## The Black Death Overview

Name:

Use the information given to answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

**Black Death Vocabulary** 

**Epidemic** (n.)- a widespread occurrence of a disease

Pandemic (adj.)- widespread over a whole country or the world Plague- (n.) a contagious bacterial disease characterized by fever, insanity, and formation of buboes, and sometimes an infection of the lungs Yersinia Pestis- (n.) the bacteria that causes plague **Buboes-** (n.) swollen lymph nodes in the armpit or groin

The **Black Death** was a devastating epidemic that struck large portions of Asia, the Middle East, and Europe in the 14th century (1300s). In Europe, it killed over a ⅓ of the population, depending on the region. In total around the world, it is believed that at least 75 million people were killed by the disease in the mid 1300s.

Most scientists now believe that the Black Death was an outbreak of **bubonic plague**, which is a disease caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis* which lives in rodents like rats. Rats, which were common in Medieval cities, often had fleas on them. The fleas bit the rats, then jumped onto humans (or other rats) and bit them, which spread the disease to humans. Once the disease was in a person it was spread from person to person through body fluid and coughing.



Rat contracts the bacterium Yersinia Pestis



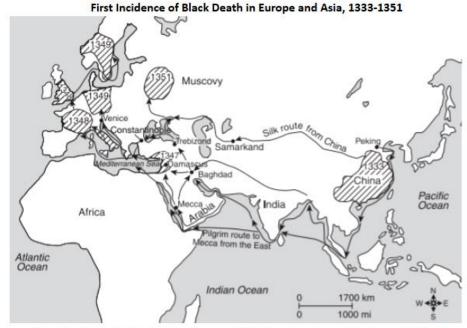
Flea jumps on rat and bites it and has rat blood in its mouth.



Flea jumps on human and bites, mixing rat and human blood and giving human Yersinia Pestis.



- 1. What are the scientific names of the Black Death?
- 2. What carried and spread the Black Death?
- 3. Where did the Black Death originate?
- 4. What **type of routes** did the Black Death travel on?
- 5. How many years did it take for the Black Death to spread to **Scandinavia**?



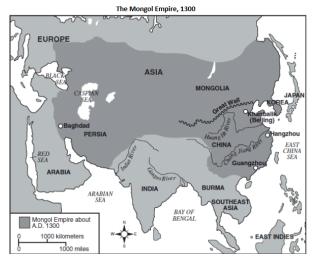
Adapted from the New York State Education Department . Global History Exam. January 2011. Internet. Available <a href="https://exam.january.2011">https://exam.january.2011</a>. Internet. Available <a href="https://exam.

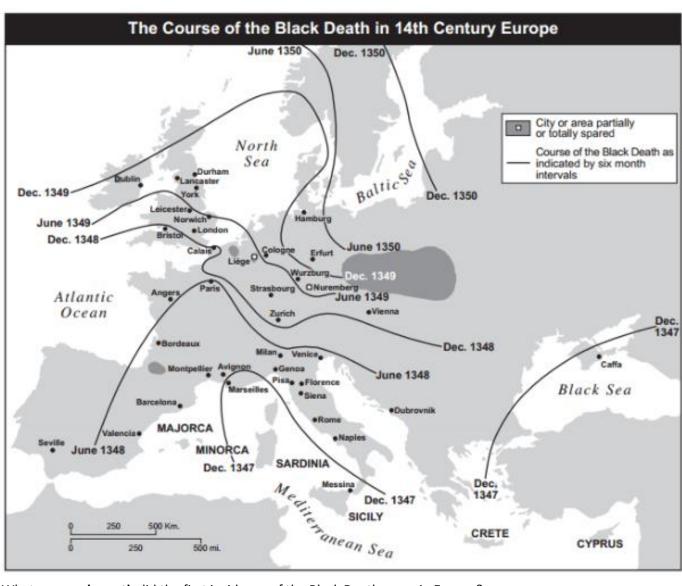


Areas of outbreaks of plague with first known dates

From the beginnings of the **Mongol Empire**, the Mongol Khans fostered trade and sponsored numerous caravans. The very size of the Mongol Empire encouraged the wider dissemination of goods and ideas throughout Eurasia, as merchants and others could now travel from one end of the empire to another with greater security, guaranteed by the *Pax Mongolica*.

6. What role did the Mongols play in the spread of the Black Death?





- 7. What year and month did the first incidence of the Black Death occur in Europe?
- 8. How long did it take for the Black Death to reach London after it reached Europe?
- 9. If another disease as contagious and untreatable as the bubonic plague was in the 14th century came to Europe **today**, do you think it would spread faster or slower? Explain