

Read the text and answer the questions.

Guy Fawkes Night



Winter is just around the corner here in the UK, the nights getting longer, the wind chillier. There aren't many of us who would claim November is their favourite time of year. But fear not, there are still plenty of weird and wonderful celebrations to look forward this month, Guy Fawkes being one of my favourites. :) Guy Fawkes Night (also known as Bonfire Night) is totally unique to the UK, even if it does seem a bit strange to any onlookers.

So a brief bit of history: it celebrates a failed attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament (that's where Big Ben is) in London. It all happened on November the fifth, 1605. A group of Catholics who were unhappy with their Protestant rulers wanted to bring the government down. Their leader was a man called Guy Fawkes and his plan was called the Gunpowder Plot. Fortunately, some passers-by saw Guy Fawkes and his followers with the gunpowder. Guy Fawkes was arrested. He was put on a bonfire and burned to death. In Britain, this day is also called Bonfire Night and bizarrely enough, it's a night we still celebrate today!

Bonfire Night is perhaps one of Britain's biggest autumn festivals, and certainly one of its brightest. Unfortunately, it is in winter and takes place at night! You have to brave the cold, but it is worth it. Every town and village puts on a fireworks display. There is usually a large bonfire in the middle of the town. People gather at it to watch the fireworks and eat traditional Guy Fawkes Night food. Baked potatoes and toffee apples are the most popular treats. There is usually a mock guy on the bonfire to represent the real one that died 400 years ago. Many families have their own smaller celebrations with private fireworks displays in their garden, friends and neighbours over and sparklers too.

This time last year I was enjoying the mild autumn temperatures in the south of France, so it's the promise of this year's sparkling celebrations that I'm particularly looking forward to and which are sure to brighten up a very British November evening.

Questions

- 1 Who wanted to blow up the Houses of Parliament?
- 2 Why did they fail?
- 3 What was Guy Fawkes' punishment?
- 4 What are the most popular treats that night?