

Try not to look at this until you've done all the exercises that go with the listening.

Bonfire Night

Richard: The year was 1605. James 1st was King of England and he was a Protestant. He made life for Catholics very difficult, even more difficult than in the past.

One day a group of 13 English Catholics decided enough was enough. They wanted a new king or queen, and this time a Catholic one. So they decided on a plot to kill King James and blow up the Houses of Parliament. The date they chose was 5th November, the next time King James opened parliament.

The men bought a house next door to the parliament building. This house had a cellar that went under the parliament building. They decided to fill the cellar with enough gunpowder for a huge explosion to blow up the building and the king.

One man was given the job of lighting the gunpowder. His name was Guy Fawkes. However, on the morning of the 5th November soldiers discovered Guy hiding in the cellar with 36 barrels of gunpowder. He was arrested, tortured and killed. All 13 men were found and killed. The gunpowder plot was a failure.

To celebrate, King James 1 ordered the people of England to light a bonfire. Now every year on 5 November bonfires are built to remember the gunpowder plot. Right on top of the bonfire is the "Guy", a model of Guy Fawkes. November is usually cold so people wear warm clothes and eat warm food: potatoes, sausages and soup. Not forgetting the fireworks of course, there is always fireworks!