Enrichment Activities

**Biography:** Inform the students that an obituary is a notice of someone's death. It usually appears in the newspaper and often includes a short biography of that person. Instruct the students to select one of the people mentioned in the book An American Plague listed below and write an interesting and factual obituary about that person. Obituaries include the deceased person's:

- Full name
- Date of Death
- Place of Death
- Cause of Death
- Date of Birth
- Place of Birth
- Names of Parents
- Marriage and name of spouse
- Education
- Jobs
- Awards & Achievements
- Family (survived by)


(Another choice with teacher approval)

**Current Events:** Epidemics and pandemics have become a byproduct of the “globalization” of the modern world. Invite the students to investigate news sources to discover if there is currently an epidemic in some part of the world. Ask them to share what this epidemic is, how it spreading, and what measures are being put in place to control it.

**Scientific Research:** Humans have been “plagued” by terrible epidemics throughout history. Encourage students to research one of these diseases, list ten facts about it, and share their findings with the class. Your suggested list might include: botulism, bubonic plague (Black Death), cholera, diphtheria, influenza, leprosy, Lyme disease, malaria, measles, polio, smallpox, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, yellow fever, etc.

**Economics:** When it was evident there was a yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia, merchants closed their shops, supplies stopped coming in, and many people left the city for a healthier place. This situation caused many goods and services to become scarce. There was a great demand, the amount of a particular good or service consumers wanted to purchase, and very little supply, the total amount of goods and services available to purchase. The goods and services remaining in the city were being sold at very high prices.

Divide the board or a piece of chart paper in half. On one side write SUPPLY, on the write DEMAND. Ask students what goods and services may have been available in 1793. List those under supply. Then ask what would be needed most during an epidemic. List those under demand. Discuss with the students what they think will happen when the demand is far greater than the supply. (Possible answers include: shortages, high prices, hording, theft, starvation.) Instruct the students to write a paragraph based on the class discussion. Possible topics:

- Why Supplies Were Scarce in Philadelphia in 1793
• The Greater the Demand, the Higher the Price
• Survival: Good and Services Required in a Time of Need

Listening: (Recorded Books) Students who would like to listen to part of An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793 can find Chapters 1 & 2 at this address: www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3751212

Reading: Students who find gross diseases interesting and who are nonfiction fans may also like to read:
• You Wouldn’t Want to Be at the Boston Tea Party!: Wharf Water Tea You’d Rather Not Drink by Peter Cook. Franklin Watts, 2006.
• You Wouldn’t Want to Be Sick in the 16th Century!: Diseases You’d Rather Not Catch by Kathryn Senior. Franklin Watts, 2002.

Students who rather read fictional accounts of historic events might find these titles interesting:

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Diamante Plague Poem

A diamante poem has seven lines that form the shape of a diamond. It does not need to rhyme. It uses nouns, adjectives, and verbs to describe a topic. Diamantes use contrasts to show both sides of the topic.

Here is an example of a diamante poem about the plague in Philadelphia in 1793:

PLAGUE

dreadful, deadly
hunting, finding, hurting
fever, pain // coolness, peace
fighting, hoping, improving
strong, healthy
RECOVERY

Parts of Speech Review:

Noun: a person, place, thing, or idea
Adjective: a word that describes a noun
Verb: an action word
Antonym: a word having the opposite meaning of another word
Directions: Create a poem using the pattern. Your poem’s topic should be about being sick and getting better. The words listed below will help you with the first and last lines of your poem.

Noun (topic)

2 Adjectives

3 Verbs (“ing” words)

4 nouns (change focus in the middle)

3 Verbs (“ing” words)

2 Adjectives

Noun (noun opposite of line one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sickness Words</th>
<th>Healthy Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ailment</td>
<td>1. Able-bodied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Blight</td>
<td>2. Cleanliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Complaint</td>
<td>3. Convalesce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Contamination</td>
<td>5. Energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Desolation</td>
<td>6. Fitness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Deterioration</td>
<td>7. Happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Disease</td>
<td>8. Healing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Epidemic</td>
<td>10. Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Illness</td>
<td>11. Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Infection</td>
<td>12. Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Lethargy</td>
<td>13. Recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Outbreak</td>
<td>15. Restoration</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Pestilence</td>
<td>17. Treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Scourge</td>
<td>18. Vigor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Virus</td>
<td>19. Vitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Weakness</td>
<td>20. Wellness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Primary and Secondary Sources

Primary sources come first. They include eyewitness accounts about people, places, or events. Examples of primary sources include journals, official records, and photographs.

Secondary sources come second. Writers of secondary source materials explain, summarize, or interpret events using primary sources.

**Example:** Jim Murphy used newspaper articles, personal letters, and death records from 1793 to find the information he needed to write *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793.*

### PRIMARY SOURCE EXAMPLES
- Autobiography
- Birth Certificate
- Diary
- Eyewitness Account
- Government Document
- Gravestone
- Interview
- Last Will and Testament
- Legal Contract
- Letter
- Map

### SECONDARY SOURCE EXAMPLES
- Biography
- Encyclopedias—Print and Electronic
- Historical Novel
- Magazine Article
- Television Documentary
- Textbooks
- Travel Brochure
- U. S. History Book
Primary and Secondary Sources Activity

The examples listed below can be found in *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793* by Jim Murphy.

Directions: Write *P* if you think the source listed would be considered a **PRIMARY SOURCE**. Write *S* if the source would be considered a **SECONDARY SOURCE**. Be prepared to defend your answers.


2. Philadelphia Directory and Register, 1973 (listing names, occupations and addresses of the city’s citizens)

3. Governor Thomas Mifflin’s proclamation found in the November 14, 1793 edition of the newspaper, the *Federal Gazette*


5. *Fever, 1793*, an award-winning fiction book by Laurie Halse Anderson

6. Letters written by John Adams to Thomas Jefferson

7. Map of Philadelphia (drawn by John Hill, 1796)

8. *Walter Reed: A Biography* by William B. Bean


10. Elizabeth Drinker’s journal (1759-1807)
ACROSS
3. A widespread contagious disease with a high fatality rate
4. Yellow coloring of skin and eyes
5. Army doctor who identified the mosquito as the source of yellow fever; Walter ____
8. Able to be spread from one person to another
10. Above-normal body temperature
11. Outbreak of an infectious disease

DOWN
1. Blood-sucking insect
2. Separation from others to stop the spread of disease
3. The capital city of the US from 1790–1800
6. Famous doctor in 1973; Benjamin ____
7. Capable of causing injury or death
9. The author of An American Plague; Jim ____

WORD BANK
contagious, epidemic, fever, jaundice, mosquito, Murphy, Philadelphia, plague, quarantine, Reed, Rush, toxic
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