



Great Fire of London

Guided Portrait Discussions

These portrait discussions give questions for a teacher to ask the children, with possible suggested answers in brackets. It may be necessary for the teacher to probe a bit further with supplementary questions and to add little bits of information to arrive at the full meaning.

Elizabeth Pepys by James Thomson, 1828 after John Hayls, 1666, NPG D5507

How is this portrait different from the other ones you have been looking at?

(In black and white, not a painting but copied from a painting and then printed on paper)

Do you think that Elizabeth is pretty?

(Pepys thought she was - they were very fond of each other even though they had quite a few arguments)

This picture was painted as a pair to Samuel Pepys's portrait, but sadly Elizabeth's painting was destroyed many years ago - why is it important to look after things from the past?

(Think about how useful all the things in this website have been in helping you find out about the Fire of London)

We know a bit about what Elizabeth Pepys looked like from this print, but not the colours because the painting hasn't survived - could you help by choosing some good colours and doing a portrait of her?

(Discuss good colours to use - maybe look at the colours in the other paintings, especially Charles II's clothes. Try to avoid colours that were not available then - lime green, anything fluorescent, very bright purples and so on)