

Medieval Context:

- Thinking back to what we've discovered about the Middle Ages so far, make a list of bullet points describing the Middle Ages

- **Religion plays a massive part**

- ...

- ...

- ...

- ...





Learning outcomes

- Understand what the Black Death was and how it affected people in England during the years 1348-49.
- Understand the disputed causes, treatments and preventative measures used during the time of the Black Death.

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Medieval Plague

Black Death 1348

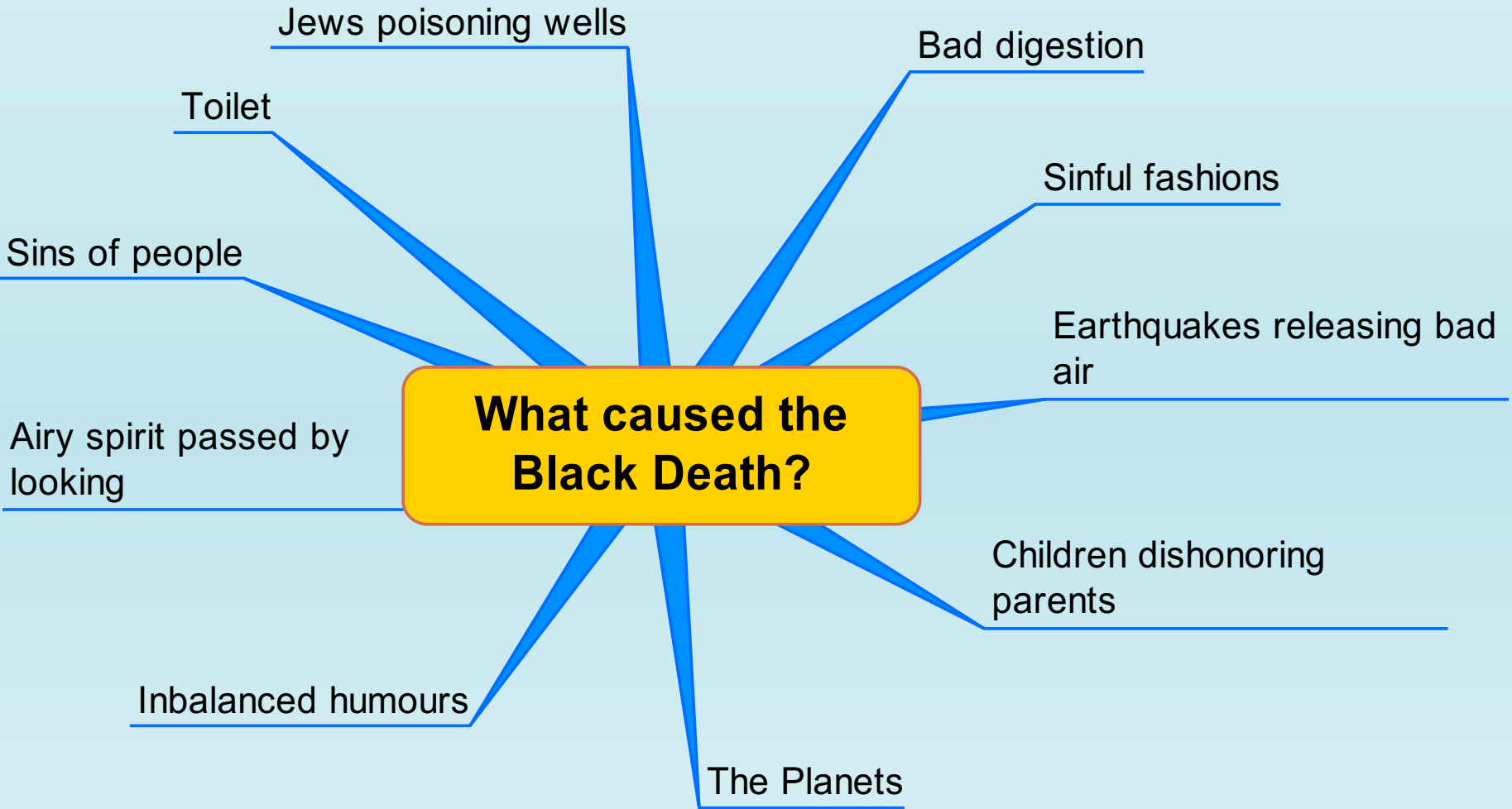
Which century? 14th

What do I
know about
the Black
Death
already?



Watch the following
Horrible Histories clip, add
your observations to your
little mind map





The Black Death arrived in England in 1348, from China and the trade routes.

This plague was unlike anything the people had seen before including the physicians, it was devastating with it's death toll. 200 people a day were being buried and we think 1 million people died, over 1/3 of the whole population. Most towns or cities the plague hit saw half of its population die.

How might you have felt if you were alive in 1348 England with this plague?

"Neither physicians nor medicines were effective. Whether because these illnesses were previously unknown or because physicians had not previously studied them, there seemed to be no cure. There was such fear and desperation, nobody seemed to know what to do?"

**Italian historian Marchione Di Coppo
Stefani - 1347**

**As a historian yourself,
what can you infer from
this source, select
EVIDENCE from the source
to back up your point.**





As a historian yourself, what can you infer / learn from this source about the Black Death?

Select EVIDENCE from the source to back up your point.



Journey of the Black Death



What does this map tell us about the Black Death, can it help us infer how it got to Britain? What about how fast it got here?

Answer these two inferences in full sentences.

If you can, add some of your own ideas or inferences



Symptoms of the Black Death

Chest pains
and breathing
trouble



Boils and
black
buboes
appearing
in the
groin and
armpits



Symptoms of
Black Death



Fever

Sneezing and
coughing up
blood



Once you got the plague, you had days to live



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Nobleman
Doctor
Usurer
Chaplain
Bailiff
Verger
Merchant
Hermit
Peasant
Youth
Virgin
Baby



Pope
Emperor
Empress
Cardinal
King
Bishop
Duke
Abbot
Knight
Carthusian
Burgomaster
Canon

What is the message of this source?



Day 1 Painful swellings called buboes appeared in the victim's armpits and groin. These were usually about the size of an egg, but could sometimes be as big as an apple.



Day 4 The disease attacked the nervous system. This caused the victim to suffer spasms. The victim was in terrible pain.



Day 2 The victim vomited and developed a fever.



Day 5 Sometimes the buboes burst and a foul-smelling black liquid oozed from the open boils. When this happened the victim usually lived. However, in most cases the victim suffered a painful death.



Day 3 Bleeding under the skin caused dark blotches all over the body.





“Medieval people did not know about germs causing disease. They did not understand that plague was spread by rats and fleas. They thought that people’s bodies were poisoned.

If the swellings burst and the poison came out people sometimes survived. It seemed sensible to draw out the poison.”

Cures:

The swellings should be softened with figs and cooked onions. The onions should be mixed with yeast and butter. Then open the swellings with a knife.

Take a live frog and put its belly on the plague sore. The frog will swell up and burst. Keep doing this with further frogs until they stop bursting. Some people say that a dried toad will do the job better.

Flagellants:



What can you infer from these sources about treatment, prevention or ideas about the Black Death or attitudes in 1348.

What did the Government do?

- *Local authorities* attempted to take action. They passed new quarantine laws to stop people moving about too much. Anyone new to an area had to avoid everybody else for 40 days. They also quarantined infected houses.
- They tried to stop large crowds by banning religious processions.
- Stopped cleaning the streets thinking the rubbish stench and dead bodies would drive off miasma



- **HOWEVER**

- The local government didn't have any real power so couldn't enforce these laws. The rich people moved freely and the Church continued as normal.

So, you have all this information – What to do with it???

Probably the most crucial part of our Medicine course is understanding the **treatments, causes** and **preventions** of each period.

Using 3 highlighters / colours, go through your notes on the Black Death and identify any information that you believe is about Treatments, Preventions or Causes relating to the Black Death.

KEY FOCUS of the Black Death

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	Religious & supernatural	Natural	Common beliefs
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many people believed the Black Death was a punishment from God for the sin in the world Some astrologers said the unique position of Mars, Jupiter and Saturn in 1345 was a sign of something big about to happen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people believed it was impure air. Breathing in the miasma upset the balance of the humours Some people thought the Miasma might have originated from fumes released by an earthquake or volcano 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Black Death would have been terrifying and they might have blamed anything through desperation Jews had been blamed for poisoning the wells, as well as naughty children
Treatments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confess your sins and ask God for forgiveness through prayer It was God's will so some people accepted it and did nothing Wear charms Quarantine was attempted but always failed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physicians tried bleeding & purging (Four Humours). They also sometimes lanced the buboes. Strong smelling herbs like aloe & myrrh. Lighting a fire and boiling vinegar Potions were used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to desperation and fear, they would have tried almost anything! Probably a mixture of Religious, Supernatural and Natural Apothecaries sold remedies Without knowing the cause, it was impossible to know a cure
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray to God and fast Go on a pilgrimage and make offerings to God Flagellation – Whip yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escape the plague as quickly as possible was advised by the pope's physician. Carry a posy of flowers or lavender to your nose & avoid bathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do joyful things, listen to music and avoiding anything sad Sit in a sewer to drive miasma away Avoid visiting infected family & friends



KEY FOCUS of the Black Death

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Task: Using the information on the previous slide / table plus your notes, complete your Black Death summary sheet carefully, it will be your revision and comparison later on in the course...

Medieval Apocalypse Documentary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffa0FoxkUTo>



BREAKING NEWS – BREAKING NEWS

- In groups of 4, use the information from your posters to create a TV news report about
 - Causes of the Black Death
 - Advice given
 - One of you should be a journalist, leading the press conference, one of you a priest, one a physician and finally an everyday person
- Remember to give advice on **BOTH** treatment & prevention

Summary

- Causes of the Black Death were thought to be supernatural – either as a result of alignment of the planets, a punishment from God – or caused by a miasma.
- Treatments included prayer, strong-smelling herbs and herbal remedies.
- To begin with, physicians tried bleeding and purging, but this made patients worse.
- Prevention was better than treatment: once you caught the Black Death, it was very likely that you would die.
- People tried to avoid catching the Black Death by avoiding infected family members or by leaving infected areas.
- Town authorities and other local governments tried to act by quarantining people.

Checkpoint

1: Draw a flow chart to show how the Black Death spread and the impact it had on Britain

2: Name FOUR treatments people used to try to cure the Black Death

3: List reasons why the local authorities were not very successful in the methods they used to try to halt the spread of the Black Death

Challenge

How did people's beliefs about the causes of the Black Death, and ideas to prevent it, reflect general ideas about the causes of illness and disease from the whole period c1250-1500?

Homework:
Due:

Big Picture (whole period) – general beliefs	Small detail – beliefs about Black Death	Related treatment	Related prevention
God sent disease	Black death was a punishment for sin	Prayer, fasting	Prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, self flagellation
Miasma was a cause