

Edward Jenner

Key Points

- Smallpox was a much feared disease in the 18th century
- Inoculation was introduced to Britain by Lady Wortley Montagu
- Jenner observed cowpox victims being immune from smallpox
- He successfully experimented with using cowpox as a vaccine against Smallpox.
- His vaccine was successful and a vaccination program was introduced by the Government.
- Jenner did not understand how the vaccine worked.

Investigation into the success of Jenner's vaccine.

Source A

"After being vaccinated with cowpox she was so ill with fever, and with these boils, that she could not work for a week. Many years later she caught smallpox." C Cooke.

Source B

"There is a list of those who died of cowpox there. A list of those who were defectively vaccinated and caught smallpox; and those who died of smallpox and told that they would be protected." From a contemporary letter referring to Jenner's work.

Source C

"Medicine has never before produced any single improvement of such usefulness." Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States in a letter to Edward Jenner.

Source D

"The cowpox matter was inserted into the arm of the boy on May 14th 1796. On the seventh day he complained of uneasiness, on the ninth he lost his appetite the next day he had a slight headache but the next he was perfectly well. Then he was inoculated with smallpox, but no disease followed." Jenner, detailing his first vaccination.

Questions

- 1) What similarities are there between Sources A and D?
- 2) Look at Source B. Was Jenner's vaccine a universal success?
- 3) Does Source A prove that all vaccinations did not work?
- 4) What evidence is there in Source B that the vaccine did not work?
- 5) Using these sources and your own knowledge. Explain whether Jenner's vaccine a success.

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Reasons for Jenner's success.

- 1) What methods did Jenner employ?
- 2) Was chance a factor in his success?
- 3) What technological improvements of the previous 100 years assisted him in his work?

Continuity and change

Source E

27 October 1793

John Moore Paget was inoculated with Smallpox.

26 January 1834

Baby Margaret was vaccinated by Mr Drake, the smallpox being at Mells and Downhead.

25 June 1844

Jane did not go out on account of Richard who was not so well, but leeches and warm baths relieved him.

Questions

- 1) Which of these diary entries represent changes in Medical practice? (Explain why)
- 2) Which of these diary entries represent a continuation of medical practice? Explain why.

Was Jenner's discovery a change or a development in the History of Medicine? Explain your answer.

Things to consider (These are NOT all of the things that could be in your answer)

How Jenner established the link between cowpox and Smallpox.

The way that he tested his theories.

The way that disease was treated before and after his vaccine was introduced.

Whether or not his work could be used to aid further medical progress.

Things to remember

A change is something new.

A development is an adaptation of older practices.

Structure of your answer is important: PLAN before you write.

A GOOD response will

- Use available evidence
- Make use of background information
- QUESTION some of the points that YOU raise.