

GUY FAWKES NIGHT

By Julietta Schoenmann

Every year Britain remembers the attempt by Guy Fawkes and 12 other men to blow up the Houses of Parliament on November 5th 1605. This group decided to kill the king because of his persecution of Catholics.

They put 36 barrels of gunpowder under Westminster but some of the group started to have worries about their plan and one even sent an anonymous letter to his friend telling him to stay away from Parliament on November 5th. The plotters were therefore caught and Guy Fawkes was executed.

Nowadays, people celebrate the failure of the plot by letting off fireworks and building a bonfire, sometimes with an effigy/model of Guy Fawkes on the top that they burn.

Further information at: <http://www.bonfirenight.net/gunpowder.php>

Segment: secondary

Level: intermediate

Materials: handout and Youtube clip: www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMNOnYxhpOY

The lesson

1. warm up the class by writing *Guy Fawkes Night* on the board and perform the following rhyme. Use gestures to explain the more difficult vocabulary (e.g. *hang him on a lamp post/poke him in the eye/hip, hip hooray*).

Guy Fawkes, Guy
Stick him up on high,
Hang him on a lamp post
And there let him die.

Guy, Guy, Guy,
Poke him in the eye,
Put him on the fire
And there let him die
Burn his body from his head
Then you'll say
Guy Fawkes is dead
Hip, Hip, Hooray!

Traditional November 5th rhyme

2. Put students in small groups of 4. Ask them to discuss the connection between the name and the rhyme.





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3. Invite suggestions from a few groups but accept all answers. Praise any group that correctly offers something close to the fact (the gunpowder plot of November 5th). Explain that the lesson will be about the reason why British people let off fireworks on November 5th each year.



Listening activity

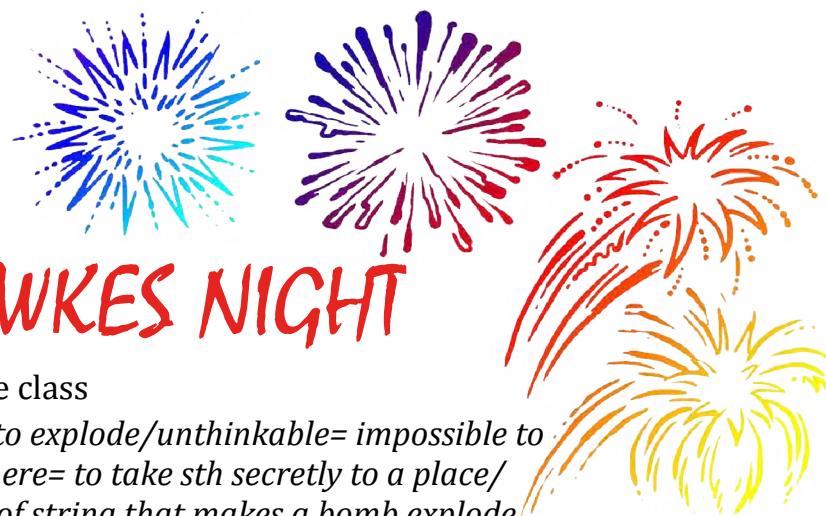
1. Tell students that they are going to watch a clip from a programme called *Horrible Histories* which shows events from history in a fun way.
2. Explain that in this clip the story of Guy Fawkes is presented as a trailer for a film called *Fawkes' Thirteen* in the style of *Oceans' Eleven*. Ask if anyone has seen this film and if so what it's about (a gang of 11 people plan to rob money from a Las Vegas casino).
3. Ask students to look at Part A on their handout. Explain the words 'gunpowder' and 'fuses'.
4. Tell students to watch the clip and match the gang member with their title by drawing connecting lines between all 3 sections in the table. They should then answer the question that follows with a 'yes' or 'no' answer.
5. Ask students to check their answers in pairs then check them with the whole class (Suggested answers: 1) Guy Fawkes the Explosives expert who is responsible for the gunpowder and fuses/John Wright the Persuader who provides the reason for the plot/Robert Catesby the Brains who outlines the stages of the plot/Francis Tresham the Idiot who sends a letter to his brother-in-law telling him to stay away from Parliament on November 5th 2) No).
6. Ask students to look at Part B on their handout. Ask them to read the two summaries of the plot.
7. Tell them they are going to watch the clip again. They should choose which summary is correct.
8. Check the answer with the whole class (Answer: Summary 2).



Vocabulary follow-up activity

1. Ask students to look at Part C on their handout. They should use their dictionaries (www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com) to find the meaning of any unknown words or phrases.
2. Put students in pairs and ask them to find out the meanings together.





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3. Check the answers with the whole class

(Suggested answers: *to blow up* = *to explode/unthinkable* = *impossible to imagine* / *to sneak sth into somewhere* = *to take sth secretly to a place* / *to light the fuse* = *to light the piece of string that makes a bomb explode* / *a barrel of gunpowder* = *large round container made of wood* / *to go off without a hitch* = *an event that happened without a problem* / *to take the day off* = *to stay home from work* / *to be hung, drawn and quartered* = *executed by hanging, then cutting out the stomach and dividing the body into 4 pieces*).

Role play activity

1. Tell students they will be working in small groups. They are members of a gang. They are going to act out a plot that goes wrong. Tell students that each group is going to mime their actions for the class and the others have to explain the plot details. Tell groups that their mimes can be comic.
2. Put students into groups of 4 or 5. Tell them they have 10 minutes to discuss their plot and rehearse their actions
3. Invite groups to perform one by one. After each performance, ask groups to discuss what happened then ask one group to describe the plot. Check with the performing group that the description was correct.
4. Continue until all groups have mimed their plots.

REMEMBER, REMEMBER
THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER,
GUNPOWDER TREASON AND PLOT.
WE SEE NO REASON
WHY GUNPOWDER TREASON
SHOULD EVER BE FORGOT!





GUY FAWKES NIGHT - HANDOUT

Part A

1. Watch a clip about the Gunpowder Plot from *Horrible Histories*. Match the gang member with his title and role in the plot.

NAME	TITLE	ROLE IN THE PLOT
Guy Fawkes	The Idiotprovides the reason for the plot
John Wright	The Brains	...sends a letter to his brother-in-law telling him to stay away from Parliament on November 5th
Robert Catesby	The Explosives Expert	...is responsible for the gunpowder and fuses
Francis Tresham	The Persuader	...outlines the stages of the plot

2. Was the plot successful?

Part B

Read these two summaries of the story:

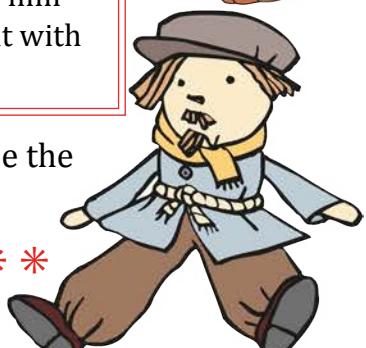
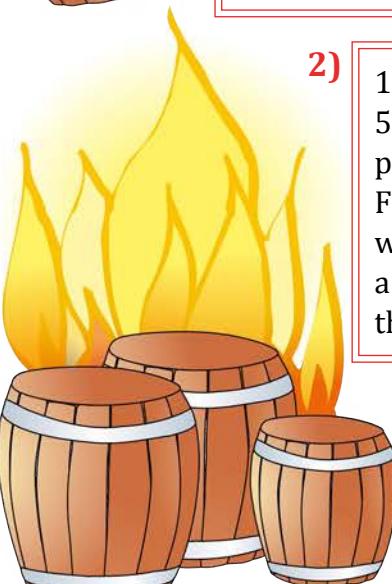
1)

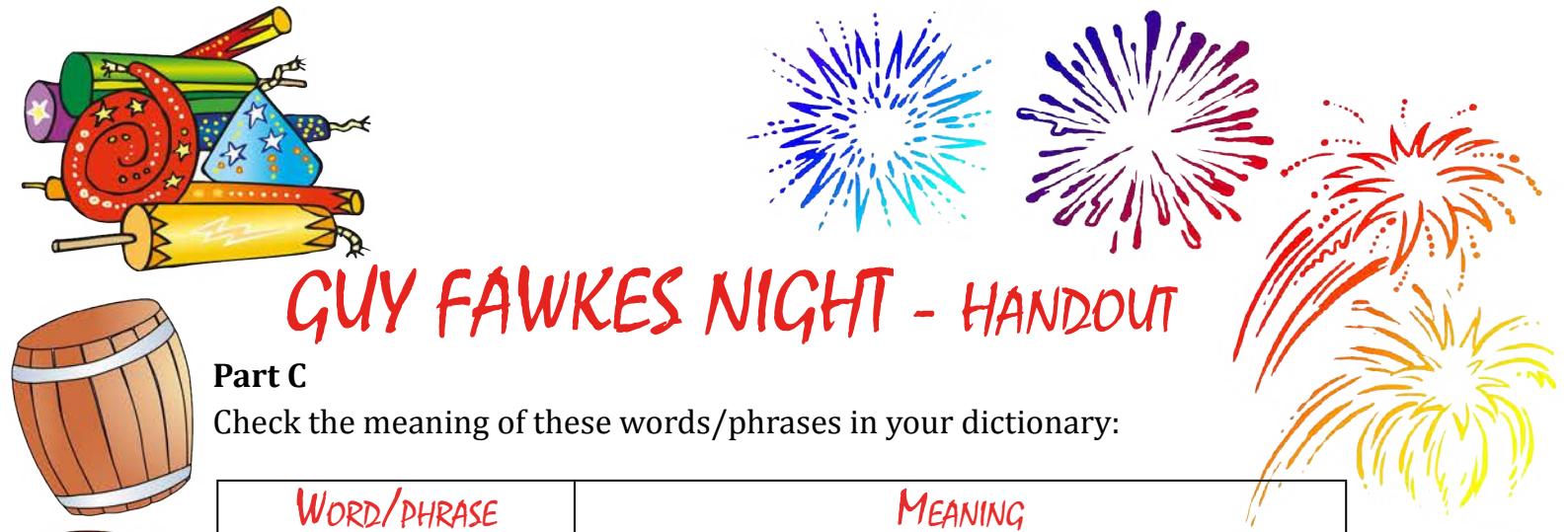
13 men decided to blow up the Houses of Parliament on November 5th 1605 to kill the prime minister. This was because he hated Catholics. They planned to put 30 barrels of gunpowder in a room near Parliament. Robert Catesby was part of the gang but realised his brother would be in Parliament the day of the explosion. He wrote him a letter suggesting he take the day off. Guy Fawkes was caught with the explosives and arrested. He was later released due to lack of evidence.

2)

13 men decided to blow up the Houses of Parliament on November 5th 1605 to kill the king. This was because he hated Catholic. They planned to put 36 barrels of gunpowder in a cellar under Parliament. Francis Tresham was part of the gang but realised that his brother would be in Parliament on the day of the explosion. He wrote him a letter suggesting he take the day off. Guy Fawkes was caught with the explosives and arrested. He was executed for his crime.

Which one is correct? Watch the clip again and choose the correct summary.





GUY FAWKES NIGHT - HANDOUT

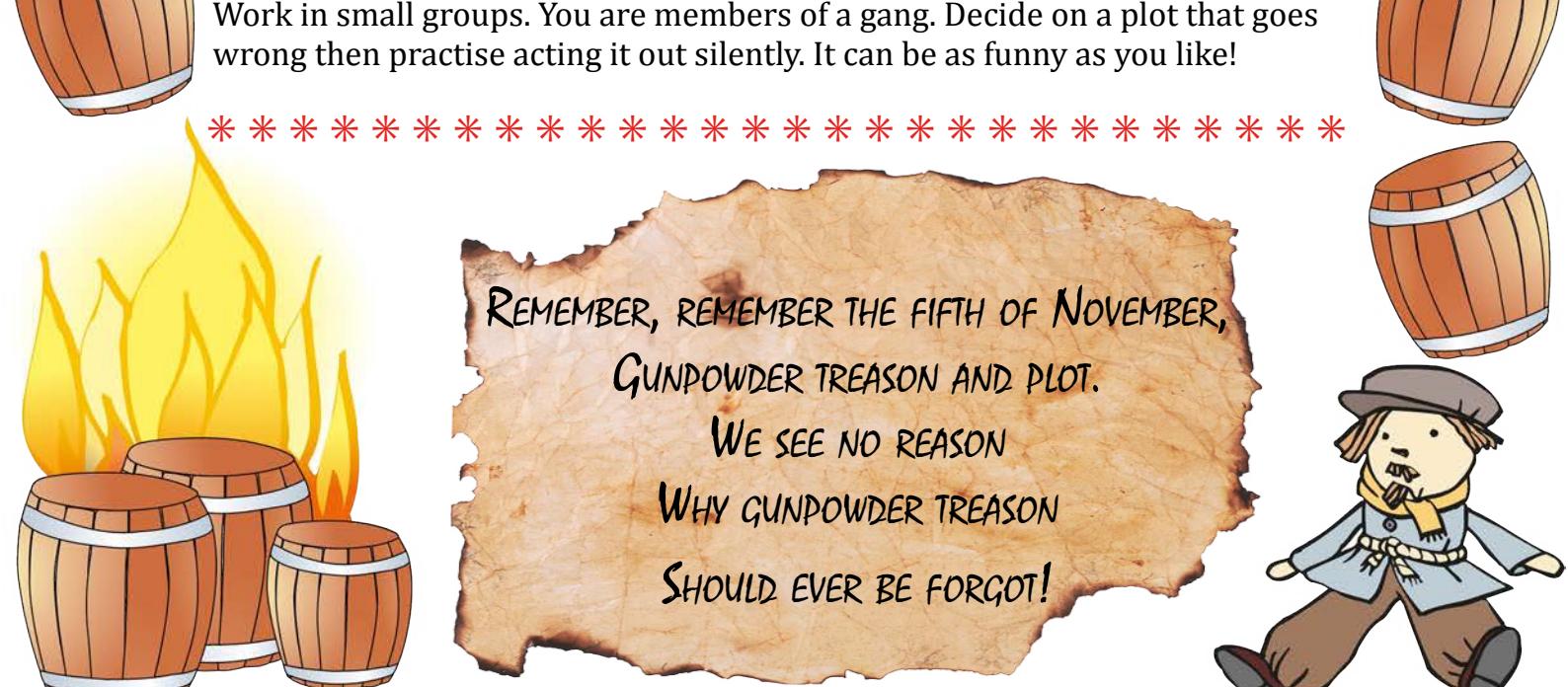
Part C

Check the meaning of these words/phrases in your dictionary:

WORD/PHRASE	MEANING
To blow up (a building)	
Unthinkable	
To sneak something into somewhere	
To light the fuse	
A barrel of gunpowder	
To go off without a hitch	
To take the day off	
To be hung, drawn and quartered	

Part D

Work in small groups. You are members of a gang. Decide on a plot that goes wrong then practise acting it out silently. It can be as funny as you like!



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