The Black Death 1347 - 1350
• Dead littered the streets everywhere.
• Cattle and livestock roamed the country unattended.
• Brother deserted brother.
The Black Death was one of the worst natural disasters in history.

- In 1347 A.D., a great plague swept over Europe and ravaged cities causing widespread hysteria and death.
- One third of the population of Europe died.
- The primary culprits in transmitting this disease were Oriental Rat Fleas carried on the back of black rats.
The Rat Flea

- Fleas are blood sucking parasites.
- They have the potential of spreading dangerous diseases to humans and other animals.
The Black Death

- The Black Death came in three forms:
  - 1. bubonic
  - 2. pneumonic
  - 3. septicemic
Bubonic plague

• The bubonic plague was the most commonly seen form of the Black Death. The mortality rate was 30-75%. The symptoms were enlarged and inflamed lymph nodes (around arm pits, neck and groin).

• Victims were subject to headaches, nausea, aching joints, fever of 101-105 degrees, vomiting, and a general feeling of illness.

• Symptoms took from 1-7 days to appear.
Pneumonic Plague

• The pneumonic plague was the second most commonly seen form of the Black Death. The mortality rate for the pneumonic plague was 90-95% (if treated today the mortality rate would be 5-10%).

• The pneumonic plague infected the lungs. Symptoms included slimy sputum tinted with blood. Sputum is saliva mixed with mucus exerted from the respiratory system.

• As the disease progressed, the sputum became free flowing and bright red. Symptoms took 1-7 days to appear.
The Septicemic Plague

• The septicemic plague was the most rare form of all. The mortality was close to 100% (even today there is no treatment). Symptoms were a high fever and skin turning deep shades of purple.

• The black death got its name from the deep purple, almost black discoloration." Victims usually died the same day symptoms appeared. In some cities, as many as 800 people died every day.
Path of the Plague
How it was Transmitted

- Flea drinks rat blood that carries the bacteria.
- Bacteria multiply in flea's gut.
- Human is infected.
- Flea bites human, regurgitates blood into open wound.
- Gut clogged with bacteria.
Effects of the Black Death on Europe

• 1/3 of the population of Europe died.
• In all, 2.5 million people died from the plague.
• Art, science, and literature stopped being created.
• People were only worried about their survival.
Effect on Children

- Children suffered as well. A common nursery rhyme is:
  - Ring a-round the rosy
  - Pocket full of posies
  - Ashes, ashes!
  - We all fall down!
• Ring around the rosy: rosary beads give you God's help.
• A pocket full of posies: used to stop the odor of rotting bodies which was at one point thought to cause the plague, it was also used widely by doctors to protect them from the infected plague patients.
• Ashes, ashes: the church burned the dead when burying them became too laborious.
• We all fall down: dead.