



Year 5 – Summer 1<sup>st</sup> half  
 Title of topic: Peasants and  
 Plague  
 Topic Focus: History

This is the knowledge organiser for our topic. It includes all the learning outcomes, key facts and vocabulary. Please share this with your child to help them develop their knowledge and understanding of our topic.

**The Black Death**

The Black Death was the name given to a type of plague. The Black Death reached England in 1348 and by 1350 had spread through most of Britain and killed almost half of the population

**Causes of the Black Death**

The Black Death was caused by a type of bacteria, it is thought to have been carried by the fleas that lived on black rats.

**Symptoms**

The first symptoms of the Black Death were high fever, headaches, vomiting and general aches and pains. Next, many victims developed lumps called buboes under their arms and on the inner thighs. Red and black boils and spots would then appear all over the body, these spots gave the Black Death its name. The buboes would split and the victim would usually die. This process could take between 12 hours and 3 days.

**Treatments**

At the time doctors had no idea what caused the Black Death or how to treat it treatments included rubbing onions, herbs, snakes, pigeons or frogs on the body. Doctors also suggested drinking vinegar, urine or eating different mixtures of herbs or flowers. None of these

**Life in the 14th century.**

The 14th century was a difficult time for the people of England. The kings of England fought expensive and usually unsuccessful battles. Cold weather and bad harvests at the beginning of the century led to famine. A disease called the Black Death spread through Europe to Britain and killed millions of people. The poor rebelled over expensive taxes and terrible working



**The feudal system.**

At the beginning of the 14th century, society was organised into a feudal system, which split people into groups based on their roles. The king was at the top of the feudal system and peasants, serfs and villeins were at the bottom.



**The Peasants' Revolt.**

The Peasants' Revolt, also called Wat Tyler's Rebellion, (1381), was the first great popular rebellion in English history. Its immediate cause was the imposition of the unpopular poll tax of 1381, which brought to a head discontent that had been growing since the middle of the century.



**Key vocabulary:**

Bacteria - Microorganisms that cause disease

Chivalry - The rules that knights lived by, that placed a high value on courage, kindness and honour

Flagellants - A group of people who thought the plague was a curse from God. They whipped themselves in public to show they were devout believers

Heraldry - A system that enabled knights to be identified on the battlefield by their coats or arms.

Jousting - A sporting contest from the Middle Ages where knights would fight on horseback with lances.

Knight- A chivalrous man who trained to fight as a soldier on horseback

Medieval - A term used when referring to the Middle Ages

Middle Ages - A period in history lasting from the 5th to the 15th Century

Monastery- A building in which monks lived together as a religious community

Peasant - A poor farm worker or tradesman who had a low social status and few rights

Pestilence - A very serious and infectious disease, such as the Black Death, that spreads quickly and is often fatal.

Serf - A medieval servant or labourer who was bound to obey and work on the land of a lord and was treated as part of his property.

Villien – A peasant who pays a lord or manor for land