



Was the Great Plague a disaster?



What should I already know?

- The Great Fire of London happened in 1666.
- Samuel Pepys wrote a diary from London in 1600s.
- Covid-19 is a modern **epidemic**
- The chronology of British history.
- There are primary and secondary sources in history.

Causes of the plague

- Medieval doctors were not certain what caused the plague, but believed it could be the result of:
 - the movements of the planets
 - a punishment from God
 - bad smells and corrupt air
 - enemies who had poisoned the wells
 - staring at a victim
 - wearing pointed shoes
 - strangers to villages too were blamed

Plague doctor

- Tally who was infected
- Tried to give cures.

Watchmen – seal up houses and put a red cross on door
Collectors – collect dead bodies ready for burial

'Cures' for the plague

- Here are some of the cures that people believed would stop the Great Plague:
Sit in the sewers so the bad smell drives the plague away;
have a bath in milk; eat toads; put (live) chicken bottoms on your spots; pray; wear lucky charms around your neck e.g. rabbit's feet.

Did you know?

Ring a Ring a Roses was about the Great Plague.

Symptoms

- Swellings in groin/armpit that spread over the body
- Rash/pain all over the body
- Tired
- Temperature increased
- Slurred speech
- Delirious
- Swollen/inflamed lymphatic glands
- Buboes

Values

Challenge	What challenges did the plague bring?
Commit	How did the people of Eyam commit to overcoming the plague?
Conquer	What did the people of London do to conquer the plague?
Celebrate	Is the end of the plague something to be celebrated?

Technical vocabulary

plague	A contagious disease that spreads rapidly and kills many people
regulations	A rule made by an authority
outbreak	A sudden occurrence of something unwelcome
Bills of Mortality	Weekly announced records of who had died and what had killed them
plague body carrier	Someone employed to get rid of dead bodies in plague pits/mass graves
epidemic	A widespread occurrence of an infections disease in a community at a particular time
disease	A disorder that produces specific symptoms and is not simply a result of physical injury
quarantine	A place of isolation when people have been exposed to infections or contagious diseases
Bubonic plague	The commonest form of plague in humans characterised by fever, delirium and the formation of buboes
pneumonic	Plague affecting the lungs
primary source	An artefact, diary or source of information that was created at the time being studied
perish	Die, especially in a sudden way
immunity	The ability to resist a particular infection
buboes	Large, highly painful swellings that popped releasing blood/pus
symptom	A physical or mental feature which indicates a disease
victim	A person harmed, injured or killed as a result of an action
swellings	An abnormal enlargement of part of the body
delirium	A state of mental confusion
hygiene	conditions to prevent disease through cleanliness

Eyam

- A village in Derbyshire
- Shut themselves off to contain the plague
- After 14 months the plague disappeared
- 260/350 villagers died

London in the 1600s

- A different place from today: dirty, smelly, overrun with people.
- Health and hygiene was poor.
- Summer 1665 was very hot – rats and fleas multiplied.

Timeline

1328	1350	1518	Feb. 1665	May 1665	July 1665	July 1665	August 1665	September 1665	Dec. 1665	Feb 1666	Sept. 1666
Plague first struck London	The Black Death had killed millions of people.	The first regulations to stop the plague were introduced in London.	The outbreak of the plague began in London.	43 people had died from the plague	The plague was rampant. King Charles II of England, his family and his court left the city for Salisbury.	17,036 people die from the plague by July.	The plague reaches the Derbyshire village of Eyam.	The king moves to Oxford as Salisbury is hit by the plague.	People who had fed the plague began to move back to London.	London was considered safe enough for King Charles II to return to the capital.	The Great Fire of London occurred.