

The Black Death in Europe

- 1) Check your understanding of these key ideas or terms:
 - a. When was the Black Death?
 - b. What proportion of the population of Europe died from it?
 - c. Affective piety
 - d. Flagellants
 - e. The Danse Macabre

- 2) Questions for thinking and writing:
 - a. Why did the Black Death spread so quickly?
 - b. What were some of the social and economic consequences of the Black Death?
 - c. What did medieval medicine have to say about plague and its prevention?
 - d. Why might medieval people have scapegoated minority groups, such as the Jews?
 - e. What might macabre art, like the Danse Macabre, tell us about life and culture after the Black Death?

- 3) Further reading and research:
 - a. Have a look at these accounts of the persecution of the Jews during and after the Black Death: <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/1348-jewsblackdeath.asp> . What led to Jewish persecution? What was the impact of these attacks on Jewish communities?
 - b. Here's a famous description of the Black Death in the Decameron by Boccaccio: <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/boccacio2.asp> . What do we learn about the symptoms of the Black Death? How did people respond to plague?
 - c. How did the Paris medical faculty explain the causes of the Black Death? <https://sites.uwm.edu/carlin/the-report-of-the-paris-medical-faculty-october-1348/>.
 - d. If you have access to a library, find some great primary sources here: John Aberth, (ed.), *The Black Death: the Great Mortality of 1348-1350. A Brief History with Documents* (2005) and here: Rosemary Horrox, *The Black Death* (Manchester, 1994) [this also has an excellent introduction] or try Philip Ziegler's *The Black Death* (London, 1969) which is a fascinating read. For advanced reading, Ole Benedictow's *The Black Death 1346-1353. The Complete History* (Woodbridge, 2004) has tons of detail about the spread of plague and mortality rates.