Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

History, Levels 7 and 8

An existing learning activity linked to a particular learning area or capability in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 can be easily adapted to incorporate career education, enriching students’ career-related learning and skill development.

1. Identify an existing learning activity

**Curriculum area and levels:** History, Levels 7 and 8

**Relevant content description:** One significant challenge and one development faced by the society that caused progress or decline ([VCHHK120](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHK120))

**Existing activity:** Examining the causes and consequences of the medical response to the Black Death.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition:** Using the Black Death as an example from which to explore changes and continuities in medical practice over time.

2. Adapt the learning activity to include a career education focus

| Existing learning activity | Adaptations, changes or extensions that can be made |
| --- | --- |
| Students analyse a range of written and visual primary sources to evaluate medieval understanding of the Black Death at the time. They should consider the causes, prevention treatment and effects as they were understood at the time. Teacher leads a discussion about the findings and constructs a concept map from students’ ideas.  Teacher may choose to use a case study, such as the English rural village of Eyam (see Additional resources). Teacher can prompt students’ thinking by using questions such as: How did different groups of people respond to the Black Death in Eyam? Why? How effective were these responses in protecting the inhabitants of Eyam and surrounding villages?  Teacher turns discussion towards the origins of medieval beliefs about the Black Death (superstition, mysticism, religion, astrology, classical medical training, understandings of science, etc.) and how these affected medical practice. Students evaluate the most significant factors that influenced the medical response.  Students select a group of medieval medical and spiritual practitioners and research their perspectives and experiences of the Black Death. These could include university physicians, plague doctors, hospitals, barber surgeons, apothecaries, monks, religious leaders, flagellants, and governments and local authorities.  Students examine the resultant changes and continuities brought to medical practices after the Black Death. They evaluate the historical significance of these changing factors in shaping the medical response to the Black Death using a Diamond 9 Template (see Additional resources). | To extend this activity, students identify how the job of their medieval medical and spiritual practitioners (e.g. the physician) has evolved as a profession over time and what changes to the health industry have occurred. They can be prompted by questions such as: How has this career changed since the Black Death? What is it like today?  Students explore how these careers have changed or innovated to combat contemporary crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. |
|  | During and after the activity, students reflect on how the skills they use when studying history are useful in a broader sense throughout life. How do their critical thinking and questioning skills, and the ability to see cause and effect, affect their ability to perform in other classes? Where else might they use these evaluation skills in later life? |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* Teacher will need to consider how they discuss changes to an entire profession and how this is evident in changing roles within a profession.

Additional resources to help when adapting the learning activity

* ClassTools, [Diamond 9 template](http://www.classtools.net/_SEARCH/index.php?template=diamond9)
* National Geographic, [Why plague doctors wore those strange beaked masks](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/reference/european-history/plague-doctors-beaked-masks-coronavirus/)
* HowStuffWorks, [How the Black Death worked](https://history.howstuffworks.com/historical-events/black-death2.htm)
* BBC News, [Eyam plague: The village of the damned](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-35064071)
* The Middle Ages, [The medieval miracles of healing – medical science](http://www.themiddleages.net/life/health.html)
* History Extra, [Beating the Black Death: Did medieval medicine help people to survive?](https://www.historyextra.com/period/medieval/medieval-medicine-cure-black-death-what-caused-plague-epidemic-leprosy-sweating-sickness/)
* Science Museum, [Bubonic plague: The first pandemic](https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/objects-and-stories/medicine/bubonic-plague-first-pandemic)
* Sarah Frances Vanneste, Wayne State University, [The Black Death and the future of medicine](https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/oa_theses/29/) (see pages 76–77 of downloaded thesis)

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* Students understand the need to be lifelong learners by understanding the need to continually develop new solutions to problems.
* Students build evaluation and questioning skills.

Know your world – career exploration:

* Students develop research skills, which they can carry into other situations such as career opportunities.
* Students learn about the changing nature of an entire profession in response to moments of crisis.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* Students understand that change is a natural part of life, even in work contexts.
* Students develop their capacity to think critically and analyse decisions made by others, which helps develop the ability to make informed decisions.