

THE BLACK DEATH



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- **Main Idea (Objective):**



- A terrible plague, known as the Black Death, swept through Europe in the 1300's killing millions.

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- **Lecture Focus (Essential Question):**



- Have you ever been given a shot to prevent the flu or to protect you from another disease? Lets look at what happened in Europe before modern medicine could control contagious diseases.

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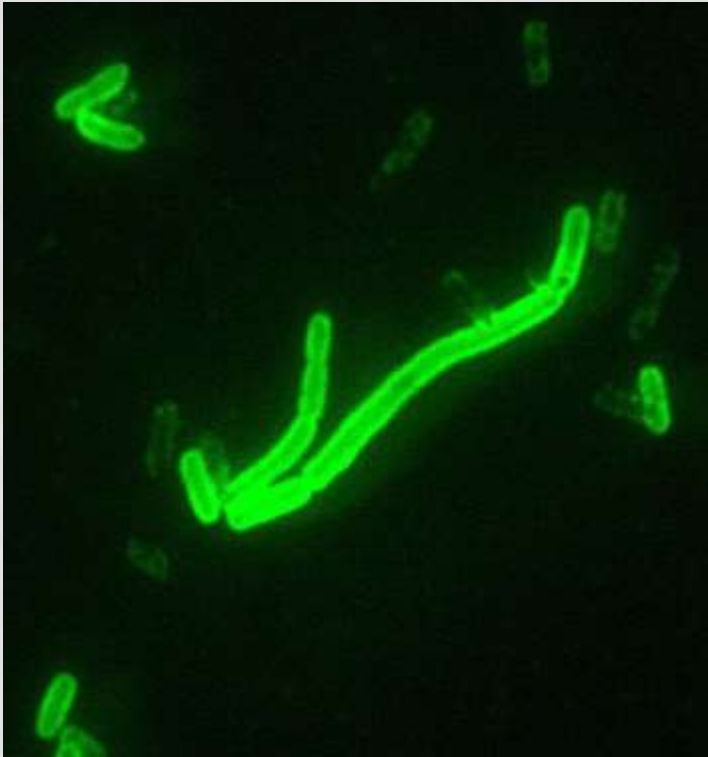
- The Middle Ages in Europe reached a high point during the 1200's.



- In the 1300's however, disaster struck...A terrible **plague**, known as the **Black Death** or **Bubonic Plague**, swept across Europe and Asia.

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- A **plague** is a disease that spreads extremely quickly and kills many people violently.



- Most scientist think that the Black Death was disease caused by a type of bacteria carried by fleas.

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- The Black Death probably began somewhere in the Gobi Desert, a desert located in central Asia.



- It had been around for centuries in Asia, but in the 1300's, the plague began to spread farther and more quicker than ever before.

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- These fleas infested black rats and unfortunately due to the unsanitary lifestyles of humans during the Middle Ages, these rats were literally everywhere.

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- The way that the Black Death spread so rapidly all of a sudden was completely baffling to Historians and Scientist at first.



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- Upon further research Historians believe that the Mongol Empire was truly responsible for the plague spreading so fast.



- The Mongols had created a vast empire that covered all of the land from Eastern Europe through Central Asia, ending in what is now China.

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- The Mongols had continued using an existing, widespread trade network set up between China, India, the Middle East and Europe.



- This trade network was so prosperous that they encouraged its use constantly, in order to bring wealth into their vast Empire.

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- **Can anyone tell me the name of this massive trade network???**



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- By the early 1300's, more goods were being shipped across central Asia than ever before.



- This made it possible for the Black Death to spread so rapidly, as caravans infested with rats carried the plague from city to city.

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- The first documented outbreak took place in **China** in 1331 and again in 1353.



- The Black Death killed between **40** and **60** million people, cutting China's population nearly in half.

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- **How does the Black Death Kill?**

Once contracted by a human the disease became airborne.

It would take about 3-7 days for it to kill you.

Symptoms were a fever, painful swelling of the lymph glands, red spots on skin that turned black and armpits would fill with blood.



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- The disease appeared in **India** as early as the 1320's and reached **Makkah**, deep inside the Muslim lands, in 1329.



- While the Black Death spread throughout Asia it was also traveling all over Europe.

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- **Makkah** - The most populated province of **Saudi Arabia**, Its capital is the sacred city of **Mecca**, which is extremely important within the Islamic faith.

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- The Black Death appeared in Europe in 1346 at the city of **Caffa** (Today known as **Feodosiya**), located along the Black Sea.

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- The city of Caffa had been under attack by Golden Horde branch of Mongols when the plague erupted.



- The Mongols, with many of their troops dying, called off the attack and created one of the first forms of **Biological Warfare** ever to happen on the planet.

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- The Mongols attempted siege of Caffa under **Jani Beg** was long and drawn out.
- Their soldiers were withering from being infected with the plague.
- In frustration they catapulted the infected corpses over the city walls, infecting the inhabitants of Caffa.
- Fleeing inhabitants may have carried the disease back to Italy, causing its spread faster across Europe.



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- Caffa was a trade colony controlled by Italian merchants from the city Genoa.
- Their ships carried the plague to Sicily in October of 1347.



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- From there it spread into Italy and by the end of 1349, it had spread through France, Germany and finally England.



- By 1351 it had reached Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and Russia.

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- As many as 19-38 million Europeans died from the Black Death between 1347 and 1351. (A cross was used to show that bodies were inside a house for pick up)



- That is nearly one out of every two people. (The image above is not real and was used in a renaissance festival to show what the plague looked like)

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- The death of so many people in the 1300's turned Europe's economy upside down.



- Trade declined and wages rose sharply because workers were few and in demand.

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- At the same time, fewer people meant less demand for food and food prices fell.



- Earning a living as a farmer was almost impossible.

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- Landlords found they had to pay workers more and charge lower rents.



- Some peasants actually bargained with their lords to pay rent instead of owing services.

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- This meant that they were no longer serfs.



- In this way the plague, like the Crusades, helped to weaken the Feudal System and change European society forever.

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- **Questions:**
- 1) What does the term Plague mean?
- 2) What Asian desert did the Black Death come from?
- 3) How many Europeans Died of the Black Death between 1347 and 1351?

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- **Questions:**
- 1) What does the term Plague mean?
 - A disease that spreads quickly and kills many people.
- 2) What Asian desert did the Black Death come from?
 - Gobi Desert
- 3) How many Europeans Died of the Black Death between 1347 and 1351?
 - 19 – 38 Million Europeans

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- **Questions:**
- 4) How many people died from the Black Death in China?
- 5) What did the Mongols do with the bodies of their soldiers that had the disease during the Battle of Caffa?
- 6) What happened to Europe's economy after the Black Death?

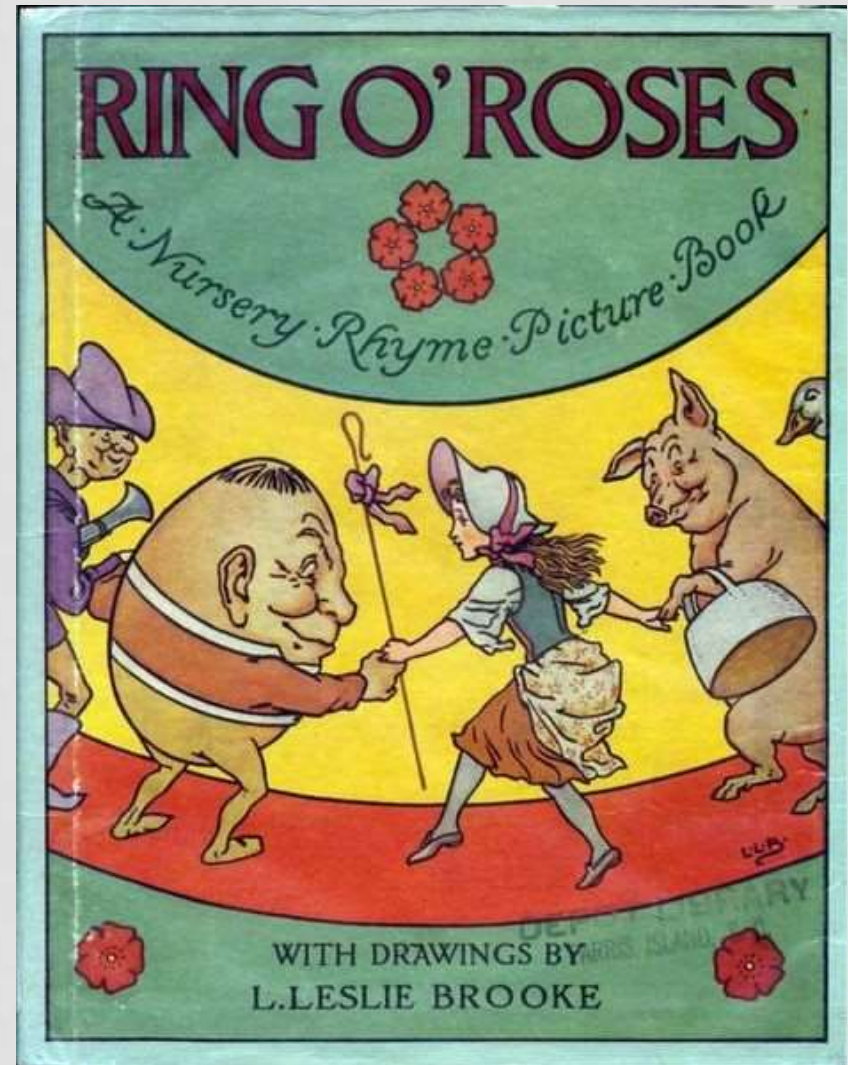
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- **Questions:**

- 4) How many people died from the Black Death in China?
 - 40 – 60 Million Chinese people
- 5) What did the Mongols do with the bodies of their soldiers that had the disease during the Battle of Caffa?
 - Threw the bodies of their infected soldiers into Caffa
- 6) What happened to Europe's economy after the Black Death?
 - It declined, was turned up side down

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- **History Connection:**
- Many folklorists believe that the popular nursery rhyme “Ring Around the Rosie” is about the Black Death.



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- The first line refers to the round pink rash that is an early sign of the disease.



- Posies, or bouquets of flowers, were worn to disguise the terrible smell of the infection.

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- The third line refers to the burning of infected corpses.



- The final line is about almost everyone infected with the Black Death eventually died, or fell down.

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- **Writing Activity:**
- In a one paragraph response complete the following writing activity.
- Write a newspaper article, or current event describing the arrival of the plague on your city and exactly what is happening to the people around you.