

You are going to read a magazine article about fire. Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-I) for each part (1-7) of the article. There is one extra heading which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

- A A historic English disaster.
- B Fighting fires high up.
- C Fire is not always destructive.
- D Human mastery of fire.
- E Developments in firefighting methods.
- F Saving trees - if they can.
- G Natural disaster leads to total destruction.
- H Do-it-yourself destruction.
- I Drowning fires with water.

## When Fire Escapes

We have now got fire under control - or just about.

0

D

These days, we have learned to control fire so well that it has almost vanished from everyday life. It is only on the rare occasion that it slips out of our control that we realise what a destructive element it can be.

1

Fires were very common in the past. In 1666 the Great Fire of London destroyed three quarters of the city. The fire began in a baker's shop in Pudding Lane and burned for three days. It destroyed 400 streets and 13,200 houses. St Paul's church was burnt to the ground, along with 86 churches and many other official buildings like the Royal Exchange and the Custom House.

2

In 1923, a firestorm devastated all of Tokyo. A firestorm is a large uncontrollable fire which is kept burning by strong winds. This was the greatest peacetime fire of modern times. It was started by an earthquake and this set off local fires from power cables and cooking pots, which rapidly burnt the houses made of wood and paper.

3

The first official fire brigade was set up in London in 1684 by Nicholas Barbon. The first fire engines were operated by hand by up to 30 men. In 1829 the steam fire engine was invented. Modern fire brigades have many specialist vehicles to fight fires in all sorts of circumstances.

4

The basic vehicle is the fire engine, which has a tank that can carry several thousand litres of water and

300 metres of hose-pipe. These can deliver up to 7,500 litres of water per minute and the pressure is so strong that many fires are "knocked out". Fireboats, however, can pump up to 100,000 litres per minute.

5

In order to put out fires which have broken out in high places in multi-storey buildings, most modern fire brigades have trucks with long ladders and platforms that rotate at the top of the ladders. Water, with its ability to cool, can put out most fires, but fires involving some easily burnt metals need to be put out with a powder like graphite or salt.

6

Forest fires can be the most damaging and dangerous. To try and stop them, fire fighters remove trees and bushes to try and create a firebreak. They also use helicopters and aeroplanes to drop bombs of chemicals on the fire in attempts to stop it spreading. Sometimes, though, once a forest fire is out of control, there is little anyone can do. For example, a forest fire began in Borneo in September 1982, and burned until July 1983, destroying 36,000 square kilometres of forest.

7

Fire fighters say the three main causes of fires are accidents, people throwing away burning matches and cigarettes, and electrical faults. Other leading causes of fires in buildings are cooking equipment, machines that overheat and open fires. Another cause of fires are people who start them deliberately: arsonists. Figures from the United States suggest that ten per cent of fires are deliberately started by people who want to make large insurance claims.

