

C Do you think these sentences are true or false?

In the early 1800s:

1. people took **baths** every day.
2. people got water from the **river**.
3. people were **afraid** to go into hospitals.
4. doctors washed their hands before they **checked** patients.
5. hospitals were very **clean** places.
6. doctors knew what **caused** sickness.

Now Read

D Read the article. See if you answered the questions in exercise C correctly.

DID YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?

What didn't people know?

Nowadays we know how important it is to wash our hands. But in the 1800s things were different. In those days, it was very difficult to stay clean. People didn't have water in their homes. They had to get water from a river or a well*. Most people took a bath only two or three times – a year! People didn't wash their hands before they ate. In fact, nobody knew that washing your hands was important at all.



Why were people afraid of hospitals?

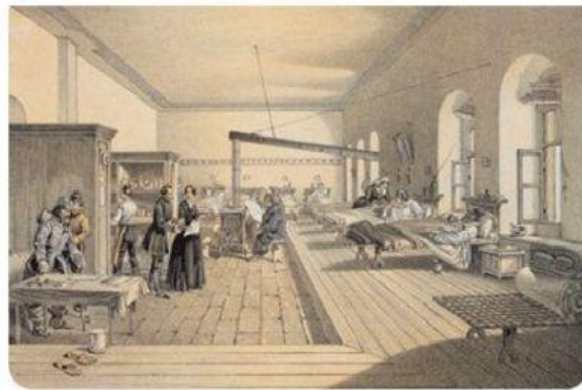
Even* doctors in hospitals didn't wash their hands before they checked patients.

Hospitals were very dangerous places because there were so many sick people in one place. And most of these sick people died.

Because of this, people were afraid to go into hospitals.

But there was one doctor who wanted to change all this – Doctor Ignaz Semmelweiss. He wanted hospitals to be a place where sick people got healthy again.

Dr. Semmelweiss realized that doctors didn't wash their hands. Maybe they were carrying a sickness from patient to patient. Was this true?



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Check It Out!

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Was Dr. Semmelweis right?

Dr. Semmelweis wanted to find out if he was right. He told the doctors in his hospital that they must wash their hands with soap and water each time they checked a patient. When the doctors started doing this, most of the patients in the hospital started to get better.

Dr. Semmelweis's idea wasn't very popular. Doctors didn't want to believe that they were carrying sickness from patient to patient. However, in 1865, an Englishman named Lister made an important discovery. He discovered that bacteria can cause sickness. Doctors who didn't wash their hands passed bacteria from one patient to another. Now everyone knew that Dr. Semmelweis was right. Sadly, it was too late to tell him. He had died the year before.



Answer the questions in your notebook.

What didn't people know?

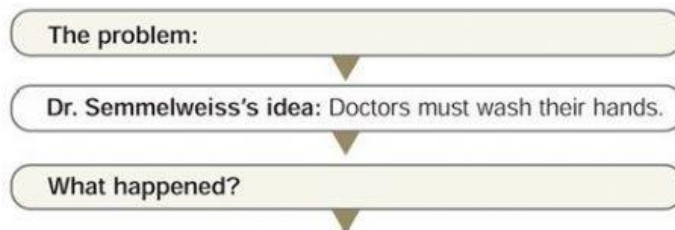
1. Why was it difficult for people to stay clean in the 1800s?
2. What didn't people know?

Why were people afraid of hospitals?

3. What happened to many people in hospitals?
4. What did Dr. Semmelweis want to change?

Was Dr. Semmelweis right?

5. Copy this flow chart and complete it in your notebook.



6. Choose the correct answer.

Doctors were against Dr. Semmelweis's idea, because they didn't ...

- a. have time to wash their hands.
- b. have soap in the hospital.
- c. like the idea that they were making patients sick.