**Escape Room – Black Death**

**Special props needed for this particular Escape Room – 4 date locks, box and hasp:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| lock | lock | box |  | hasp |
| [ORIA Combination Lock, 4 Digit Combination Padlock - 2 Pack](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B071FKJ7WW/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B071FKJ7WW&linkCode=as2&tag=activehisto0b-20&linkId=77ee25eb589f82611a6fd01578293e23)link | [ORIA Combination Lock, 4 Digit Combination Padlock - 2 Pack](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B071FKJ7WW/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B071FKJ7WW&linkCode=as2&tag=activehisto0b-20&linkId=77ee25eb589f82611a6fd01578293e23)link | [Stalwart 75-005 Metal Storage Lock Box, 12"](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0143BZHWW/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B0143BZHWW&linkCode=as2&tag=activehisto0b-20&linkId=39bf36dd9b382375be9db07c2fb638cf)link |  | [Brady Steel Lockout Hasp With Tab, 1" Inside Jaw Diameter](https://aax-us-east.amazon-adsystem.com/x/c/Qti1_ubFOnqE8iS83T0a7ywAAAFq4GuNTwEAAAFKAXpdAQI/https:/assoc-redirect.amazon.com/g/r/https:/www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003ZHUU8M/ref=as_li_tl?imprToken=5K70r-8.8iDPhaq1leKGoA&slotNum=3&ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B003ZHUU8M&linkCode=w61&tag=activehisto0b-20&linkId=d3ab285bc37c4fd847ade214144854f6)link |

* The padlocks need to be set to the dates specified by the final clues provided under the timeline later in this document.
* TIP: it’s a good idea to put a little coloured sticker on each one of these so you can easily match them to the correct dates when you need to re-set them after the lesson).

**Special sources / preparation needed for this particular Escape Room:**

* The image for Mission Flagellant should be chopped into pieces and put around the room.

**Pre-Class Preparation**

• **Print out the missions** (these are on slips that need to be cut) and hide these around the room in the suggested places.

▪ **Print off a second copy of the missions** for teacher reference.

• **Print out the timeline** ready ready to read out as ‘rewards’ for completing missions.

• **Print out the essential sources** (those used to complete the missions and those needed to answer the hint questions) and place these all over the room in various places.

• **Print out the additional sources** (which are not essential but generate more interest and provide more information) and place these around the room too.

• **Prepare additional props and the “Final Mission”** as listed later in this document.

Optional Extras:

• **Print out the hint questions** (either in plain English or encoded as QR codes as an additional ‘twist’) and keep these to one side for later in the activity if they are needed.

• **Print and cut out the “random trivia” slips** and place these all over the room (some of these are needed to answer the ‘hint’ questions; others are just for general interest).

**Scenario (available as a powerpoint starter slide)**

▪ Bring up the PowerPoint slide and read through the scenario.

▪ Give students a minute or two to explore the room, in silence and without touching anything.

▪ Then, outline the procedure through which they should aim to complete the mission:

* **Find a mission**: The class needs to locate the numerous “missions” hidden around the room which are written on pieces of paper. Whenever one is found, the teacher halts the class and reads out the mission. It is up to the class to decide who should complete this mission and who should carry on looking for the remaining slips.
* **Complete the mission**: Each time students feel a 'mission' is completed, they should alert the teacher. The teacher asks all students to pay attention as the mission is read out and the answer provided. If the answer is correct, the next piece of the timeline (starting with the earliest) is then read out and ALL STUDENTS SHOULD TAKE NOTES (the importance of this is clear from the “Final Mission”…). If it is wrong, the class has to “freeze” for 60 (valuable) seconds as a penalty.
* **Escape the room**: Once the class has the final piece of the timeline, a clue is provided which enables them to solve the final mission and "escape"!

**Outline of the “Final Mission”**

• Once the class has been given the full timeline of 10 events, all students stand around the edge of the room. They are told that the teacher will give them a clue based on something they have learned (note – you can find these under the timeline later in the document). The answer will be a four-digit number which will unlock ONE of the padlocks. One student ONLY will be nominated to try unlocking a padlock with this clue (they can try as many times and for as many padlocks as they like). They have 30 seconds. If they fail to do so then we have to wait in silence for a minute till the next person is chosen to try again. All four locks need to be unlocked for the room to be sprung. In this way all students feel under pressure to take notes!

**Timeline of key events**

• Each time a mission is completed, READ OUT another piece of the timeline.

▪ ALL students should make a note of this, because the padlocks are set to key dates in this timeline and the clues will be given at the end and only nominated students will be able to try unlocking a padlock each time.

• When the final mission is completed, tell students that to unlock the four padlocks they must work out the combinations from clues based on the timeline.

**Timeline**

(Each time students complete a mission, read out the next event in the timeline and remind students that they need to take notes so that they can complete the final mission).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Slip 1 | 1347: Black Death reaches Sicily, carried from Asia by trading ships. Boccaccio described the symptoms “The first signs of the plague were lumps in the groin or armpits. After this, black spots appeared on the arms and thighs and other parts of the body. Almost all died within three days”. |
| Slip 2 | 1348 (January): Plague reaches Marseilles, France. The most common symptom of the disease is large swellings called “buboes” under the armpits. |
| Slip 3 | 1348 (April): Around forty Jews were massacred in Toulon, France. People believed that the Jews had caused the plague by poisoning the wells. |
| Slip 4 | 1348 (June): The plague reaches Bristol on the south coast of England. Some people try to protect themselves by shaving a dead chicken and strapping it onto their buboes! |
| Slip 5 | 1348 (September): The daughter of Edward III, King of England, dies of the Black Death. |
| Slip 6 | 1348 (November): Plague reaches London. King Edward III orders all rubbish to be cleared up because he thinks the disease is being spread by pollution. |
| Slip 7 | 1349 (May): Plague reaches Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The richest people are protecting themselves by eating powdered emeralds and even diamonds! |
| Slip 8 | 1349: A religious group called the Flagellants attempted to rid Europe of the Black Death by touring the continent whipping themselves to persuade God they were sorry for their sins. |
| Slip 9 | 1351: The Statute of Labourers: So many people have died that the Lords of the Manor are desperate for workers to farm the land. These workers know this and so demand more wages. The King passes a law making this illegal. |
| Slip 10 | **1381**: The Peasants' Revolt: Angry about the Statue of Labourers, thousands of peasants rise up in rebellion in London under the leadership of Wat Tyler and John Ball. They are eventually brought under control but the King wisely allows wages to rise. |

**Final Four Clues**

When students have completed 10 missions and then completed the timeline, the four final clues to unlock the box are as follows:

* One of the padlocks is set to the date of the Peasants’ Revolt. (teacher note: red padlock = 1381)
* One of the padlocks is set to the date of the Statute of Labourers. (teacher note: blue padlock = 1351)
* Two thirds of the European population died of the Black Death. One of the padlocks is set to this statistic expressed as a percentage rounded up to within one decimal place (teacher note: yellow padlock = 0067)
* One padlock is set to the date that the Black Death arrived in Europe, backwards (teacher note: green padlock = 7431).

**Missions**

(note – completing ten of these will lead to the completion of the timeline. I have created more than 11 missions though so there is some flexibility for students in terms of finding / completing missions).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Mission Slips (cut out the cells in this column and hide them in the place described)** |  | **Answer** | **Location (NOTE: change to whatever you like to suit your classroom!)** | **Location Hint (if you wish to give them a clue as they run out of momentum)** |
| **Mission: Flagellant**  The Flagellants were people who whipped themselves so that God would see they were sorry and not give them the plague. Reconstruct the chopped up image of the flagellants and show it to your teacher. | > | (students reconstruct the image) | Around the room |  |
| **Mission: Edward III**  According to the written source, why did so many COWS die as a result of the Black Death? | > | They wandered into ditches because no farmers were left to look after them. | Underneath the classroom bin. | The location of this mission is rubbish. |
| **Mission: Wat Tyler**  According to the written source, (a) Why did many men rush to become monks after the Black Death and (b) Why was this a problem? | > | (a) Because their wives had died and (b) They were not even literate. | Taped on the underside of a desk. | You will need to look upwards to find this mission. |
| **Mission: John Ball**  Find the document which lists “Stages of the Disease”. Find a volunteer willing to mime each of the stages of the disease. When you are ready, perform the mime for the rest of the class: you should read through the “stages” and your partner should act them out. | > | - | Inside a locked box (with the key for this hidden somewhere else in the room e.g. taped to the ceiling). | This mission is boxed up. |
| **Mission: Bristol**  According to the Welsh poet, what colour were the buboes that appeared under his arms? | > | “Ashy” | Under a plant pot. | This mission is planted somewhere obvious. |
| **Mission: Buboe**  Plague doctors wore special masks filled with herbs to protect them from the disease. Find the picture of the German plague doctor and give his name to your teacher. | > | Schnabel von Rom | On the globe of the world from the Geography room, stuck onto Italy. | You’ll have to go all around the world to find this mission. |
| **Mission: Sicily**  What was the name of the very first town in England that suffered from the Black Death? | > | Melcome | Written in UV pen on a laminated surface / transparency. | You’ll need to be quite bright to find this mission. |
| **Mission: Boccaccio**  According to the source, how did the Black Death find its way into Scotland? | > | The Scots invaded England to take advantage of their weakness – then took the disease back with them. | Stuck underneath a ginger beer bottle | Finding this mission will be thirsty work. |
| **Mission: Touloun**  Find TWO ‘suggested cures’ which explain how you can use POO to help treat the disease. Read these out to the class. | > | (a) Breath in fumes so you vomit to clean your system; (b) Use them to seal your opened buboes. | Inside the printer tray. | This mission still needs to be printed out. |
| **Mission: Chicken**  According to the ‘suggested cure’, why should you cut open your veins and let your blood pour out of them?! | > | To restore the balance of your humours. | Taped to the ceiling. | Look on the ceiling… |
| **Mission: Emerald**  What is the Latin name for the plague virus? | > | Yersinia Pestis | Underneath a mouse mat next to the teacher computer. | The mission is under a mat. |

Note – the following could be provided as an alternative to “Mission Emerald” if you have a Mexican Code Wheel (i.e. if students set “A” to be matched to 01, 27, 53, 79 then they can decode each pair of numbers to match a letter on the wheel)”

**Mission: Emerald**

Use the Mexican Code Wheel to decipher the mission instruction:

7586537287194686836453986114407965578493189860059464530799574887967371

Tip: A = 01 | 27 | 53 | 79

