

Islamic Medicine: Changes and Developments

PROMPT SHEET 2

Question: How useful is Source 1?

Read each of the following answers.

SAMPLE ANSWER 1: The Source is useful because it tells us that Rhazes understood the difference between smallpox and measles. The source doesn't tell us how Rhazes established this theory though so it's not all that useful.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2: The Source is useful because it tells us that Rhazes understood the difference between smallpox and measles. This shows us that Rhazes developed medical understanding as this observation hadn't been made before. However the source doesn't fully explain that Rhazes came to this conclusion after following the guidance of Hippocrates and carefully observing and recording the symptoms of his patients.

SAMPLE ANSWER 3: The Source is useful in that it shows that Rhazes, who authored the source himself, understood the major differences between smallpox and measles. This demonstrates that he made medical advances as this knowledge hadn't been previously recorded. However the source does not go on to explain how Rhazes came to these conclusions, which was by following Hippocrates and Galen's example and making careful observations of patients with these symptoms. Likewise the source does not explain that such knowledge would result in changes in treatments, which as a result of the Arabian system of training doctors did happen. The source therefore is useful in that it provides evidence of developments made by Rhazes but further information is required by a historian in order to use this source effectively.

Give each answer a mark out of six.

Make a brief note of the ways in which each answer would pick up points.

What's missing from these answers?

Now write an answer to the question yourself. This answer will be analysed by another student within the group who will make suggestions as to how you can improve your answer.