Tracing the Outbreak

Use details from a historical investigation to support analysis.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.9 "Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Snow's conclusion and number three details that support it. In the margin, write a short note showing how each numbered detail supports the conclusion.

The Broad Street Investigation

(1) In 1854, a deadly cholera outbreak struck London's Soho neighborhood. Many people believed cholera traveled through foul air, so officials focused on smells and ventilation. Physician John Snow doubted that explanation. He visited homes, recorded deaths, and placed their locations on a map. The marks clustered near the Broad Street water pump. Snow did not treat the map as proof by itself. He compared its pattern with information about where different residents got their drinking water.

(2) Snow also investigated people who did not become ill. A nearby brewery supplied workers with beer, and its workers had few cholera deaths. The workhouse near the pump had its own water supply and also had relatively few deaths. In contrast, some people who lived farther away still used the Broad Street pump and became sick. These comparisons strengthened Snow's conclusion that contaminated water, rather than bad air, spread cholera. After local leaders removed the pump handle, the outbreak declined, though it was already beginning to fade.

(3) Years later, investigators learned that sewage from a nearby cesspool had seeped into the Broad Street well. This finding gave a likely source for the contamination Snow suspected. Snow's work mattered because he combined several kinds of evidence: a death map, interviews about water use, and comparisons among groups. His investigation did not depend on one dramatic fact. Instead, each piece of evidence helped test the same explanation. Today, researchers still use maps and comparisons to examine how diseases move through communities.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What conclusion did Snow reach about how cholera spread? Give two details from the passage that support this conclusion.

2. How do the brewery and workhouse details weaken the idea that foul air caused cholera?

3. Why was it important that some people who lived farther away became sick after using the Broad Street pump?

4. How does the later discovery about the cesspool affect Snow's explanation? Use evidence from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In exactly three sentences, argue whether Snow's investigation gives a convincing explanation for the outbreak. Use two details from two different paragraphs and explain how the details support your judgment.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · W.8.9

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Snow's conclusion and number three details that support it. In the margin, write a short note showing how each numbered detail supports the conclusion. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What conclusion did Snow reach about how cholera spread? Give two details from the passage that support this conclusion.	**Snow concluded that contaminated water spread cholera. Supporting details include deaths clustering near the Broad Street pump and people farther away becoming sick when they used that pump.**
2	How do the brewery and workhouse details weaken the idea that foul air caused cholera?	**Both places were near the pump but had relatively few deaths because they used other drinks or another water supply. If foul air caused cholera, nearby people should have become sick regardless of their water source.**
3	Why was it important that some people who lived farther away became sick after using the Broad Street pump?	**This detail shows that water use, not simply living close to the pump, was connected to illness.**
4	How does the later discovery about the cesspool affect Snow's explanation? Use evidence from the passage.	**It strengthens Snow's explanation because sewage seeping into the well provides a likely source of the contaminated water he suspected.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Snow had strong evidence that contaminated water spread cholera. His map showed deaths clustered near the Broad Street pump, and people farther away became sick when they used that pump. The brewery and workhouse had few deaths because they used other water sources, which makes the water explanation more convincing.

Accept claims that are supported by accurate passage details and clear reasoning. For the open task, check for exactly three sentences, evidence from two different paragraphs, and an explanation of how the evidence supports the judgment.