

Fire at Night

It's ready steady sticks for fiery fun,
The strike of the match is the starter's gun.
Up go the flames, long-jumping sky,
The smoke catches up, hurdling high.
The crowd stamp their frozen feet
Clap their hands for the winning heat.
Guy Fawkes sits on top of the pyre,
Easily beaten, eaten by fire.
Who is the quickest in the scorching race?
Flames of gold grab first place.
Who beat the day? The crowd then roars
The moon made silver to the stars' applause.
Who has come third? No one remembers,
As they all sprint home, leaving only bronze embers.
As clouds shuffle by with a marathon creep,
Children in bed clutch the prize of sleep.

Andrew Fusek Peters



Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Read the text, then answer the questions.

- 1.** This poem describes a bonfire as if it is a different event. What is the event? Give three examples that tell you this.

- 2.** Why does the writer use 'gold', 'bronze' and 'silver' at the end of the poem?

- 3.** Which athletics events are mentioned in the poem?

- 4.** What won the 'scorching race'?

- 5.** Explain the meaning of these lines:
'Who beat the day? The crowd then roars
The moon made silver to the stars' applause.'

- 6.** Why does the poet refer to 'bronze embers'?

- 7.** What features of the poem can help you learn to recite it by heart?
