

Safety Awareness and Fire Education - Gloucestershire
Activity Notes - Calling 999

Class	Years 5 and 6
Topic:	Calling 999
Activity:	1
Over view of activity	History of the Fire and Rescue Service
What happened when	Notes
Romans were the first to have organised firefighters.	The Romans used slaves called 'familia publica' as firefighters until one disastrous fire in AD 6. Then the Emperor passed the responsibility to the Roman Army who established the 'Corps of Vigiles'; the first organised firefighters. Being a Vigiles was seen as an honourable means of obtaining full Roman citizenship. They would also 'police' the cities, capturing runaway slaves and watching over the clothes of Romans at the baths. There would have been 'Vigiles' in Britain during Roman times. When the Romans left Britain, so did the 'firefighters'.
William the Conqueror introduced the first fire safety law – to put out fires and lights at dusk	William the Conqueror introduced the first 'Couvre-feu' or Curfew law (French for covering of the fire), which stated that fires and lights had to be put out at nightfall to try to stop the number of fires. This was an unpopular law because it was hard to light the fire again in the morning, and it didn't work.... The first Great Fire of London was in 1212. Allegedly 12,000 people died.
The Great Fire of London 1666 brought about the fire service today.	The second Great Fire of London started in a bakers shop in Pudding Lane at 2 o'clock in the morning on Sunday 2nd September 1666. It would burn for four days and destroy five-sixths of the largest city in Europe, however it would also lead to the development of the fire service today. Insurance companies paid for teams of men to put out fires in the houses they insured. They then joined together to form fire brigades which evolved into the fire and rescue service today. Once your home was insured you were given a metal badge 'fire mark' to fix to the building. When a fire broke out, if a 'brigade' arrived and it was not their company's mark, often they would leave the building to burn. Over time the companies realised it was in their best interests to work together and fire brigades, paid by public money were formed
The role of a modern firefighter	Today firefighters have a wide range of roles including: Intervention: (helping at emergencies) Firefighting, road traffic collisions, water rescue, search and rescue, rescue with ropes, chemical incidents. Prevention: (trying to keep people safe) Education at schools, talking to the public, home safety checks, putting up smoke alarms. Protection: (making the building safe) Making sure public buildings have smoke alarms, sprinkler systems, fire doors, clear escape routes etc.