



Reimagining the Restoration

Welcome to the KS1 activity pack for Reimagining the Restoration, a project between the University of Leicester and the Museum of London, funded by the AHRC. We have created new materials for teaching about the Great Fire and life in 17th-century London. These resources have been informed by new research into the diaries of Samuel Pepys, and created in direct response to teachers' feedback.

Resource 1: What was life like in 17th-century London?

This short video and activity sheet will help learners better understand what life was like in 17th-century London. This may work well for you as a starter activity or introduction to the topic.

There are versions of the activity sheets for learners working at or working towards the expected standard.

Here are some additional notes on the video that you and your learners may find helpful:

- During the 1640s and 1650s there were civil wars in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. In 1649 the English parliament executed King Charles I and declared a republic. After the rule of Oliver Cromwell and his son Richard, parliament restored the monarchy. King Charles II took the throne in 1660.
- The Great Plague in 1665-1666 was an outbreak of bubonic plague which killed an estimated 100,000 people in London in 18 months. The disease periodically broke out in many European cities in the 17th and early 18th centuries, including Paris and Vienna.
- In the 17th century, many better-off households in London paid for water to be piped to their homes, though it's unclear how many functioning water supplies were in use by the 1660s.
- Note that the roofs of 1660s London are mostly tiled. Brick houses were common but many still used chiefly wood.

Resource 2: How did the Great Fire start?

The Great Fire of London was not the city's first fire. Learners may already know about the bakery on Pudding Lane, but this activity sheet provides a timeline from the fire's start to its finish. This is a chronology activity, learners will need to cut and stick out each event and place them in the correct order. You may want them to glue the ordered events in their exercise books.

Learners will need:

- Scissors
- Glue.

There are versions of the activity sheet for learners working at or working beyond the expected standard.

Here are some additional notes which you and your learners may find helpful:

- The exact cause of the Great Fire isn't certain, but it may have been caused by a spark from Thomas Farriner's oven. Glowing embers could have been left in the oven overnight.
- The area around Pudding Lane was full of warehouses containing flammable materials including oil and timber, so once the fire began it spread very quickly.
- There was no London fire brigade in 1666, local parishes were responsible for handling their own firefighting. You can find pictures of the tools used by 1660s firefighters in Resource 5, or online here <https://www.fireoflondon.org.uk/browse-the-collection/>
- Although the Great Fire of London destroyed more than 13,000 houses and left much of London's population homeless, very few people died in the fire, with the death toll perhaps as low as six.



Resource 3: How do we know what happened?

This resource has been designed as an introduction to historical sources and evidence. The activity sheet begins with a paired discussion activity to give your learners a chance to speak their thoughts aloud and ask each other questions about what they already understand. You may want to give them some prompts to get them started, such as:

- “Where might you look to find out about the past?”, prompting them to suggest books, the internet, or a museum.
- “How do we find out what’s happening in the world today?”, prompting newspapers or websites.
- “What might someone use to write down their life story?”, prompting diaries or letters.

The activity sheet also includes an explanation of primary and secondary sources, and an activity to help learners explore different types of primary and secondary sources. You may wish to keep learners in pairs for this part to encourage discussion, but it also works as an individual task.

There are versions of the activity sheets for learners working at and working towards the expected standard.

For clarity, the pictured sources are:

Samuel Pepys’s diary

- This is a primary source.
- It could tell us about the life of a person living at the time of the Great Fire, as well as the events of the fire itself and what people did, said, and felt during the fire.
- A disadvantage to using a diary like this as a primary source is that it only tells one person’s perspective.

Fireoflondon.org.uk, a website about the Great Fire of London

- This is a secondary source.
- It could tell us about the events of the Great Fire, with detailed explanation of the circumstances surrounding the fire, as well as its impact and legacy.
- A disadvantage of using a secondary source is that you are relying on the research and interpretation of the author, which may change over time as new details are uncovered.

A leather bucket

- This is a primary source
- This could tell us about the types of equipment people used to fight the fire, the materials available to them, and the reasons why it was so difficult to fight the fire.
- A disadvantage to using an object like this as a source is that we don’t always know how they were used, or exactly how old they are.



Resource 4: Who was Samuel Pepys?

Resource 3 mentioned Samuel Pepys's diary, and you may have had a few learners asking "Who was Samuel Pepys?". This video and accompanying activity sheet aim to give you and your learners an explanation of who Pepys was, what his life was like, and why his diary is so important.

The true or false activities on this sheet have been separated into three parts. You may wish to pause the video at several points and give your learners the opportunity to complete each section while the information is fresh in their minds.

There are versions of the activity sheet for learners working at or working towards the expected standard.

Here are some additional notes which you may find useful:

- Samuel Pepys did not come from a wealthy background, he was able to afford university education thanks to several scholarships and grants.
- Pepys wrote his diary between 1 January 1660 and 31 May 1669. He ended it because he feared he was going blind. He experimented with green spectacles and a special mask with paper tubes in to help his sight. This allowed him to keep writing his diary a bit longer.
- Pepys was a hardworking naval administrator, at a time when the navy was England's biggest industry. In the 1660s, the Navy Office was responsible for shipbuilding and for providing sailors with food, clothes and other supplies. Pepys later became a powerful figure in the government administration, seeking to improve standards in the navy. One of his innovations was to introduce the first naval exams: after 1677 naval lieutenants had to prove they understood sailing and navigation.
- Pepys was actually arrested for treason three times. In 1679 he was accused of passing naval secrets to the French. He was arrested in 1689 and 1690 in connection with plots to restore James II to the throne. In all these cases, the charges weren't justified and he was released.

- During the Great Fire, on 4 September, Pepys and his naval colleague Sir William Penn buried their wine and Pepys's parmesan cheese in the garden of their homes. This wasn't as daft as it sounds: these were expensive imported foods, and most of their other goods had been moved to safety – they were waiting around to see if the fire would come to destroy their homes, so this felt like doing *something*. They were copying their colleague Sir William Batten, who had buried his wine earlier in the day.
- Pepys wrote about his daily life, and the bad behaviour referred to in the video includes his extramarital relationships, accepting bribes, and some scathing thoughts about his colleagues (Penn was 'a false rogue').
- Pepys's diary was written using a shorthand developed by Thomas Shelton in the 1620s. The system allowed for faster writing, and had symbols replacing words. You could learn shorthand through employing a tutor or buying a manual. Both men and women used it for taking notes in church and for studying.

To learn more about the diary, there is an additional activity sheet 'How did Samuel Pepys write his diary?' and a teachers' guide to the diary. There you can find answers to children's common questions, an explanation of shorthand, and - at the end - large format images of the diary.

Although Pepys's writing is primarily about his own life, it's also useful for finding out about other 17th-century Londoners. You can learn about the lives of deaf Londoners mentioned in Pepys's diary in a specially produced comic on museumoflondon.org.uk/deaf-history-resources



Resource 5: How did people fight the Great Fire of London?

This activity sheet aims to develop learners' inference, oracy and investigation skills. The main task has been designed as a group activity, for groups of three or four.

To start the activity, learners should begin by talking through their ideas in their groups. They may use the questions on their activity sheet to prompt them.

Here are some additional notes which you and your learners may find useful:

- Although there were no brigades at the time of the fire, each parish had its own firefighting equipment, often stored in the local church.
- Equipment, such as buckets and helmets, often had the name or initials of the parish painted on it. This is really useful for knowing where these items came from and who might have used them.
- It took a long time to demolish houses using fire hooks. By the night of 4 September 1666, people had started to use gunpowder instead, which worked much more quickly.
- After the Great Fire, every parish was required by law to have at least two working fire squirts.

You can find images of other objects from the Great Fire online here

<https://www.fireoflondon.org.uk/browse-the-collection/>

Resource 6: How did they rebuild London?

This video and accompanying activity aim to explain how the city was rebuilt after the Great Fire and how London changed. This is a group card-sorting activity, designed to develop oracy skills and an understanding of cause and effect as learners work together to see how London changed after the fire.

If you have received a deck of cards:

- Each deck contains 4 sets of 15 cards
- Separate each set, shuffle them, and hand them out to your learners.
- Learners should work together to talk about each card, figure out which order the cards go in, and place them in the correct order.

If you're printing the cards yourself:

- The PDF contains one set of 15 cards. You should cut the cards out and shuffle them before handing out to learners.
- Learners may glue the cards into their exercise books.

Here are some additional notes which you and your learners may find useful:

- Some people think that the Great Fire of London is the reason behind London banning thatched roofs on houses. Although fire risk was the reason, this actually happened hundreds of years before, in 1212. Houses in 1666 had tiled roofs.
- Although there were a lot of wooden houses, by 1666 brick houses were very common too.
- The first fire brigades in London were set up by insurance companies, and would only extinguish fires for those who were up-to-date on their insurance payments. Insured houses had plaques on them so that fire brigades knew who had paid and whose houses to save.