

The Great Fire of London

Enquiry Question: "How did the fire start and how did it spread so easily?"

Key Knowledge



leather water bucket	St Paul's Cathedral
Tower of London	axe
water squirt	fire hook

Key People

Samuel Pepys	Thomas Farriner	King Charles II

Key Vocabulary

bakery	A place that makes bread, cakes, etc.
St Paul's Cathedral	A very large church in London. A new St Paul's Cathedral was built after the fire.
diary	A book that people write about their lives in.
firebreak	A gap that stops a fire spreading to nearby buildings.

Timeline of Events

Sunday 2nd September 1666 The fire starts at 1 a.m. Mid-morning: Samuel Pepys starts to write about the fire in his diary .	Monday 3rd September 1666 The fire gets very close to the Tower of London.	Tuesday 4th September 1666 St Paul's Cathedral is destroyed by the fire.	Wednesday 5th September 1666 The wind dies down and the fire spreads more slowly.	Thursday 6th September 1666 The fire is finally put out. Thousands of people are left homeless.
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Key Events and Facts	
When and where did the fire start?	The fire started on Sunday 2nd September 1666 in Thomas Farriner's bakery on Pudding Lane.
Why did the fire start?	The fires used for baking were not put out properly.
Why did the fire spread so quickly?	In 1666, the buildings in London were made of wood and straw and they were very close together, making it easy for the flames to spread. It had also been a dry summer, so the buildings were dry. Strong winds were blowing, which helped the flames to spread.
How did people try to put the fire out?	People used leather buckets and water squirts to try to put the fire out, but these did not work. Later in the week, King Charles II ordered buildings to be pulled down to stop the flames from spreading.
How and when was the fire put out?	By Thursday 6th September, the wind had died down. This meant that people were able to put out the flames.

