



Guy Fawkes – Britain’s Most Famous Traitor (B2 -Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. How would you define a traitor?
2. Can you name any famous traitors in your country’s history?
3. Spies are often considered traitors in one country and heroes in another. Can you name any?
4. Have you ever heard of Guy Fawkes?
5. If so, what do you know about him?

B – Listen and answer

Listen to the two parts of the article (without reading) and choose the correct answer.

Part One

1. The Catholic conspirators of November 1605 intended to kill
a) just King James I. b) just the king and his ministers. c) everybody present at the time.
2. Guy Fawkes, the most notorious of the group, was not brought up as a Catholic.
a) True. b) False. c) The article doesn’t say.
3. The plot was only planned a few weeks in advance.
a) True. b) False. c) The article doesn’t say.
4. Guy Fawkes was caught while he was
a) carrying barrels of gunpowder. b) about to light the fuse. c) writing an anonymous letter.
5. After their arrest, the conspirators were executed
a) at the Tower of London. b) by burning. c) in a very cruel way.

Part Two

6. During the reign of Elizabeth I, Catholic priests
a) could hold masses in private houses. b) held Protestant religious services.
c) were severely punished for holding masses.
7. According to historian Antonia Fraser, Guy Fawkes
a) was tall and strong. b) had a dark brown moustache and a long flowing beard.
c) was small and heavily-built.
8. People began to celebrate 5th November with bonfires and fireworks in
a) 1606. b) the 1650s. c) the 19th century.
9. Every 5th November, around is spent on fireworks.
a) £150 million b) £20 million c) £115 million
10. Now Guy Fawkes masks are often worn by people protesting against
a) governments. b) financial institutions. c) both of these

C – Read and answer

Read the two parts of the article and answer the questions.

1. What did the conspirators hope to achieve by blowing up Parliament and killing King James?
2. How did Guy Fawkes gain military experience?
3. What made government ministers decide to order the House of Lords to be searched?
4. How did Guy Fawkes avoid the punishment suffered by the other conspirators?
5. What consequences did the plot have for Catholics in England?
6. What damage would the explosion have done to the area if the plot had succeeded?
7. What has changed in the practice of burning effigies on bonfires on Guy Fawkes Night?
8. Why did members of the Occupy movement adopt Guy Fawkes masks to hide their identity?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. Before the development of railways, goods were transported in _____ on rivers and canals.
2. The country's former president was _____ last year in a military coup
3. The animal we saw in the park last night was a fox not a cat. It had a _____ tail.
4. After cleaning up the garden, we lit a _____ to burn all the old wood and dry leaves.
5. Your _____ are your arms and legs.
6. Many towns in Europe celebrate their patron saint's day by holding a _____.
7. When the volcano erupted, residents were forced to _____ from their homes.
8. The robber entered the bank wearing the uniform of a security guard as a _____.

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 4)

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. Use between 2 and 5 words including the word given.

Example: Fawkes and twelve other conspirators planned to blow up Parliament.

ONE Fawkes was one of thirteen conspirators planning to blow up Parliament.

1. The aim of the conspiracy was to kill King James and his entourage.

AT The conspiracy _____ King James and his entourage.

2. Fawkes's parents were prominent Protestants.

BORN Fawkes _____ prominent Protestant family.

3. Fawkes's involvement in the plot started in April 1604.

BECAME Fawkes _____ in the plot in April 1604.

4. Some conspirators started to doubt whether the plot was a good thing.

SECOND Some conspirators started _____ about the plot.

5. During the first search, they didn't find anything in the building.

WAS During the first search _____ in the building.

6. Fawkes only revealed the names of his co-conspirators after great suffering.

DID Only after great suffering _____ of his co-conspirators.

F – Write about it

Write about a plot to assassinate a public figure in your country's history. Mention:

- who the designated victim was;
- who the conspirators were;
- where/when the events took place;
- the reason for the assassination plot;
- whether it was successful;
- what the consequences were.

Answers: Guy Fawkes – Britain's Most Famous Traitor (B2)

B – Listen and answer

1. c 2. a 3. b 4. b 5. c 6. c 7. a 8. b 9. a 10. c

C – Read and answer

1. They hoped to inspire a revolt against Protestantism and force a violent change of monarch and government. 2. He fought for Spain against Protestants in the Netherlands. 3. Lord Monteagle told them about the anonymous letter he had received warning him not to attend the opening of Parliament. 4. He fell, or jumped, and died instantly of a broken neck. 5. Laws against Catholics became more severe and advances towards religious tolerance were put back centuries. 6. It would have destroyed the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey and seriously damaged buildings up to 500 metres away. 7. In more recent times, instead of burning effigies of the Pope or Guy Fawkes, people have often burnt effigies of political figures, like Putin. 8. They were inspired by the anarchistic revolutionary in a 1982 comic book series and a 2005 film who wore a Guy Fawkes mask.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. barges 2. overthrown 3. bushy 4. bonfire 5. limbs 6. firework display 7. flee
8. disguise

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. aimed at killing 2. was born into a 3. became involved 4. to have second thoughts
5. nothing was found 6. did Fawkes reveal the names