

# The Great Fire of London

Songs for KS1 about The Great Fire of 1666, including Thomas Farynor, Samuel Pepys and Christopher Wren.



# The Great Fire of London

These Notes include information on three songs about *The Great Fire of London* of 1666, which can be used to complement the history content on the [BBC Teach history pages](#) for KS1.

The songs are:

- Here in Pudding Lane (see page 3)
- Fire, fire, everywhere! (page 7)
- Let's get building! (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 about the causes of the Fire, a song about the events of the Fire, and a final song exploring the new buildings after the Fire. Thus the songs can be used to help pupils consolidate and sequence the important facts and outcomes of *The Great Fire of London*.

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.

In 1666 fires in London were quite common. Homes didn't have electricity, so real flames were used for lighting, cooking, and heating. Most buildings had timber frames and were built closely together - so once a fire had started it could easily spread.

It's thought that the fire started in a baker's shop early in the morning of 2nd September. The shop belonged to the king's baker, Thomas Farynor (Farriner), in Pudding Lane.

The fire spread quickly down Pudding Lane towards the River Thames and London Bridge, fanned by strong winds. As the fire reached the Thames it ignited warehouses full of highly flammable materials like oil. After just a few hours London Bridge was on fire too.

The fire lasted about four days. Famous buildings including St Paul's Cathedral, The Royal Exchange, and the Guildhall were completely destroyed, as well as 13,200 houses and 87 parish churches.

Firefighting was much more basic in 1666 and people didn't know nearly as much about stopping fires as we do today. The people used leather buckets and primitive tools - like water 'squirts' - to try to stop the fire; unsurprisingly, they didn't work very well.

Eventually gunpowder was used to blow up buildings in the path of the fire, to create significant firebreaks, and gradually the fire was brought under control. There are only six recorded deaths from the fire, but up to a third of the city was destroyed and more than 70,000 people were made homeless.

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

# Here in Pudding Lane

## Focus

Social history of streets and towns; clothes and writing; mammals and pets; musical scales; singing words clearly; steady beat; short and long notes.

## You will need

Drums, soft beaters, tambourines, triangles, xylophone, glockenspiel, keyboard.

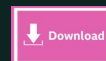
## Music, dance and drama

- Listen to how the backing track features the sounds of some 17th century instruments of the time: recorder, crumhorn, lute, harpsichord and hurdy-gurdy.
- The song has a fun, lilting 3/4 rhythm that you can sway along with gently as you sing. It mostly flows along, except for the word 'Pudding' which has a short-long rhythm each time.
- Percussion. In the choruses some large drums (or cardboard boxes) with soft beaters or hands can play on the words 'Here' and 'Lane'. At the start of Verse 2 tambourines can join in a 'long-short-long' pattern (listen to the backing-track here) then make up quicker delicate patterns for 'Quills...', etc. In Verse 3 quiet triangles can play occasional sounds to evoke sparks of light in the dark.

- The tune is built from the notes of the C major scale (C, D, E, F, G, A, B and C'). Encourage children to play these notes on a xylophone, glockenspiel or keyboard. They could then pick out each phrase of the tune by ear, or by following letters on a card: (G, G, F, A, G / C', C', B, A, G / A, A, F, G, A, G, A, E / A, A, F, G, A, G, A, E / G, G, F, A, G / G, A, E, D, C).
- Make a class street scene in dance and movement to fit with the backing track, recreating the atmosphere of the 17th century. For each verse a small group could briefly act out in mime details in the lyrics (1: shops, carrying things, dogs, cats; 2: writing with quills, putting on wigs and hats, nibbling pastry; 3: moving around in the dark).

## Follow-up ideas

- Find out about 17th century baking recipes for pies, puddings, bread, pastry and 'ship's biscuits' (also called 'hard tack', which Thomas Farynor's bakery may have been baking at the time!). Have a go together at some baking of your own.
- What dogs, cats, mice, rats and other mammals might be seen in your area or neighbourhood? What pets do some of you keep at home? Keep a class mammal diary of your observations.
- Design your own imaginative wigs and hats on paper. Try making some of these from cardboard, fabric, cartons and recycled plastic, etc.



Download the backing track of this song

- Find out how feathers from large birds such as goose, swan, turkey and crow have been used to make 'quills' for dipping into ink, for writing and drawing.
- Investigate the science of light, dark, candles and sparks, taking special care about fire safety.

### Extra resources

- For a special 'ship's biscuit' recipe see resources from the National Maritime Museum:

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/ships-biscuit>



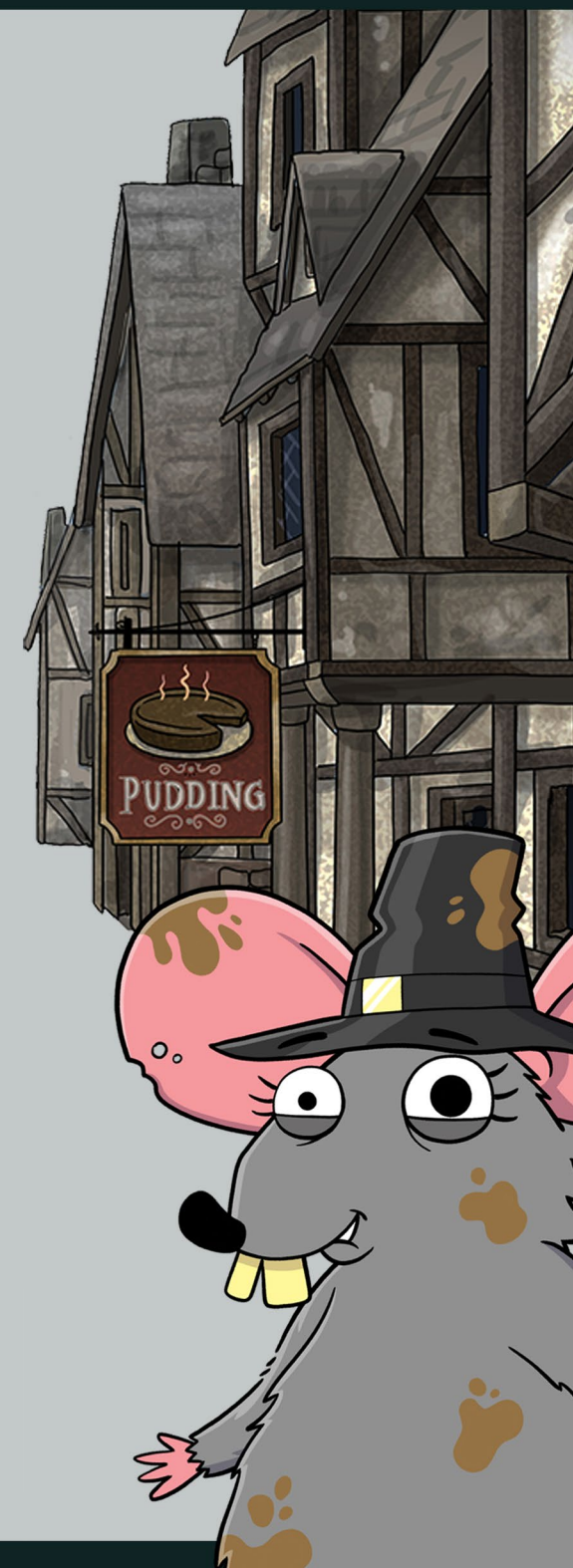
# Here in Pudding Lane

Here in Pudding Lane,  
Here in Pudding Lane,  
Pies and puddings  
And dogs and cats,  
Shops for this  
And shops for that,  
Here in Pudding Lane,  
Here in Pudding Lane.

Here in Pudding Lane,  
Here in Pudding Lane,  
Quills and candles  
And wigs and hats,  
Pastry nibbled  
By mice and rats,  
Here in Pudding Lane,  
Here in Pudding Lane.

Here in Pudding Lane,  
Here in Pudding Lane,  
Night in Farynor's  
Bakery dark,  
Help! Watch out  
For a fiery spark,  
Here in Pudding Lane,  
Here in Pudding Lane.

Here in Pudding Lane,  
Here in Pudding Lane.



# Here in Pudding Lane

Words and music: Barry Gibson

*With a lilt*

C Em Dm G7 C G9 C F C Em

Here in Pud - ding Lane, Here in Pud - ding Lane,

13 F C Em F C

1. Pies and pud - dings and dogs and cats, Shops for this and shops for that,  
2. Quills and can - dles and wigs and hats, Pas - try nib - bled by mice and rats,  
3. Night in Fa - ry - nor's bake - ry dark, Help! Watch out for a fie - ry spark,

**CHORUS**  
(Last time twice) G9 C G C

Here in Pud - ding Lane, Here in Pud - ding Lane,

# Fire, fire, everywhere!

## Focus

Fire safety; homes in history; maps in local areas; keeping a diary; listening to and copying rhythm patterns; saying then singing; close together notes (pitch).

## You will need

Hand drums (eg bongos); tambourines; cymbals; woodblocks; recorders; paper; water pouring (eg jugs and mugs).

## Music, dance and drama

- Listen to how the backing track features recorders and percussion alongside the sounds of modern instruments (electric guitar, synthesiser, cymbals and drum kit).
- In the choruses everyone can join in with air guitar and air drum actions! Listen to the backing track for percussion patterns to play along with in Verse 1 (tambourine), Verse 2 (bongos and hand drums), Verse 3 (tambourine), Verse 4 (all), Coda (everyone play a 'heartbeat' rhythm).
- The singing needs a sense of urgency! Practise saying the tricky words of the verses clearly, before singing them.
- The chorus hovers around just three notes (A, Bb and G) a bit like an emergency siren (sometimes heard in TV theme tunes about emergency services too). Practise playing and singing these notes on their own.

In small groups compose music for putting out a fire, using a few classroom instruments and sound-makers. It could begin with a simple, quiet repeating pattern (D, E, F, G / A, G, F, E). Then add in and build up fire-crackling sounds (eg drums, cymbals, woodblocks, paper). Then add watery sounds to put the fire out (eg recorders, swanee whistles, tambourines, water being poured). Finally make everything die down and slow down.

- Other groups can create a dance and drama scene for putting out a fire to fit with some of these new compositions (or with the backing track).

## Follow-up ideas

- Find out about the diary of Samuel Pepys. In groups or as a class (and for some individual children) you could start keeping a daily diary about events and happenings in your lives at home and at school.
- Find out about fire safety in your home and school. Create pictures, maps and posters about it.
- Look at pictures of 17th century furniture and compare it with modern tables, chairs, cupboards, bookcases, etc. How are the materials different? How about the way it is made?
- Make a word list of some parts of different kinds of building and add small pictures of examples - stairs, floors, windows, doors. What else?



Download the backing track of this song

- Look at and make maps for streets, lanes, rivers, canals, buildings and other special features in your area. How do the symbols on the map 'key' work?

### Extra resources

- For information about furniture, rooms and buildings of different periods (including the 17th century) see the Museum of the Home (formerly the Geffrye Museum):

<https://www.museumofthehome.org.uk>

- See also museums in your local area, illustrated books in your library and online.
- For historical fire safety equipment and some unusual 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 examples of local and international initiatives see:

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

<https://sparkyschoolhouse.org>

- For maps and mapping ideas see:

<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/education/teacher-resources>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/geography-ks1--ks2-maps/zdwhpg8>





# Fire, fire, everywhere!

Fire, fire, everywhere!  
Fire, fire, take great care!  
Fire, fire, everywhere!  
Fire, fire, take great care!

Fire in all the buildings,  
Room and roof and hall,  
Find a place of safety,  
Mind as houses fall!

## Chorus

Burning chairs and tables,  
Burning stairs and floors,  
Fire through the windows,  
Fire through the doors!

## Chorus

Samuel Pepys' diary,  
Tells a tale of strife,  
Animals and people,  
Running for their life!

## Chorus

People in a panic,  
Down the streets and lanes,  
Even by the river,  
London is in flames!

Fire, fire, everywhere!  
Fire, fire, take great care!  
Fire, fire, everywhere!  
Fire, fire, take great care!

Fire, fire, fire, fire,  
Fire, fire, everywhere!



# Fire, fire, everywhere!

Words and music: Barry Gibson

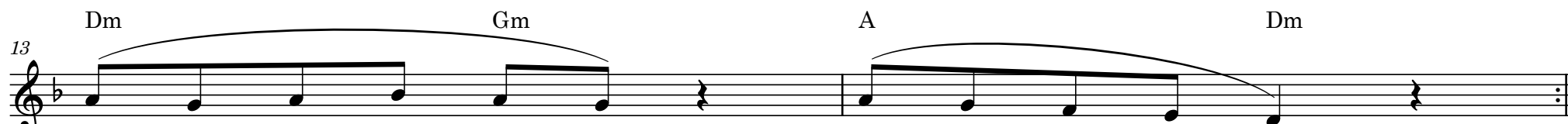
*With urgency!*

Musical notation for the first line, measures 1-6. Chords: Dm, A, Dm. Lyrics: *Fi - re, fi - re, ev' - ry - where! Fi - re, fi - re, Take great care!*

Musical notation for the second line, measures 7-10. Chord: A. Lyrics: *Fi - re, fi - re, ev' - ry - where! Fi - re, fi - re, Take great care!* *Last time to \*CODA*

Musical notation for the third line, measures 11-14. Chords: Dm, Bb, A. Lyrics: *1.Fire in all the build - ings, Room and roof and hall,  
2.Burn - ing chairs and ta - bles, Burn - ing stairs and floors,  
3.Sam - uel Pe - pys' dia - ry Tells a tale of strife,  
4.Peop - le in a pa - nic Down the streets and lanes,*


13



Find a place of safe - ty, Mind as hou - ses fall!  
 Fi - re through the win - dows, Fi - re through the doors!  
 A - ni - mals and peo - ple Run - ning for their life!  
 E - ven by the ri - ver Lon - don is in flames!

## \* CODA

15



Fi - re, fi - re, Fi - re, fi - re, Fi - re, fi - re, ev' - ry - where!

# Let's get building!

## Focus

Tunes from chords; houses, homes and buildings; 3D shapes.

## You will need

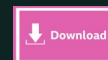
Glockenspiel; xylophone; chime-bars; melodica; keyboards.

## Music, dance and drama

- The tune is based on notes from just the chords of C major (C, E, G) and F major (F, A, C'), featuring especially the sounds of bright trumpets and brass instruments. It is made of short phrases all going up, from lower to higher. Can you make your voice 'lift up' as you sing them? Try looking upwards and raising your eyebrows - it helps! NB: the last high note of all is quite long and loud, so make sure you take plenty of breath for that last phrase.
- In pairs or small groups find the notes of the tune (C, E, G and F, A, C') on pitched percussion (eg glockenspiel, chime bars or xylophone), melodicas, keyboards, etc, playing and listening. Use them to compose 'fanfares' by making up different patterns and phrases going up...down...up + down...staying on one note...down + up...and so on.
- Create a dance and drama scene to fit with the backing track, about working together to build buildings. You could use your bodies to suggest some of the shapes in the song (towers, steeples, domes, etc) or devise a sequence where you assemble large pieces of cardboard 'scenery'.

## Follow-up ideas

- Houses and homes. Look at photos and make drawings and artwork of places where people live near you - eg different houses, bungalows, maisonettes, mobile homes, caravans, blocks of flats, etc, and their surroundings. What might make those areas better to live in?
- Cathedral. Look at pictures of St Paul's and other cathedrals around the UK and the world. Find out about all sorts of religious buildings in your area - churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, chapels, etc - and the people who visit them. Make pictures of some.
- In pairs or small groups, use wooden blocks, modelling clay, construction kits, etc, to help design your own houses and homes.
- Towers, steeples, domes and monuments. Explore the maths of some simple 3D shapes with the help of paper, tape, card and recycled materials. Try putting together cubes, cuboids, cylinders, cones, pyramids and simple domes.



Download the backing track of this song

## Extra resources

- For some fun architecture starters see:

<https://www.architecture.com/education-cpd-and-careers/learning/riba-national-schools-programme/learning-resources/learning-at-home>

- For help with discussion about different religious traditions see:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zxnygk7>

- For an introduction to 2D and 3D shapes in maths see:

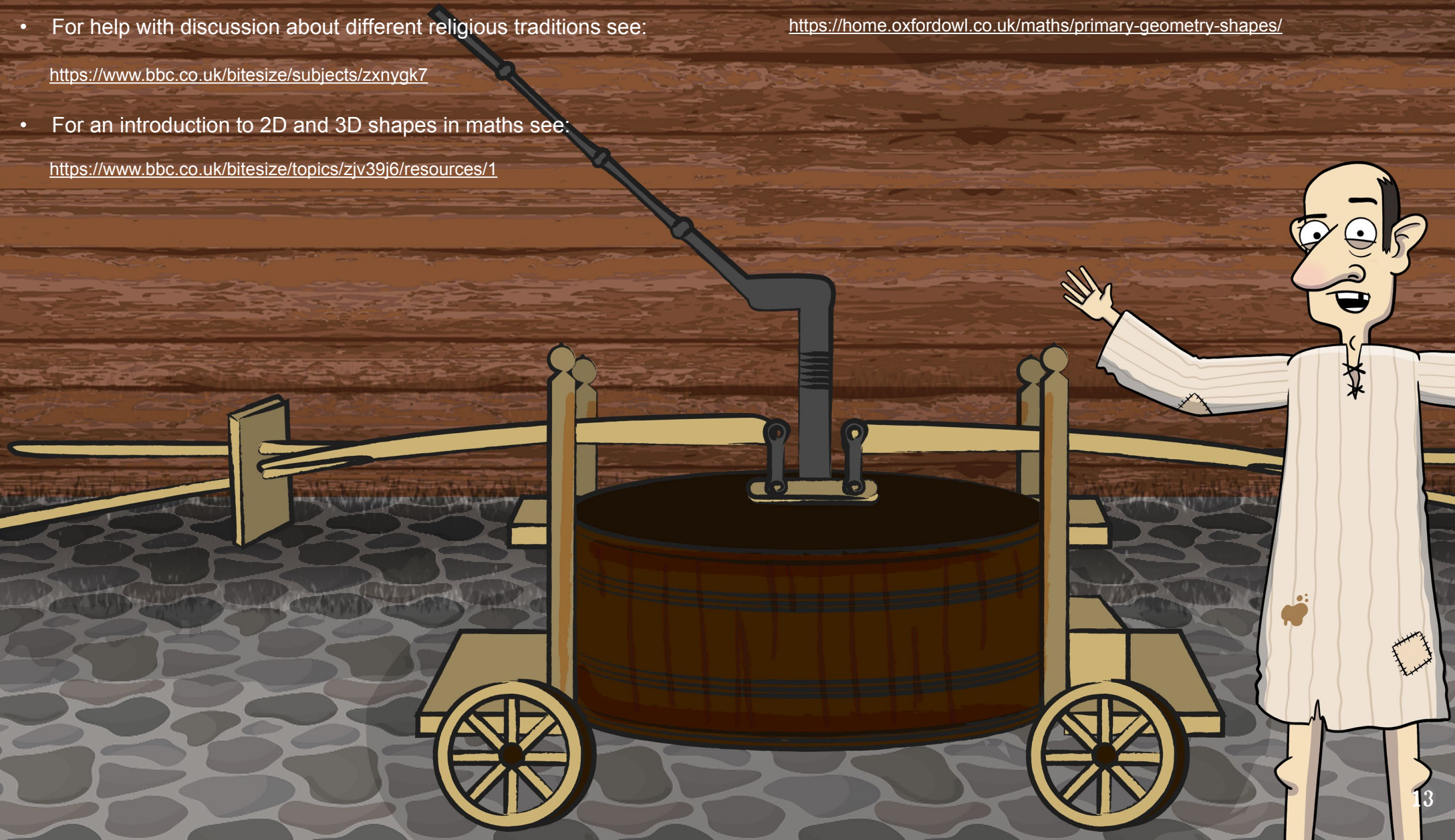
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zjv39j6/resources/1>

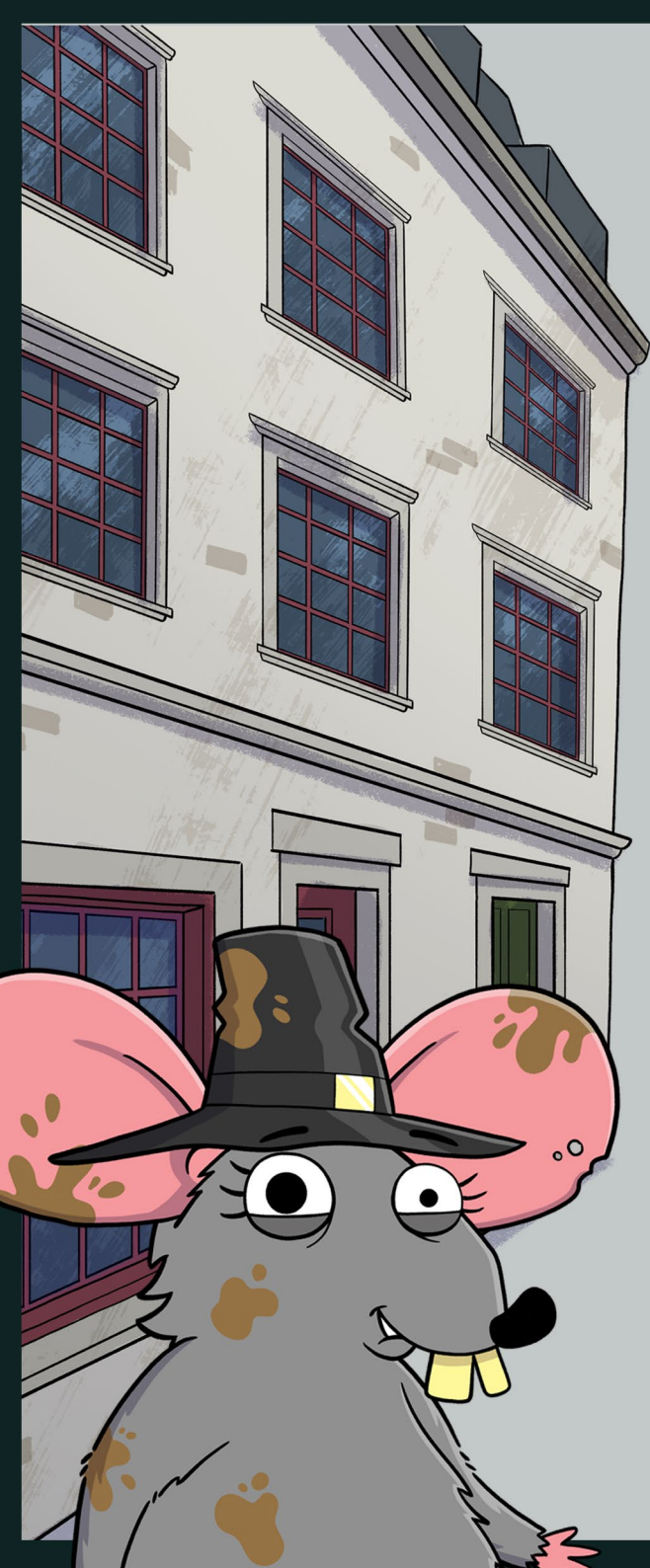
- For some other shape activities see:

<https://nrich.maths.org/9020>

- For geometry for different age groups see:

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/maths/primary-geometry-shapes/>





# Let's get building!

Let's get building  
Let's get building  
Let's get building  
Build up high!

Build new houses  
Build new houses  
Build new houses  
Of brick and stone!

Chorus (Let's get building...)

Towers and steeples  
Towers and steeples  
Towers and steeples  
Straight and strong!

Chorus (Let's get building...)

Great cathedral  
Great cathedral  
Great cathedral  
Huge, great dome!

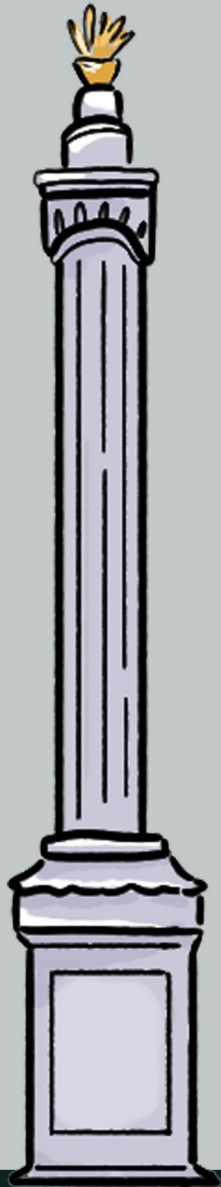
Chorus (Let's get building...)

Tall stone column  
Tall stone column  
Tall stone column  
Monument!

Let's get building  
Let's get building  
Let's get building  
Build up high!

Let's get building  
Let's get building  
Let's get building  
Build up high!

Build...up...high!



# Let's get building!

Words and music: Barry Gibson

*Steadily* **CHORUS**

C G C F C F

Let's get build - ing, Let's get build - ing, Let's get build - ing, Build up

10 C *Last time sing chorus twice, then go to \*CODA*

C F C

high!

1. Build new hou - ses, Build new hou - ses, Build new  
 2. Towers and stee - ples, Towers and stee - ples, Towers and  
 3. Great ca - the - dral, Great ca - the - dral, Great ca -  
 4. Tall stone co - lumn, Tall stone co - lumn, Tall stone

16 F C \* **CODA** F C

F C F C

hou - ses of brick and stone.  
 stee - ples, \_\_\_\_\_ straight and strong.  
 - the - dral, \_\_\_\_\_ huge, great dome!  
 co - lumn, \_\_\_\_\_ Mo - nu - ment!

Build up high!