Bonfire Night!

In Great Britain, Bonfire Night is celebrated every year on 5 November. People often go to bonfire parties with their friends and families. At these parties, there is always a big bonfire. You can often find a variety of food stalls at these parties, and there is always a huge firework show to celebrate Bonfire Night.

The idea of Bonfire Night originates from the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. On 5 November 1605, a man called Guy Fawkes, along with other plotters, all of whom were Catholic, tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament. Their plan was to do this during the State Opening of England’s Parliament, when Protestant King James I was visiting. It is referred to as the Gunpowder Plot, because the men planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament using 36 barrels of gunpowder that were stored in a room underneath the building.

On 26 October, just 10 days before the plan was to go ahead, the authorities were informed about the plot by an anonymous letter. At around midnight on 4 November, Guy Fawkes was discovered guarding the gunpowder underneath the Houses or Parliament and he was immediately arrested. Many of the plotters fled from London as they heard that their plan had been discovered. On 27 January 1606, Guy Fawkes and seven other plotters were convicted and they were all sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered.

To celebrate the fact that the Gunpowder Plot didn’t succeed, people began to light bonfires around London. The Observance of 5th November Act was soon enforced, which became an annual public day of thanksgiving for the plot’s failure. And still today, Bonfire Night (or Guy Fawkes Night) is celebrated around the country to celebrate the failure of the Gunpowder Plot over four centuries ago.

1. What do people often do to celebrate Bonfire Night? __________________________________________

2. What was the Gunpowder Plot? Why did Guy Fawkes want to carry it out? ________________

   ___________________________________________________________

3. Why were the plotters caught? What happened to them? _________________________________

   ___________________________________________________________

4. Why do you think people lit bonfires to celebrate the plot’s failure? ________________________

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5. Find out more details about the Gunpowder Plot. Report your findings to the class.
Lösungen zu ‚Bonfire Night‘

1. What do people often do to celebrate Bonfire Night?
   They often go to bonfire parties with their friends and families. (At these parties, there is a big bonfire, as well as food stalls and a huge firework show.)

2. What was the Gunpowder Plot? Why did Guy Fawkes want to carry it out?
   The Gunpowder Plot was a plan to blow up the Houses of Parliament on 5 November 1605 using 36 barrels of gunpowder that were stored in a room underneath the building. Guy Fawkes wanted to kill King James I because he was Protestant. Guy Fawkes and the other plotters were Catholic.

3. Why were the plotters caught? What happened to them?
   The plotters were caught because the authorities received an anonymous letter on 26 October informing them about the plot. Some plotters fled London and others were caught. Guy Fawkes was caught guarding the gunpowder around midnight on 4 November. On 27 January, eight plotters, including Guy Fawkes, were convicted and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered.

4. Why do you think people lit bonfires to celebrate the plot’s failure?
   (Lösungsbeispiel:)
   I think people lit bonfires to celebrate the plot’s failure because the bonfires represented the fire after the explosion that would have happened if the authorities hadn’t found out about the plot in time.

5. Find out more details about the Gunpowder Plot. Report your findings to the class.
   Individuelle Lösungen