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| **HA Resource Hub Submission Form** | | | |
| **Resource Title: London eve of plague sense of period** | | | **Age Range: KS3 or KS4** |
| **Author name and email contact:**  Helen Snelson (thanks to Alex Ford for the text that has been added to for this activity).  [enquiries@history.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@history.org.uk) | **Resource Details: (e.g. how many documents does it consist of? In which order?)**  **5 pages of A4** | | |
| **Necessary prior learning to complete this:**  It would be odd to be doing the Black Death out of context of the narrative of the Middle Ages or the narrative of Health and the People. | | **What does it lead to next?**  Sets up a good sense of period and place understanding for the plague narrative that then unfolds – either as part of KS3 or KS4. | |
| **Explanation: How should this resource be used?**  Students read an engaging text to give them a sense of period for what London was like just before the Black Death struck. They then annotate a map of the period. This could be used with Y7, or as sense of period work before the study of the plague in a Health Through Time GCSE unit. There is some resonance here! | | | |

**Teachers:**

**London in 1347 (based on A Time Traveller’s Guide to Medieval London by Ian Mortimer)**

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| **Presenter** | **Old Man** | **Sailor** |
| **Passer-by** | **Goldsmith** | **Market seller 1** |
| **Market seller 2** | **Market seller 3** | **Market seller 4** |
| **Rich Man** | **Town Crier** | **Helpful Person** |
| **Guard** |  |  |

**1) Medieval London**

**Presenter** – Hello I am going to take you on a tour of London. It is the largest city in England and also the richest, most powerful and most vibrant too. Of course it is also the dirtiest, smelliest and most violent city in England to boot. London is so powerful because King Edward III (3rd) put his parliament here, ten years ago in 1337. Let’s ask this old man how it has changed the city.

**Old Man** – Well of course you are all too young to remember, but in the old days the important government people just followed the king around wherever he went. For ten years now they have been meeting in the city of Westminster just down the road. Now the parliament is here, it is much easier for the merchants and business owners to go to parliament. Before this, most of the ordinary folk couldn’t afford to keep running around after the king. The parliament has made London much more important too so we get much more trade now than when I was a boy.

**2) Arriving**

**Presenter** – Arriving in the city along the Strand is certainly impressive. From here there are hundreds of houses and shops. The streets are wide and there are markets on every corner. Swans swim gracefully up the river and the Thames is full of hundreds of boats. The docks along the river are packed with men loading cargo onto boats.

**Sailor** – Here don’t you go touching that! That Yorkshire wool is bound for markets over in Germany – it’s worth more than you lot have got!! Come on, get a move on you lot, there’s a Hansa ship waiting to put ashore.

**Presenter** – I think we’d best move on into the walled city itself.

**3) Inside the City**

**Presenter** – You’ll have noticed that there is a definite change inside the walls. The smell hits you from a long way off. There are tubs of water at the sides of the street, filled with decaying rubbish. The roads have lost their surfaces and the mud seems to stay all year round. The streets are littered with animal dung, vegetable rubbish, fish remains and entrails…it’s not a pretty sight…or smell. There are animals everywhere, from rats to live pigs. They tried to get rid of them a few years ago but it just got worse! Watch out!

**Pig** – oink oink oink

**Passer-by** – If you think that’s bad, you don’t know the half of it. Two years back the mayor of London made it illegal from throwing any more human waste into the ditch by Fleet Prison over there – he was worried about the health of the prisoners

**Goldsmith** – Why not step into my shop and try and forget the filth outside. Why not spend more time in the comfort of the fine shops. You can get everything here from silver to medicines, silks to spices. If you have the money, then this is a fine place to live. Why just last month the king made our water supplies run with wine instead of water. What a glorious celebration that was! Now what did you want to buy? What? No money – then get back out onto the streets and stop wasting my time!!

**4) Markets**

**Presenter** – I think we should go somewhere where we are more welcome. London has many markets which are used by rich and poor alike. You can find allsorts here in the Chepeside whilst the Billingsgate market will sell you a nice piece of fish. You can pick up a bargain if you don’t mind it being past its best. There are a few traders here who will try and rip you off if you look like an outsider, but there are a lot of laws in place to protect buyers from being sold things for too much money. The market traders are fined if they break the rules.

**Market seller 1.**

Come and buy your silken hose only 2 pence.

**Market seller 2.**

Capons plump capons only 3 pence each.

**Market seller 3.**

Apple pie lovely apple pie only 4 pence, come and buy your apple pie.

**Market seller 4.**

Come and get your goose grease, get your goose grease here now only 5 pence, help ease those sores!!

**Presenter** – It’s much darker here, the people are poorer and the houses almost touch each other at the top and block out the sunlight

**Presenter** - Watch it woman!! She has just thrown the contents of the Chamber pots all over me! No wonder there is a terrible smell in this town. Watch where you are walking everybody. There are even pigs sniffing around. People seem to be hurrying towards somewhere. There is quite a crowd straight ahead by the cross. Oh look there is the town crier mounting the steps now!

**Town Crier** – Oyez, Oyez, Oyez, Hear Ye , Hear Ye. Good people of London. Three men are to be hanged for murder at Tyburn later today. Entertainment garaunteed as you watch these criminals dance the Tyburn jig.

**Presenter** – Sounds like fun! If we wait here long enough they will take the criminals to the site in an open ox-cart from Newgate Prison. They usually put on a good show. Don’t forget to jeer if you see any displays of weakness on the gallows…

**Rich man** – Out of my way fellow, out of my way can’t you see I am in a hurry, clear the way. A great sickness is coming! The Italians are all talking about a plague which makes men cry out for death. They say God is punishing people for their sins and cleaning the earth of evil. I must find one of those famous London doctors to get a cure. They are normally everywhere but today I can’t find a single one. Maybe I will go back to the Church instead. God must protect me if the doctors can’t

**5) Leaving**

**Presenter** – Right I don’t like the sound of that. Let’s get back out of this filthy city before we get ill too! Aldgate is the closest exit from here…let’s ask this person how to get there.

**Helpful person** – Why good sir / madam it just behind you. But if you want to leave London tonight you and your group will have to hurry. The keepers close the gate promptly at 6 of the clock and it is nigh that now.

**Presenter** – Right hurry, but as we go…if you look over there you can see the White Tower that William the Conqueror built here. When I was young, the baron Roger Mortimer had his head stuck on a pole at the top of the tower. He had tried to take power away from the king. Not a good idea. They let him hang naked at Tyburn for 2 days before they cut off his head!

**Guard –** You and your group have just made it Sir. I have already got my keys out, you were all close to spending the night in the city, and unless you had somewhere to stay it could have been a very nasty night for you.

**Presenter** – I hope you enjoyed that tour of Medieval London. Do come back soon.

**Task:** to annotate this map of London with information you have learnt from reading the text. Write captions around with arrows to the map so that a person looking at the map could learn what you have just learnt. How will you make it clear for them? What are the most important points to know? What guidance do they need to be safe?

