History: How measly were the Middle Ages?

Year 9 | Term 2 | Trinity MAT

Timeline

1025	Avicenna, the Islamic doctor, publishes his book 'The Canon of Medicine' with over 400 different cures.
1209	The University of Cambridge is established.
1215	The Magna Carta is signed by King John when he is forced by the Barons. The King holds too much control in England and is a poor military leader.
1348	The Black Death arrives in England.
1381	The Peasants' Revolt takes place.
1357-1453	The Hundred Years War between England and France

Key people

King John	John was forced to agree to the Magna Carta, which limited the power of the monarch.
Wat Tyler	The leader of the Peasant Revolt .
King Richard II	Richard was the 14 year old King who faced the Peasants Revolt in 1381.
Galen	A roman doctor who was still very influential in the medieval period. He used Hippocrates' theory of the Four Humours to explain illness and had dissected

The Islamic world was at the centre of scientific discovery whilst Britain used Urine Charts and Barber Surgeons to deal with sickness.

Key Terms

Measly	Too small in size or amount: not enough. This enquiry suggests that the Middle Ages were not a good time to be alive or important in history.
Tithes	The money people paid to the Church. This was around 10% of their earnings.
Monasteries	These Church buildings were the homes of monks and nuns and were used as hospitals.
Superstition	The belief in supernatural powers such as good and bad luck.
Islam	The religion followed by countries in the Middle East. Many wars were fought between the followers of Islam and Christianity.
Relics	A historical, religious object believed to have the power to "cure" people.
Priests	These were the men who would conduct church services like mass and marriages.
Latin	The language of the Church and Bible.
The Black Death	The disease that arrived in England in 1348. symptoms varied from buboes on the neck and groin to flu like symptoms.
Peasants	The poorest people in society, they often worked as farmers.
Serfs	Serfs were farmers owned by a landowner, they were not free to leave the land without permission.
Miasma	Bad smelling air– people believed bad smelling air could carry disease.
The Four Humours	The four liquids in the body that people believed should always be balanced to be healthy– yellow bile, black bile, blood, phlegm.

Key Questions

How important was the Church to everyday life?

- The Church offered people an understanding of the world and some form of education.
- Priests would pray for the souls of the dead so that they could get into heaven.
- The Church acted as a meeting place for the people.

What was the Black Death?

- In 1348 the Black Death arrived in England. The disease killed around 1/3 of the population. The people had no idea what caused it or how to treat it– they believed it was sent as a punishment from God.
- The country faced widespread food shortages after the Plague and many towns and villages were abandoned. Cures were superstitious and included using animals or whipping to please God.
- Symptoms included– a fever, large buboes, a rash on the body and then death.

What was The Peasants' Revolt?

- The revolt started when tax collectors tried to collect the new Poll Tax to pay for King Richard II's war against France.
- Peasants were angry that they were still serfs and serving their King.
- The peasants demanded that they all be free and equal. The leader of the rebellion was a man called Wat Tyler.
- The King lied and promised them freedom, but the men involved in the revolt were quickly killed.

Who healed the sick in Medieval England?

- Physicians were professionally trained and university educated. They would look at the symptoms of the patient's symptoms and diagnose them.
- Barber surgeons were untrained surgeons, they learned their skills on the battlefield and would cut hair and do basic surgery.
- Apothecaries would mix herbal remedied– they had no formal education but would pass their skills and knowledge onto apprentices.
- People still believed in the work of Galen and Hippocrates.

What were Medieval Hospitals like?

- Religious hospitals were run by the Church and were very clean
- Some charities opened specific hospitals for the mentally ill or those with contagious diseases like Leprosy