

SAMPLE ISSUE · WEEK OF 2 NOVEMBER 2026

Bonfire Night & Britain in the Fifties

Print on A4, or enlarge to A3 for the group table.



Fireside Weekly

About 60 minutes

Any member of staff can run it

Large print

Session plan

- 5 min** **Welcome.** Say today's date and that Bonfire Night is this week. Say the old rhyme together: "Remember, remember, the fifth of November."
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- 15 min** **The Big Quiz (page 2).** Play Round 1 in two teams and save Round 2 for another day. Read each question twice. Stuck? Offer the choices in brackets.
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- 10 min** **Old money challenge (page 3).** Residents are the experts. Ask them to order the coins and teach the staff.
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- 10 min** **Read-aloud story (page 4).** Read slowly, then use the three questions under the story.
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- 15 min** **Working lives or talking cards (pages 5 and 7).** In pairs or small groups, with a cup of tea. Note anything new on page 8.
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- 5 min** **Close.** Ask everyone for one memory from today. Thank people for what they shared.

Covering for the activities coordinator? Everything you need is here. Print pages 2 to 9, read this plan once, and follow the timings.

Adapting it. For residents who prefer a quieter session, read the story one-to-one and use two or three talking cards. The puzzles on page 6 suit residents who like to work alone.

Safety. No sparklers or fireworks indoors. If you share toffee, check each resident's diet and swallowing plan first.



The Big Quiz

Two rounds of eight: one for today, one for another session. The choices in brackets make any question easier. Answers are on the last page.

ROUND 1 • REMEMBER, REMEMBER

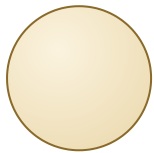
1. Children asked passers-by for a “penny for the ...” what?
(guy or bonfire?)
2. In what year was the Gunpowder Plot? (1605 or 1805?)
3. Which king were the plotters trying to kill? (James I or Charles I?)
4. Where was the gunpowder hidden? (the House of Lords or the Tower?)
5. What false name did Guy Fawkes give when caught?
(John Johnson or John Smith?)
6. What makes bonfire toffee dark? (black treacle or golden syrup?)
7. Which Yorkshire ginger cake is eaten on Bonfire Night?
(parkin or Eccles cake?)
8. Finish the rhyme: “Remember, remember, the fifth of November,
gunpowder, treason and ...”

ROUND 2 • REMEMBER WHEN? 1948 TO 1971

1. In what year did the NHS begin? (1948 or 1958?)
2. Many families bought their first TV to watch which 1953 event?
(the coronation or the Cup Final?)
3. Which mountain was first climbed in Coronation year?
(Everest or Snowdon?)
4. Who ran the first four-minute mile, in 1954? (Bannister or Stirling Moss?)
5. In what year did sweet rationing finally end? (1953 or 1963?)
6. Who scored a hat-trick in the 1966 World Cup final?
(Hurst or Bobby Moore?)
7. Who was the first man on the Moon, in 1969? (Armstrong or Aldrin?)
8. On what date in 1971 did Britain go decimal? (15 February or 1 April?)

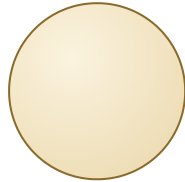
Old Money Challenge

Pounds, shillings and pence. Who can put these coins in order of value?



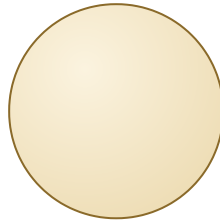
A tanner

6d, sixpence



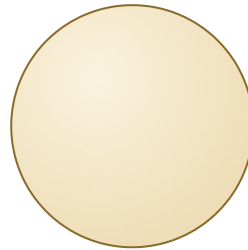
A bob

1s, a shilling



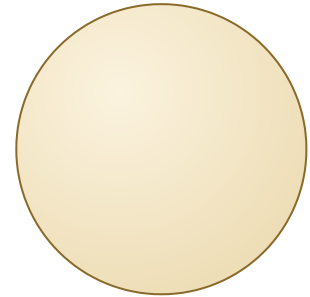
A florin

2s



Half a crown

2s 6d



A crown

5s

Coins drawn at actual size when printed at 100% on A4 (sizes from the Royal Mint).

Ten-bob note

10s, half a pound

CAN YOU WORK IT OUT?

1. How many old pennies made a shilling?
2. How many shillings made a pound?
3. So how many old pennies were in a pound?
4. How many tanners make a bob?
5. How many half-crowns make a pound?
6. A florin and a tanner together make which coin's value?
7. After decimalisation, what was a ten-bob note worth?

The Guy on Albert Street

A short story to read aloud, slowly. It is fiction, written for this pack.

Every year, the children of Albert Street started building the guy on the first of November. Old Mr Hughes from number twelve gave them a pair of trousers with the knees gone, and Mrs Price found a jacket that had been waiting for the rag-and-bone man.

They stuffed him with newspaper until he was round as a pudding. Little Eileen painted his face on a paper bag, with a moustache that went up at one end and down at the other. They called him Mr Moustache, and nobody could think of a better name.

For four days they wheeled him up and down in an old pram with a squeaky wheel. “Penny for the guy, mister?” By Saturday they had one and ninepence, which went on sparklers and a bag of chestnuts.

On the night itself the whole street came out. The fathers built the bonfire on the waste ground at the end of the road. The mothers brought potatoes wrapped in newspaper to push into the embers, and someone always burnt their fingers getting them out.

When they lifted Mr Moustache on top, Eileen went very quiet. “He was a good guy,” she said. Her brother put an arm round her. Then the first rocket went up, everyone said “Oooh” at once, and the whole street glowed orange.

TALK ABOUT IT

- Who made a guy when you were young? What was it made from?
- What would you have bought with one and ninepence?
- Did your street come together for Bonfire Night, or for something else?

Working Lives

Everyone in the room has decades of experience, at work and at home. Ask about it.

- Your first job, paid or at home: how did it start, and what was your first day like?
- Your first wage packet or pocket money: how much was it, and what did you spend it on?
- Your proudest moment, at work or at home.
- A skill you had that most young people today don't.
- The best boss you ever had, or the best neighbour.

Anything new about a resident? Note it here for their life-story record.

Puzzles

WORD SEARCH

G	U	N	P	O	W	D	E	R	A	C	I
C	P	T	R	S	H	T	B	B	B	F	L
H	P	R	N	P	T	O	W	E	O	R	C
E	A	E	C	A	N	F	E	R	N	O	M
S	R	A	E	R	T	F	W	E	F	C	W
T	L	C	L	K	B	E	A	S	I	K	N
N	I	L	L	L	L	E	B	A	R	E	Y
U	A	E	A	E	C	S	C	L	E	T	M
T	M	E	R	R	C	C	R	U	N	B	E
M	E	N	C	S	C	P	A	S	W	A	Y
O	N	O	W	A	Y	C	C	C	D	I	P
M	T	O	W	R	R	R	U	C	T	T	A

BONFIRE TREACLE SPARKLER ROCKET CHESTNUT TOFFEE
PARLIAMENT CELLAR GUNPOWDER

FINISH THE SAYING

A stitch in time ...

Many hands ...

Don't count your chickens ...

Every cloud ...

Too many cooks ...

The early bird ...

Talking Cards

Cut along the dotted lines. Use in pairs or one-to-one.

What was your first job, and how did you get it?

What did you do with your first wage packet?

Where did you grow up?
Describe your street.

What was a typical Saturday night when you were twenty?

Who was the best cook in your family? What did they make?

What's the best piece of advice you were ever given?

Where was the best holiday you ever had?

What would you tell your twenty-year-old self?



Activity Record

Bonfire Night & Britain in the Fifties · Date: _____ · Run by: _____

Engagement: **1** watched or listened · **2** joined in · **3** led or shared a memory. Copy anything new into the resident's care plan or life-story record.

Resident	Took part	Engagement 1-3	What they enjoyed, said or remembered

Answers

ROUND 1 • REMEMBER, REMEMBER

1. Guy
2. 1605
3. King James I (James VI of Scotland)
4. Under the House of Lords
5. John Johnson
6. Black treacle
7. Parkin
8. plot

ROUND 2 • REMEMBER WHEN? 1948 TO 1971

1. 1948
2. The Queen's coronation
3. Mount Everest
4. Roger Bannister
5. 1953
6. Geoff Hurst
7. Neil Armstrong
8. 15 February 1971

OLD MONEY CHALLENGE

1. 12
2. 20
3. 240
4. 2
5. 8
6. Half a crown (2s 6d)
7. 50p

FINISH THE SAYING

1. A stitch in time ... saves nine
2. Many hands ... make light work
3. Don't count your chickens ... before they hatch
4. Every cloud ... has a silver lining
5. Too many cooks ... spoil the broth
6. The early bird ... catches the worm

WORD SEARCH

G	U	N	P	O	W	D	E	R	A	C	I
C	P	T	R	S	H	T	B	B	B	F	L
H	P	R	N	P	T	O	W	E	O	R	C
E	A	E	C	A	N	F	E	R	N	O	M
S	R	A	E	R	T	F	W	E	F	C	W
T	L	C	L	K	B	E	A	S	I	K	N
N	I	L	L	L	L	E	B	A	R	E	Y
U	A	E	A	E	C	S	C	L	E	T	M
T	M	E	R	R	C	C	R	U	N	B	E
M	E	N	C	S	C	P	A	S	W	A	Y
O	N	O	W	A	Y	C	C	C	D	I	P
M	T	O	W	R	R	R	U	C	T	T	A