

Mapping a London Epidemic

Part 1. Read the text and use the map to answer questions 1 and 2.

In 1854, in a single ten-day period, 500 people suddenly died in London, England. And they all died of the same illness in a single section of the city. The cause of death was determined to be cholera, a severe infection of the small intestine. What was the source of this disease? How was it spreading? A physician named John Snow was determined to find out.

Dr. Snow began by drawing a map of the afflicted part of the city, a district called Soho. On this map he marked the home of each victim with a dot. This produced a map similar to the one below.

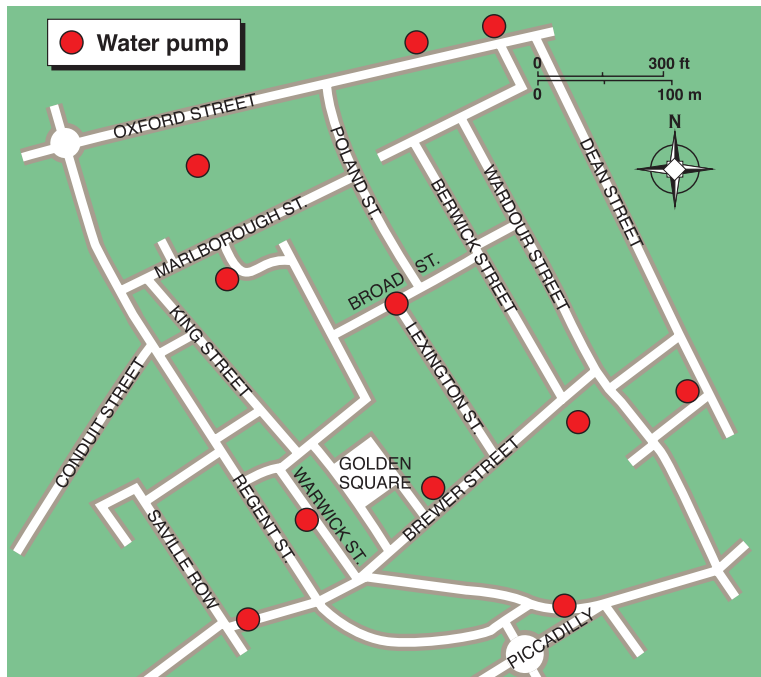


1. What does each dot represent? _____
2. Describe the patterns shown on the map. Where are most of the cholera deaths concentrated?

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Part 2. Read the text and use the map below and the map from Part 1 to answer questions 3-5.

Thinking that drinking water might be carrying the deadly germs, Dr. Snow drew a map of the pumps that supplied Soho's drinking water. At the time, running faucets and tap water were not available in the home. In some neighborhoods of London, people drew water from a local pump and carried it to their homes.



3. Look at the information on both maps. Which pump do you think might have had cholera-infected water? Why? Write your answer. Then mark the location of this pump on the first map.

Dr. Snow convinced the London authorities to turn off the suspected pump. The number of cholera deaths immediately declined, almost to zero.

4. Why would Dr. Snow have combined the information on the two maps into one map to present his findings to authorities?

5. Why might cholera deaths have occurred among people who lived farther away from the “killer pump”?
