northern Europe. One of the major architects : Sir Christopher Wren (designer of the new St Paul's Cathedral) had the mission to create the Monument to commemorate the catastrophic event. It is a 66 m high column made of stones. Sixty-six metres being the exact distance from the Monument to the place where the fire started.
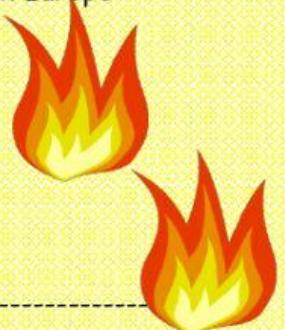
I . FACTS AND FIGURES . MATCH THE FACTS AND THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES

1 . 2 September 1666

2.£ 10 million an epidemic.

3. 300 council.

4. 87

5. £12,000

6. year 1700

7. 70, 000

8. 1665

9. 80%

10. 66

11. 1. 30 a.m.

12. 8

☐ a. number of victims.

☐ b. number of Londoners killed in

☐ c. budget oft he London town

☐ d. year of a terrible epidemic.

☐ e. number of churches destroyed.

☐ f. part of London destroyed by the Great Fire.

☐ g. time when the fire started.

☐ h. number of houses destroyed in 5 ½ hours.

☐ i. cost of the fire.

☐ j. time when the fire started in London.

☐ k. London was then the biggest city in Europe

☐ l. height of the Monument.

IV. PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

the of*Great* *London* days* 1666* in* lasted*four*Fire*

----

tried people*chains* put* out * it * to* with * bucket*

----

they water* took* from* river*the * Thames* buckets* with *

----

*enormous * destruction* despite* the * people* eight* only* material* died*

----

*plague*far* the * bubonic* less* than* because* of * year* the * before*

----

* that* after* built* town * new* they* a * brick* in*