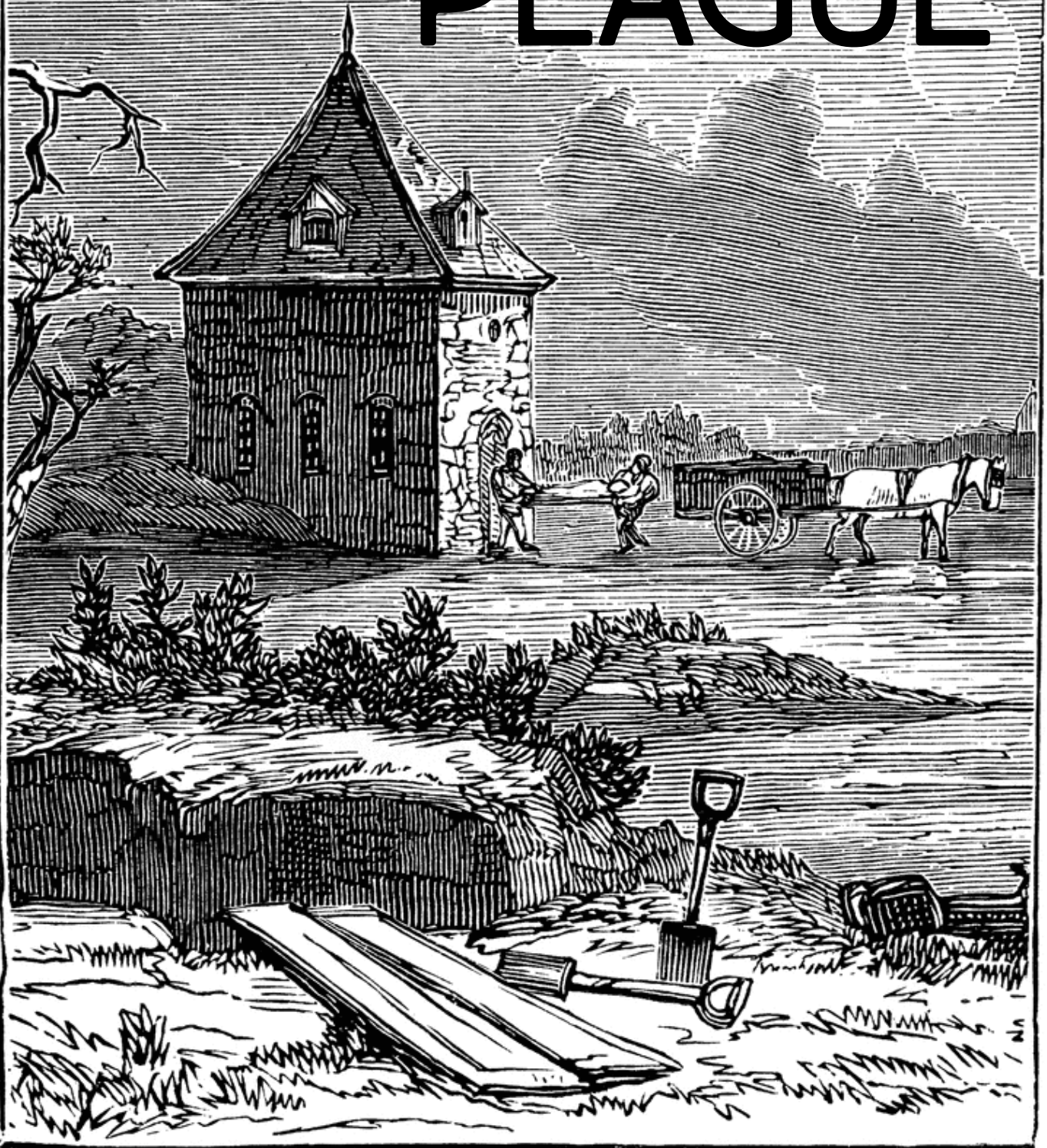


# THE PLAGUE



# The Plague Unit Study & Lapbook

Optional Books:

*The Door in the Wall* by Marguerite de Angeli

*The Black Death* by Tom McGowan

*When the Plague Strikes* by James Cross Giblin

*The Middle Ages* by Sarah Howarth (pgs. 42-43)

*Story of the Middle Ages* by Michael McHugh (pgs. 99-100)

## 1. What Was the Plague?

The Plague was also called the Black Death, the Black Plague, and the Bubonic Plague. It was a deadly and highly contagious epidemic disease caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*. Some vocabulary words you should know:

**Bacterium:** One-celled organisms having the characteristics of both plant and animal

**Epidemic:** breaking out suddenly in a particular area affecting a lot of people at the same time

**Pandemic:** an epidemic that is widely spread

**Contagious:** a disease that can be passed by contact

### Lapbook Component 1

Includes names bi-fold and vocabulary flap book

|                                      |                               |  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>...it still<br/>kills!</b></p> | <p>Glue into lapbook here</p> | <p><b>by any<br/>other<br/>name...</b></p> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|

Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines. Inside, list various names of the Plague.

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <p>Bacterium</p>  | <p>VO<br/>CA<br/>B<br/>U<br/>L<br/>A<br/>R<br/>Y</p> |
| <p>Epidemic</p>   |  |
| <p>Pandemic</p>   |  |
| <p>Contagious</p> |  |

Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines. Write definitions under flaps.

## 2. How Was It Spread?

The Plague was thought brought to Europe from the east, spread by flea infested rats on merchant ships. Sometimes there were no survivors at all when the ships ported. The disease was then spread person to person by contact through touch and droplets sprayed from lungs and mouth.

### Lapbook Component 2

Includes How was it Spread? Matchbook

# ***HOW WAS THE PLAGUE SPREAD?***

Vertical lines for writing inside the matchbook.



Cut matchbook on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines.  
If desired, cut out and glue primary lines inside of book.

### 3. When and Where Did It Spread?

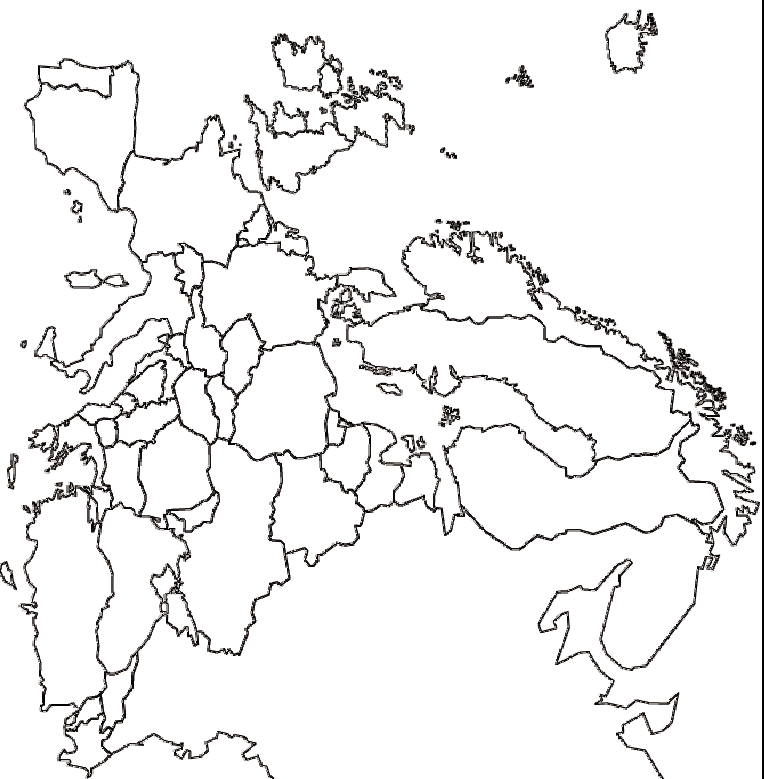
The disease arrived in Venice, Italy in 1347 and then spread clockwise around Europe, hitting France, Spain, England and Britain, Germany, Scandinavia and finally northwestern Russia around 1351. To put this in perspective, the Middle Ages began in 476 A.D. and ended in 1492.

#### Lapbook Component 3

Includes Where in the World? Shutterfold and Timeline Accordion

What continent was the most affected by the Plague?

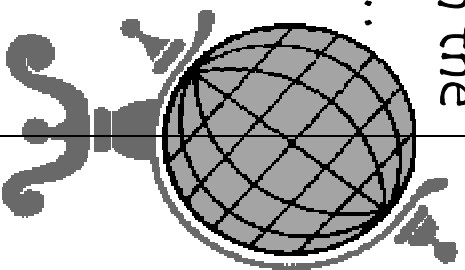
What was the first country hit in this continent?



Label the countries affected by the Plague:

- Italy – Green
- France – Purple
- Spain – Red
- England – Gray
- Britain – Blue
- Germany – Orange
- Scandinavia – Yellow
- Russia – Pink

Where in the World...



was the Plague?

Cut out shutterbook on solid lines.  
Valley fold on dotted lines.

Cut out cover graphics on solid lines. Glue onto cover.

# BLACK DEATH TIMELINE

476 A.D.

1347 A.D.

1351 A.D.

1492 A.D.

Cut out accordion as one piece. Accordion fold so cover is on top. Write events that took place at each date.  
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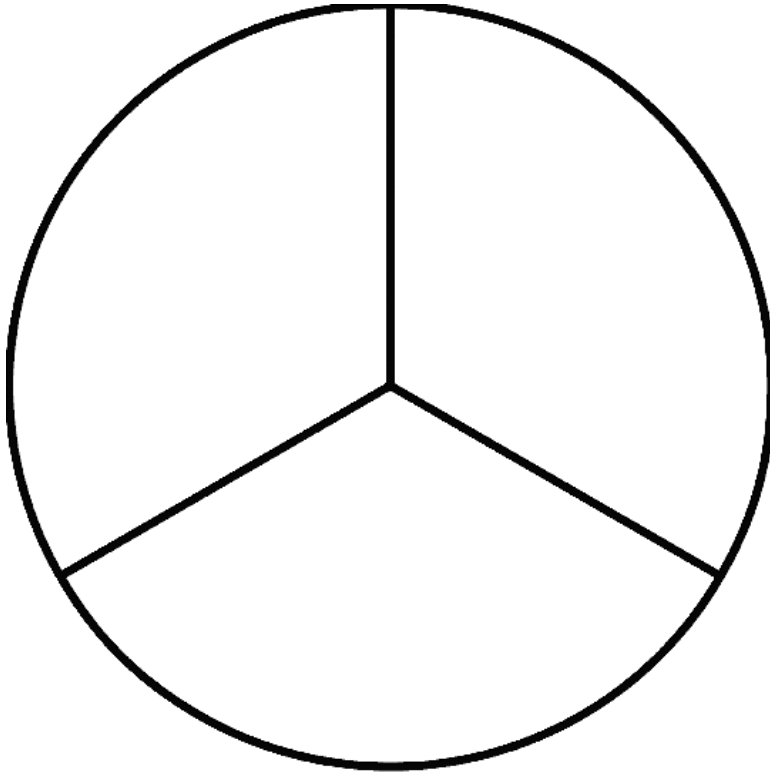


#### 4. How Many People Contracted the Plague?

The number of victims varies from source to source, but some major European cities reported almost 1000 deaths a day, with one third of the European population being wiped out by 1350. This meant approximately 25 million deaths.

#### Lapbook Component 4

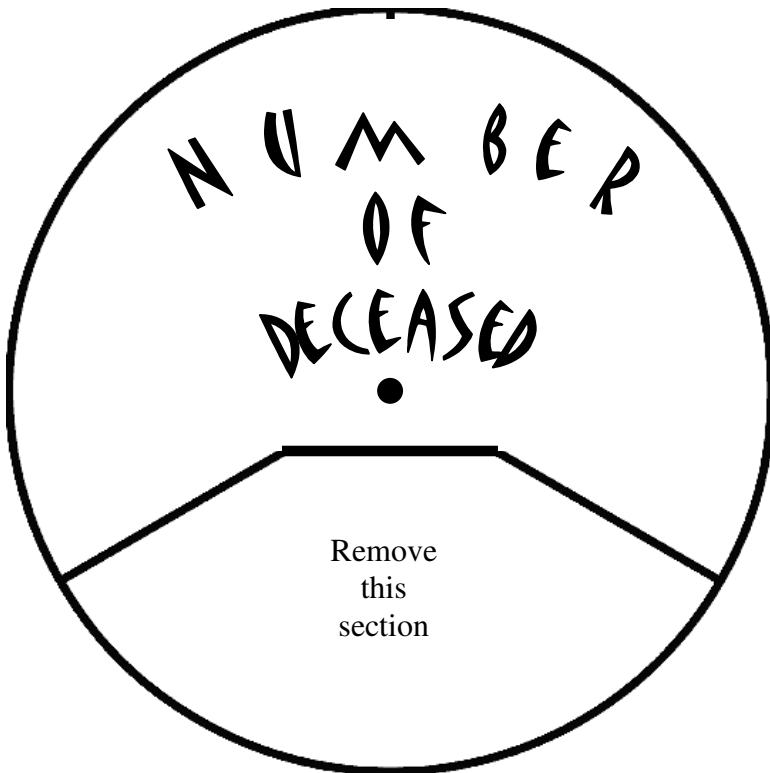
Includes Number of Deceased Wheel



Print on cardstock.  
Cut out both circles.  
Remove section of top circle where marked. Insert brad through center of both circles, making sure that wheels can move freely.

Use this wheel to demonstrate the volume of one third of the population in Europe dying from the plague. If one third meant 25 million deaths, what was the total population? Mark each section of wheel with one third of the population, and color one section lightly with a black crayon.

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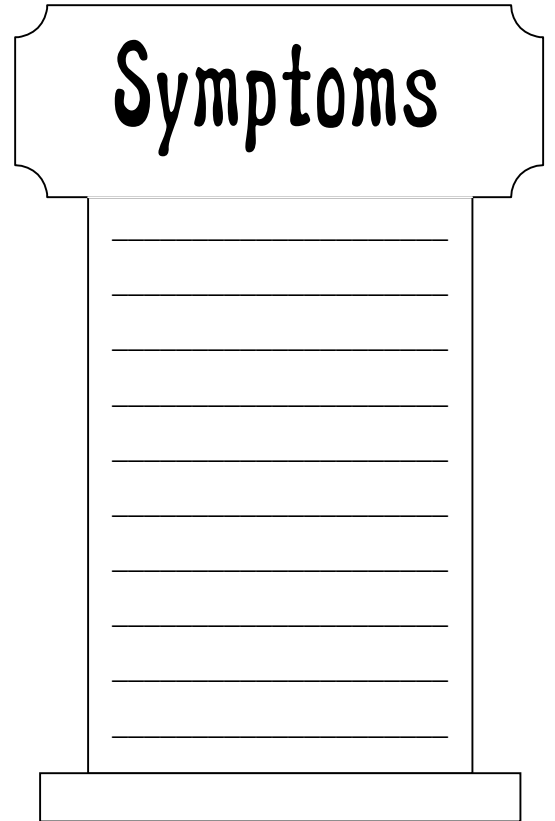
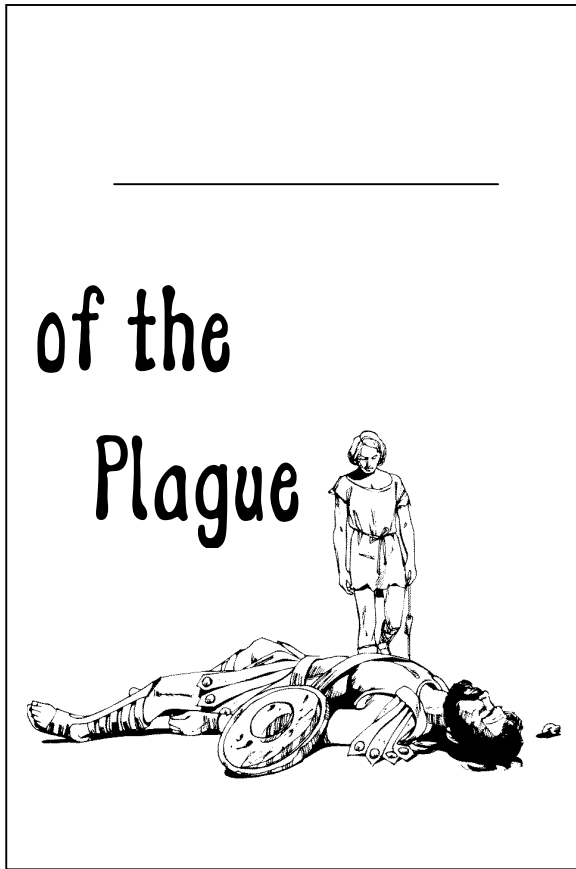


## 5. What Were the Symptoms?

The Bubonic Plague was characterized by the appearance of buboes, which are large and inflamed lymph nodes in the groin, armpit and/or neck. It can move into the lungs and blood stream. The incubation period is two to seven days from contact. The first symptoms are headache, nausea, vomiting, aching joints, and a generally ill feeling. The buboes then appear, along with a fever, increased pulse rate, and exhaustion. The buboes turn a deep purple color, giving the disease the name Black Plague. Sometimes there are also symptoms of delirium. In non-fatal cases, the fever drops in about five days, and approaches normal in about two weeks. In fatal cases, death results within about four days.

### Lapbook Component 5

Includes Symptoms Slide



Cut out pocket as one piece. Cut slit on line. Cut out slide as one piece. Place slide through slit. Glue pocket into lapbook, being sure that slide moves freely.

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## 6. How Was It Treated?

People in the Middle Ages lived in dirty environments, didn't know or understand about germs, and didn't properly dispose of human or animal waste so when a disease such as the Plague began, it spread rapidly. Medical treatments were often "kill or cure." Doctors treating the disease used special clothing that looked like a bird suit. Research the purpose of this suit.

**Spiritual Healing:** Many people thought that the Plague was Divine punishment, so lots of prayer was a part of the healing process for some. There were also people called flagellants who believed that they could persuade God to bring health to Europe by whipping themselves in public.

**Herbal Remedies:** The people of Europe had some herbal remedies that were handed down to them from ancient civilizations, but most medical treatment was guesswork. They watched how patients would react to different herbs and treated others based on these reactions. There were some standard remedies used that are still in use for today, such as ginger to sooth nausea, and Echinacea to boost the immune system.

**Animal Cures:** During the Middle Ages, animals were often used to treat Plague victims. There were ointments for topical relief made from goose grease. Goat's cheese mixed with bull's blood was put on a head to cure a headache. A doctor, Thomas Vicary, who shaved a chicken's bottom and tied the bird to the swollen part of the victim, introduced one of the strangest animal cures. The bird was said to soak up the disease and would be replaced each time it became infected with the plague, until either one remained healthy or the patient died.

**Blood Letting:** Doctors believed that disease was carried in the blood, and the way to cure a patient was to let out the "bad blood" by cutting one of the patient's veins. This treatment was called bloodletting. This was a "kill or cure" treatment, as pints of blood were taken, bringing the patient to a very weak state. Later on, realizing that too many people were bleeding to death, doctors began to use leeches, which would suck out smaller amounts of blood over longer periods of time.

### Lapbook Component 6

Includes Kill or Cure Tab Book and Plague Doctor Simple Fold

Print all on paper and cut out on solid lines. Stack with cover on top and staple together on side.



# Kill Or Cure



## Spiritual Healing

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## Herbal Remedies

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**Animal  
Cures**

Handwriting practice area for 'Animal Cures' with ten sets of lines (solid top and bottom, dashed middle).

**Blood  
Remedies**

Handwriting practice area for 'Blood Remedies' with ten sets of lines (solid top and bottom, dashed middle).

# PLAGUE DOCTOR



Cut out on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted line.  
Inside write description and purpose of doctor's uniform during the Plague.



## 7. Why Was It So Devastating?

Losing 1/3 of the population brought on a lot of changes in Europe during the Middle Ages. The fact that so many people of working age died seriously devastated the economy. The skilled workers, craftsman, and farmers were in short supply, and therefore so were most products including food, clothing, tools, wood for fuel, etc.

### Lapbook Component 7

Includes Devastation Tri-Flap

Cut out on solid lines. Mountain fold side flaps, and then mountain fold cover down over flaps. Write answers under flaps.

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*What devastated  
the economy?*

*What were there  
shortages of?*



*Devastation*

## 8. What Was Its Impact On Society?

In spite of the devastation, there were some good things to come out of the Plague. For one, it brought the end to the feudal system. Because workers were so scarce, the surviving serfs could get a job anywhere they wanted. This took a lot of the power away from the feudal lords, as the serfs were now able to gain wealth elsewhere. Secondly, it opened eyes about public health and medical science. Diseases, treatments, proper hygiene, and anatomy were more closely studied. The Church lifted the ban on autopsies, so now doctors could better understand the human body by studying cadavers (dead bodies). And lastly, people started to take their spirituality and eternity more seriously, developing personal relationships with God apart from the state Church. This helped lead to the Reformation.

Lapbook Component 8

Includes Outcome Flap

PLEASE  
\*What is it good for?\*

Outcome  
#1

Outcome  
#2

Outcome  
#3

Cut component out as one piece on solid lines. Cut flaps on solid lines.  
Mountain fold title and glue down in place. Mountain fold flaps on dotted line.  
Record three positive outcomes of the Plague under flaps.

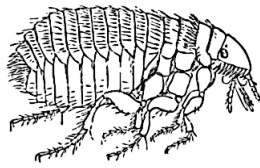
## 9. The Critters at Fault

Fleas: A flea is a bloodsucking wingless insect. It lives entirely on the blood of the host it calls home. Hosts include man and other mammals, and sometimes birds. Fleas are found in all parts of the world. They lay eggs, which hatch into larva in about 6-12 days. The larvae have biting mouthpieces, which they use to eat organic debris for a couple days before they cocoon and enter pupal stage. An adult flea then emerges. Adult fleas have broad, flat bodies, short antennae, and piercing and sucking mouthparts. They have 6 long powerful legs that enable them to leap high into the air. The fleas that carry bubonic plague are rat fleas, living on and sucking the blood of rats throughout Europe.

Rats: Rats are mammals with large ears, pointed snouts, long tails, and coarse fur. They have very powerful teeth, and are capable of chewing through large wood planks and even lead pipes. They are usually nocturnal. Rats live in human habitations, in forests, in deserts, and on seagoing ships. Most species are herbivores, but some are omnivores. They have live births, each female producing up to 60 babies a year! The critter responsible for carrying the Plague-causing fleas was the brown rat. This species grows to 16 inches including the tail, and does much damage to food supplies. It attacks pets, poultry, and occasionally man, spreads disease, and destroys property.

### Lapbook Component 9

Includes Flea Graduated Book and Rat Graduated Book



# FLEA

What do they eat?

What kind of body covering?

Where do they live?

How many legs?

Vertebrate or Invertebrate?

What kind of mouth?

Live Birth or Eggs?

Circle one:

Mammal

Bird

Fish

Insect

Reptile

What kind of animal?

Cut on solid lines. Stack with smallest on top. Staple where marked.





RAT

What do they eat?

What kind of body covering?

Where do they live?

How many legs?

Vertebrate or Invertebrate?

What kind of mouth?

Live Birth or Eggs?

Cut on solid lines. Stack with smallest on top. Staple where marked.

Circle one:

Mammal

Bird

Fish

Insect

Reptile

What kind of animal?

## 10. If We Only Knew Then What We Know Now

We have come a long way in science and the field of medicine since the fourteenth century. Pretend that you are a scientist during the Plague, but you are beyond your years in knowledge about disease and prevention, knowing the things we now know. Write a letter to the king persuading him to take action to help prevent more deaths. Would you try to convince him to stop trade and travel abroad? Would you tell him to set up a national health advisory to teach the people proper hygiene? How would you go about getting rid of the rats causing the problems? How about proper burial of dead bodies?

### Lapbook Component 10

Includes Scroll Border Paper and Pocket

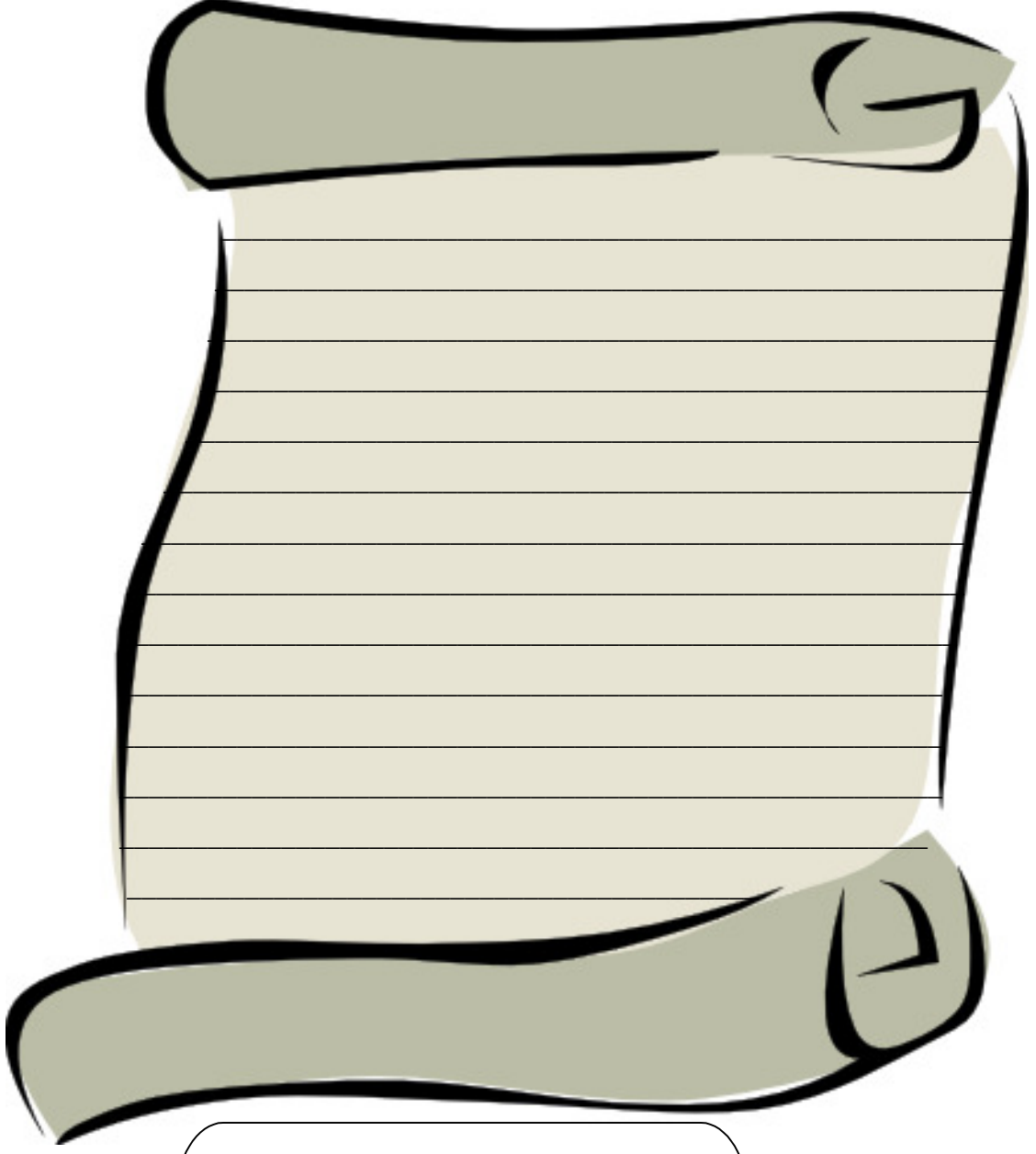


Cut out scroll. Write a letter to convince the king how to rid the country of the plague.

Cut out pocket as one piece. Fold under tabs and glue into lapbook. Store letter in pocket.

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*Letter*  
*to the*  
*King*



## 11. Ring Around the Rosy

Your child is probably familiar with the Ring Around the Rosy rhyme, but what he may not know is that some historians have traced it back to the Plague.

The symptoms of the plague included a red rash in the shape of a ring on the skin (ring around the rosy). People knew to stay away from the dead bodies, so they put posies in the shirt or jacket pocket of the deceased to identify them as a danger.

For the third line, there are two different versions. One version says, “ashes, ashes,” referring to the ashes of the cremated dead bodies. The other version says, “A-tishoo, A-tishoo,” referring to the violent sneeze that accompanies the disease.

The last line, “we all fall down,” refers to the many deaths that resulted. Use this children’s rhyme as copywork.

### **Version 1:**

Ring around the rosy

A pocketful of posies

"Ashes, Ashes"

We all fall down!

### **Version 2:**

Ring-a-Ring o'Rosies

A Pocket full of Posies

"A-tishoo! A-tishoo!"

We all fall Down!

### Lapbook Component 11

Includes Ring Around the Rosy Cursive Copywork fold

Ring around the rosie

A pocketful of posies

"Ashes, Ashes"

We all fall down!



Ring Around the Rosy

A vertical rectangular box containing ten sets of handwriting lines. Each set consists of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Cut out book on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines.  
Cut out handwriting lines on solid lines and glue inside of fold.  
Copy verse on lines.

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