

**GLOBAL HISTORY II
 HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS
 DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2009**

I. The Black Death

War, famine, and disease killed over half of Europe’s population between the years 1300 and 1450. The worst of these disasters was the Black Death, or bubonic plague. In just a few years, this disease wiped out at least one-fourth of the population of Western Europe.

Where did this terrible disease come from? In 1347, the city of Kaffa on the Black Sea in Russia was under siege by the Mongols, a warlike Asiatic people. After a year, many Mongol warriors began dying of the plague. In order to wipe out the population of Kaffa, the Mongol commander ordered his men to use a machine called a catapult to hurl all soldiers who had the disease over the city’s walls. As a result, most of Kaffa’s inhabitants became infected and died. A few, however, survived and escaped. They unknowingly carried the disease to the ports of Genoa and Venice in what is now Italy. The plague spread from these ports to the rest of Europe.

The bubonic plague caused death quickly. The telltale symptom was black spots on the skin. These spots were caused by a swelling of the lymph glands. Because they misunderstood the cause of the disease and believed that God was punishing them for their sins, many people fled congested cities and manors to more isolated areas which they thought were safer.

Today, thanks to advances in medical science, people know that the bubonic plague is transmitted to humans by fleas from infected rats. Through antibiotics, proper sanitation, and the elimination of vermin, the disease can be quickly brought under control.

Circle the letter of each correct answer.

1. The Black Death that raged through medieval Europe began in the
 - a. 13th century
 - b. 14th century
 - c. 15th century
2. The Black Death spread to Europe from the Russian city of
 - a. Venice
 - b. Kaffa
 - c. Genoa
3. The Asiatic people who brought the Black Death to Europe were the
 - a. Mongols
 - b. Huns
 - c. Russians
4. The bubonic plague is transmitted to humans by
 - a. roaches
 - b. fleas
 - c. flies
5. The bubonic plague can be controlled through the elimination of
 - a. dogs
 - b. infected birds
 - c. rats
6. At the time the Black Death struck Europe in the 1300s, Paris had a population of about 150,000, Venice had a population of roughly 100,000, and Nuremberg (a city in Germany) had a population of approximately 20,000. If roughly one-fourth of the inhabitants of these cities died of the disease, how many people died in each city?

Paris: _____ deaths

Venice: _____ deaths

Nuremberg: _____ deaths

II. The End of the Middle Ages

Most historians agree that the Middle Ages ended around 1500. Several important events took place which mark that time period as the conclusion of one age and the beginning of another. Two of these events occurred in 1453: the old Eastern Roman Empire that was centered at Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks, and the Hundred Years' War between France and England ended. In addition, Columbus discovered the New World in 1492, which greatly broadened Europe's horizons.

The Middle Ages began drawing to a close as early as the 1300s. The Crusades had caused feudalism to decline, trade to increase, and towns to appear. They had also brought about a rebirth of education. The Renaissance, the formal name for this rebirth of learning, began in Italy and spread to other Western European nations. Painting and other forms of art flourished, and people began studying the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans to try to understand many things about the world. Unlike the Middle Ages, in which people focused on the hereafter, the Renaissance placed emphasis on the individual in the present world.

These new ways of thinking that came about as a result of the Crusades signaled the end of the thousand-year period known as the Middle Ages.

Unscramble the following proper nouns which all appear in the text above, and explain how each person, place, or thing helped end the Middle Ages.

1. PLENTONATSCION_____

2. SLUMBUCO_____

3. SCAREDUS_____

4. SINCEARENAS_____

5. YALIT_____

6. How did people's outlook on life during the Renaissance differ from people's outlook on life during the Middle Ages?
