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What makes the Big Bang

The reason that I chose gunpowder for my personal research report is because of my experiences with gunpowder and my plans for the future in the military. The points will include how gunpowder works, the earliest uses of gunpowder, and the uses of gunpowder today.

The first point will be about how gunpowder works. The reason that things work today are because they all started out with directions or ingredients. Gunpowder began when it was mixed with saltpeter, sulphur, and charcoal. When these three compounds are mixed together, they create a volatile form, which is gunpowder. Gunpowder, when it is exposed to heat, is very unstable. Leaving the substance over an open flame wouldn’t be the brightest idea. On the other hand, it is stable when you put water on it, or moisture is in contact with the substance. Then it will not ignite and you have a faulty powder at your disposal. Another nickname for gunpowder is black powder, because of its black color. The reason for gunpowder obtaining its black form is because when it is mixed with charcoal it forms into a black substance (Baldwin)

The next point is the earliest uses of gunpowder. The most notable uses of gunpowder in the early centuries was the use of it in rifles, cannons, and flares. For the longest time gunpowder was used in rifles, and then as it evolved it became smokeless powder combined with cordite to create a more effective and deadlier weapon (FIREARMS TUTORIAL). Several of the firing mechanisms that were used in rifles that used purely black powder for firing were matchlock, wheel lock, flintlock, and percussion. As the world continued to evolve, so did gunpowder. During the 1800s gunpowder was continually being upgraded with other substances to make the shooter less vulnerable (FIREARMS TUTORIAL).

The last point is about the uses today with gunpowder. Even though gunpowder is not part of pyrotechnics that are used today, it is still the foundation of how modern day fireworks are used (Bradley). Gunpowder is not used widely as a fire starter, it is used in small quantities in flares, both for civilian and military use. The civilian version of the flare is used in a flare gun and as a maritime distress signal for people that are stranded (Smita). Another use for gunpowder is in grenades. The earliest grenades were hollow metal balls that were filled with gunpowder and had a slow-burning wick. Some of the early grenades were dangerous because the wick could be cut short or there could be too much powder. As grenades were modernized even more, they were proven to be safer with firing pins; now if you were to pull the pin on a grenade, and then put it back in, you have a safe grenade. And as the grenade was more modernized it was specialized to become thrown out of a grenade launcher (Bellis).

Gunpowder interests me because I shoot rifles that have shells that have gunpowder, and if there wasn’t gunpowder in those shells, I wouldn’t be able to do the things that I love to do. My new knowledge about how gunpowder works, the earliest uses of gunpowder, and the uses of gunpowder today will be valuable to me as I anticipate a career in the National Guard in the future.

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