

SOURCE A

Scientists did not discover the germ that caused plague until 1894. The germ bred in rats, which it killed even quicker than it killed people. The rats had fleas. The fleas bit people and so passed on the plague germs.

SOURCE B

Everybody, rich and poor was crowded together. Usually a family slept in one room. Sometimes up to a dozen people would be asleep on a straw-covered mud floor. Animals slept with them too.

The black rats which spread the plague loved the filth and warmth of the ramshackle wooden houses crammed together inside the city walls



SOURCE C A woodcutting showing a walled city that was ravaged by the plague.

SOURCE D

*It began in young children, male or female, either under the armpits or in the groin by swellings, in some to the bigness of an apple, in others like an egg. It also showed itself by black or blue spots on the arms of many, or on their thighs.*

*This was followed by three days of coughing and vomiting blood.*

SOURCE E

One popular remedy was to put a dried toad on plague boils. A doctor wrote:

*Toads should be thoroughly dried in the air or sun. They should be laid on the boil. Then the toad will swell and draw the poison of the plague through the skin to its own body. When it is full, it should be thrown away and a new one applied.*

people thought they caught plague by breathing something in the air. They carried bunches of flowers and herbs to keep the germs away.