

Teaching notes and ideas

Name of resource:	Symptoms of the Black Death
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Age group(s)	Subject(s)
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8 to 11, 12 to 14	History
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Topic	Language Level
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The Middle Ages	Beginner / Intermediate
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Description of resource

- ◆ A set of flashcards on PowerPoint with images of the symptoms
- ◆ A substitution table to support description of the symptoms
- ◆ A writing frame for a Doctor's diary noting symptoms of a patient
- ◆ A past tense activity
- ◆ A cloze activity
- ◆ A matching / sequencing activity

Preparation needed

You will need:

- ◆ Sets of symptoms flashcards for groups of targeted learners
- ◆ Bilingual dictionaries or software for targeted learners
- ◆ Copies of past tense and cloze activity worksheets for targeted learners
- ◆ Copies of the matching / sequencing worksheet – or this can be cut up into cards for matching and sequencing if preferred

You will need to:

- ◆ Make flashcards from the symptoms PowerPoint. Go to print and from the print select handouts from the dropdown menu. Then select 6 handouts per page. Laminate the cards and cut them out.
- ◆ Print out and photocopy all worksheets
- ◆ Print out the matching / sequencing activity, laminate and cut into cards (optional)

Curriculum objectives

- ◆ To understand the symptoms of the Black Death
- ◆ To understand how people were infected with the Black Death

Language/Literacy objectives	
Functions	Structures
◆ Recounting	Simple past tense: e.g. Rats carried the plague, fleas bit the rats
◆ Describing symptoms	The patient had ... The patient was... The patient usually...
◆ Sequencing	Firstly... Next... Then... As a result... Ordinal numbers: on the first, second third etc. day...
Vocabulary	
Symptoms: sick, fever, blotches on the skin, swellings, burst, black liquid, in pain, died.	
Past tense verbs: was, had, carried, bit, multiplied, became, died.	
Other: rats, trade ships, fleas, gut, plague.	

This resource could be used:

- ◆ as differentiation within class
- ◆ one to one or small group
- ◆ independent learning

Ideas for using the resource

What to do

- ◆ Use the symptoms [flashcards](#) in order to [introduce new vocabulary](#). Learners could use [bilingual dictionaries](#) to look up the words in their first language.
- ◆ The [substitution table](#) can be used as a [scaffold](#) for forming sentences describing the symptoms of the Black Death. This can be done orally. If the learners are asked to work in pairs to form sentences, this will become a [collaborative activity](#) generating exploratory talk.
- ◆ Doctor's diary is a [writing frame](#) to support learners to do a piece of writing based on the sentences they have been practising orally using the substitution table.
- ◆ The worksheet headed 'How people became infected' is a cloze activity based on a simple recount text. The associated past tense activity introduces verbs used in the cloze activity and encourages learners to make links with their [first language](#)

- ◆ The matching and sequencing activity gives another opportunity to reinforce both the new vocabulary and language of sequencing.

Other ideas for making the best use of this resource

- ◆ The symptoms flashcards can be used for a pairs game (also known as Pelmanism). The pairs game should be played with 2 – 3 learners and needs two sets of the flashcards. The cards are mixed up and placed face down on the table. The first learner turns over two cards. If they match, the learner keeps that pair. Then the next learner has their turn. The player with the most pairs at the end is the winner.

Possible extension activities

- ◆ Learners could carry out a [hot seating activity](#) where one person takes the role of the doctor who wrote the diary and the others are concerned local people wanting to know what symptoms they should look out for in their family members.
- ◆ Learners could work in pairs or small groups to create a public health warning poster telling people what to look out for.