

The Gunpowder Plot

Songs for KS1 about Guy Fawkes and the plot
to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605



The Gunpowder Plot

These Notes include information on three songs about *The Gunpowder Plot* of 1605, which can be used to complement the history content on the [BBC Teach history pages](#) for KS1.

The songs are:

- Shadows in the night (see page 3)
- Hundreds of years ago (page 7)
- Remember, remember (page 12)

The songs have been written to map broadly to the sequence of events outlined in the history videos - that is, an introductory song, a song about the events of the Plot, and a final song remembering the Plot. Thus the songs can be used to help pupils consolidate and sequence the important facts and outcomes of the Plot.

Each song can be heard in vocal versions and also in an instrumental backing track - with exactly the same timing - which you can use for practising as often as you like and for performing in your assemblies and shows for parents and the whole school. The backing tracks can be downloaded as mp3 files, for use offline.

These Notes contain:

- suggestions for performing each song
- ideas for combining the music with dance and drama
- suggestions for use of classroom instruments
- simple ideas for improvising and composing
- a range of follow-up ideas for subjects right across the curriculum.

Guy Fawkes was born in April 1570 in York. His parents were Protestants but during his childhood Guy converted to Catholicism. When he was 21 he left England to join the Catholic Spanish army, where he fought in the Eighty Years War. During his time in the army he adopted the Italian version of his name - 'Guido'.

In 1594 he joined a group of fellow English Catholics, led by Robert Catesby, in a plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament in order to kill King James I and his government. Fawkes was responsible for lighting the fuse to the barrels of gunpowder, which had been hidden under the Houses of Parliament.

The plot was unsuccessful and Guy was caught and punished, along with the other conspirators.

Over four hundred years after The Gunpowder Plot, we still remember how Guy Fawkes and his fellow plotters failed to blow up Parliament and kill the King.

Bonfire night is celebrated every year on 5 November. Bonfires, fireworks and sparklers are lit in parks and gardens all over the country. Sometimes we burn a dummy - called a 'Guy' - on the bonfire. This is supposed to represent Guy Fawkes.

Since The Gunpowder Plot, whenever the King or Queen visits Parliament, there is a tradition that the royal bodyguards - called the Yeoman of the Guard - search beneath the Houses of Parliament for any potential plotters hiding explosives.

Songs written, composed and arranged by Barry Gibson. Singers - Jenny Bryce and Wayne Forrester. For the BBC: Andrew Barnes.

Shadows in the night

Focus

Secrets and mysteries; light and shadows; louder and quieter; whispering sounds.

You will need

Drums; soft beaters; cymbals.

Music, dance and drama

- Listen to how the backing track features the sounds of some 17th-century instruments of the time (eg recorder, cornett and lute) alongside the mysterious jazzy sounds of double bass and drumkit.
- The song moves to a slow rhythm, like an early processional dance of the period called a *pavane*. Soft-beaters on drums could play softly along with this rhythm (going 'slow, quick-quick, slow, quick-quick' etc) while other children step in time too (going 'long, short-short, long, short-short' etc). Can they do this together in a simple circle dance?
- The chorus words are easy but the verses are a bit trickier, so try saying those words, verse by verse (especially the names and dates), before singing along.
- Verse 3 features whispering sounds. In small groups play whispering games and explore mixing hushed voices with soft cymbal sounds to create 'whispery music' getting louder and quieter.

- The tune is built from the notes CDEFG (with D as a 'home' note). In pairs and small groups, find these five notes on pitched percussion (eg glockenspiel, xylophone) or keyboards and use them to compose your own mysterious tunes.

Follow-up ideas

- Explore some experiments with torches, hand shapes and paper or fabric screens (or just against a wall). Make shadow puppets and perform with them in simple shadow theatres.
- The lantern used by Guy Fawkes still exists in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. See:
<https://www.ashmolean.org/guy-fawkes-lantern/>
http://www.teachinghistory100.org/objects/about_the_object/fawkes_lantern
- Look at contemporary pictures of Guy Fawkes and other people of the period. For example:
<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp01550/guy-fawkes>
- Talk about the clothes they wore, especially the hats. Design and make your own simple cardboard and fabric hats suitable for mysterious, 17th-century goings-on.
- Secret doors. Many classic children's stories have secret doors (eg the *Narnia* series by CS Lewis *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett) as well as modern novels and films. Make up stories of your own - or paint pictures - about discovering what lies behind a secret door.

Extra resources

- For general background to *The Gunpowder Plot* see:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zjkj382/articles/zjsqbdm>
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/quizzes/guy-fawkes-and-the-gunpowder-plot-quiz>
<https://learning.parliament.uk/en/resources/guy-fawkes-and-bonfire-night-primary/>
<https://learning.parliament.uk/en/resources/guy-fawkes-and-bonfire-night-video/>
 The last may not be suitable for the youngest viewers.

- For actual evidence / contemporary sources see:

<https://www.ashmolean.org/guy-fawkes-lantern#/>
<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp01550/guy-fawkes>

- For shadow puppet and shadow theatre ideas see:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zkqw2hv>
<https://www.stem.org.uk/resources/elibrary/resource/35265/>
<https://www.bdcmuseum.org.uk/kids/shadows-and-shadow-puppets/>
<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/174584923027152657/>
<https://britishmuseum.tumblr.com/post/152029049052/illuminating-shadow-puppets>



Download the backing track of this song



Shadows in the night

Shadows in the night
Shadows in the night
Plotters plan a deadly crime
1605 - a dangerous time!
Shadows in the night
Shadows in...the night.

Shadows in the night
Shadows in the night
Catesby, Fawkes and several more
Plot behind a secret door
Shadows in the night
Shadows in...the night.

Shadows in the night
Shadows in the night
Secret plans - shh, shh, shh!
Whispering - shh, shh, shh!
Shadows in the night
Shadows in...the night.
Shadows in...the night.



Shadows in the night

Words and music: Barry Gibson

Mysteriously

Dm A7 Dm C Dm C Dm

Sha - dows in the night, Sha - dows in the night,

7 C Bb G Dm C Bb G Dm C Dm

1. Plot - ters plan a dead - ly crime, Six - teen - oh - five, a dan - ger - ous time
2. Cate - sby, Fawkes and sev - eral more Plot ___ be - hind a se ___ cret door Sha - dows in the night,
3. Se - cret pla - ns, Shh - shh - shh! Whis - per - i - ng, Shh - shh - shh!

13 C Dm A7 CODA (after verse 3) Dm C Dm

Sha - dows in the night. Sha - dows in the night.

Hundreds of years ago

Focus

Time passing; fire safety; musical scales; simple rhythm-patterns.

You will need

Tambourines; drums; maracas; triangles.

Music, dance and drama

- Listen to how the backing track features instruments of the period - recorders, lute, crumhorn, harpsichord, harp and various brass instruments - to suggest the court of King James I. Recorder players can pick out some of the notes (C, D, E, F, G, A and B) while beginner ukulele players can softly strum the chords C, Dm and G - like a lute - in the choruses.
- The tune has a jig-like rhythm, bouncing gently along in 3/4. In Verse 1 tambourines can pick out the word rhythm that fits 'James the First' and 'Par-li-a-ment' (long-short-long) with the odd extra shake. In Verse 2 drums and maracas can tap out 'Gun-pow-der Plot' (short-short-short-long...). In Verse 3 triangles could tap on the words 'Just...plot... Just...Fawkes...'
- The backing track could work well for a dance procession (eg in an assembly introducing the characters in the story).
- In the coda there is some brief *scat* singing to the nonsense words 'doo-doo-doo' etc. Make up your own songs with scat phrases such as 'Be-do...', 'Ba ba ba...', 'Dm dm dm dm dm...' etc.

- The tune is made from the C major scale: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. In pairs or small groups find these notes on a recorder, glockenspiel or xylophone (also a high C) and use them to make up your own tunes.

Follow-up ideas

- What was your town or area like 100 years ago? 200 years? 300 years? 400 years? Or in 1605? How have things changed?
- 'Arguments and falling out'. In class circle time or similar discussion times, talk about different ways of getting along with friends, making up and resolving our differences.
- Discovering time travel. Make up stories to write about, illustrate and act out.
- Bangs and whistles. Think about the sounds made by fireworks, their safety aspects and dangers. For example, see:

<https://www.assemblies.org.uk/pri/2709/lots-of-fireworks>

Extra resources

- For some firework safety tips see:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/34710746>

- For historical fire safety equipment and words see:

<https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/application/files/9015/9618/8858/lr-misc-fire-glossary.pdf>

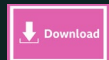
- For 21st century fire safety see:

<https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/schools/learning-resources/>

- For local and international initiatives see:

<http://www.sparkton.co.uk>

<https://sparkyschoolhouse.org>



Download the backing track of this song



Hundreds of years ago

Hundreds of years ago
Travelling back in time
James the First and Parliament
Falling-out and arguments
Hundreds of years ago
Hundreds of years ago

Hundreds of years ago
Travelling back in time
A Gunpowder Plot, hatched by a gang
To blow up the House of Lords with a BANG!
Hundreds of years ago
Hundreds of years ago

Hundreds of years ago
Travelling back in time
Just in time the plot uncovered
Just in time Guy Fawkes discovered!
Hundreds of years ago
Hundreds of years ago



Hundreds of years ago

Words and music: Barry Gibson

Flowing along

C Dm7 G7 C Dm7 G7 C Dm7 G7 C

Hun - dreds of years a - go, Tra - vel - ling

14 Dm7 G7 C F Em Dm9 G

back in time, 1. James the First and Par - lia - ment Fal - ling out and ar - gu - ments...

25 Dm7 G C Dm7 G7 C

*** CHORUS**

Hun - dreds of years a - go, Hun - dreds of years a - go,

35 G7 C F Em Dm9 G Dm7 G

2.A Gun - pow - der Plot, hatched by a gang To blow up the House of Lords with a BANG!..._

*** CHORUS**

46 C Dm7 G7 C

Hun - dreds of years a - go, Hun - dreds of years a - go,

54 G7 C F Em³ Dm9 G Dm7 G

3. Just in time the plot un - co - vered, Just in time Guy Fawkes dis - co - vered!

*** CHORUS**

65 C Dm7 G7 C

Hun - dreds of years a - go, Hun - dreds of years a - go,

73 C Dm7 G7 C

Doo - doo - doo doo - doo - doo, Hun - dreds of years a - go,

Remember, remember

Focus

Time passing; days and dates; steady-beat and rhythm patterns; higher and lower; up and down (pitch); saying then singing.

You will need

Guiro; hand-drums; woodblocks; triangles; ukuleles; swanee whistles; an old alarm clock.

Music, dance and drama

- Listen to how the tune of the chorus goes higher and lower, making up-and-down shapes. You can all show these shapes with your hands in the air, going up and down. The 'Remember, remember' words of the chorus are based on a famous traditional rhyme.
- Listen to how the verses go up step-by-step, with gaps for actions and also percussion patterns. Say the verse words slowly and carefully together, before fitting them to the tune.
- Try these actions in the 2-bar gaps: Verse 1 - wiggling firework fingers, then hands open book pages; Verse 2 - fingers 'tick-tock' side to side, in a regular steady beat, or tap an imaginary bell slowly. These actions should fit with the percussion rhythm patterns in the backing track.
- After practising these patterns a few times percussion players can perform them on guiro and hand drums (Verse 1), then woodblocks and triangle (Verse 2).
- In small groups with a few instruments (eg assorted percussion, ukuleles and swanee whistles) create music for a fizzling fireworks display.
- Another group can work out a dance for 'Fizzling fireworks'.

Follow-up ideas

- Bonfires. Find out about fire safety - eg:
<https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/schools/learning-at-home/fire-safety-education-at-home/>
- Time. If possible, look at an old-fashioned alarm clock together. Hear the sounds of winding it up, the regular ticking and the alarm bell ringing.
- Make up and tell each other more time travel 'stories from history'. Draw them as cartoons or storyboards.
- Days and dates. What are the special dates in your year? Festivals? Community events? Holidays? Birthdays? Make a class calendar chart for the whole year, showing everybody's birthday and some important dates to look forward to.

Extra resources

- Old clocks and watches. Check your local museum and see also:

<https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/objects/co1049/clock-clock>
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/search/?q=alarm%20clocks&page=1&id_category=THES48976
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/v/video-a-musical-automaton-clock/>
<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/galleries/clocks-and-watches>

- For a range of religious and other festivals and dates through the year see:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/assemblies-ks1-ks2-festivals-index/z96xwnb>

- For more background to bonfire night see:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/15351828>
<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resources/blog/sparkling-bonfire-night-resources>



Download the backing track of this song



Remember, remember

Remember, remember
The fifth of November
Gunpowder, treason and plot
I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot

Fireworks fizzle
And bonfires burn...
Stories from history
What can we learn?

(Chorus)

Ticking of clock
And ringing of bell...
Time goes on
And time will tell...

Remember, remember
The fifth of November
Gunpowder, treason and plot
I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot

Remember, remember...
Remember, remember...
Remember, remember...



Remember, remember

(Chorus-words based on traditional rhyme)

Words and music: Barry Gibson

CHORUS

Jauntily D Em A7 D A7 D A7 D Em A7

Re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber the fifth of No - vem - ber, Gun - pow - der, trea - son and plot

7 D A7 D A7 D A7 D *Last time to Coda ** Em A7

I see no rea - son why gun - pow - der trea - son should e - ver be for - got.

1.

12 D A7 Bm G (actions...) A7 D E7 A7 (actions...)

1. Fire - works fiz - zle and bon - fires burn... Sto - ries from his - to - ry, What can we learn?

19 ^{2.} D A7 Bm G (actions...) A7 D E7 A7 (actions...)

2. Tick - ing of clock And ring - ing of bell... Time goes on And time will tell...

26 *CODA Em A7 D A7 (actions...) D A7 (actions...) D A7 (actions...) D

Re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber Re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber Re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber