RENAISSANCE MEDICINE – MEDICAL HEALERS

Medicine Through Time

RENAISSANCE

Unlicensed Healers

Wise Woman
- In every village or town
- Trusted because of their knowledge of herbs and other treatments
- If a treatment went wrong then they might be accused of being a witch
- Wife or mother of the patient
- First person to treat nearly all sicknesses

Lady of the Manor
- Girls from wealthy families
- Books were written especially to give advice to ladies of the manor
- Some read medical textbooks
- They treated people from their village and local farms

Medicine Through Time

RENAISSANCE

Unlicensed healters

Quack Doctors
- Unqualified, untrained doctors who sold their own medicines and pills which claimed to cure anything - patent medicines
- These medicines were made from ‘secret’ ingredients and could be very addictive. Deaths were common
- Quack doctors travelling up and down the country, and sold medicines from portable stages in the street
- Cheaper to see a quack doctor than a proper doctor. Often more scientific medicines didn’t work.

Medicine Through Time

RENAISSANCE

Licensed Healers

Midwife
- Supervised the last week of pregnancy and delivered babies
- Licensed by the local bishop
- In the case of complications, the patient was handed over to a physician

Apothecary
- Sold and mixed medicines prescribed by physicians
- Not supposed to treat the sick, but many did so for a small fee

Surgeon
- Trained by watching and copying other surgeons in an apprenticeship
- Given licenses by the local bishop
- Looked down on by physicians as second-class doctors

Physician
- Fully qualified doctors who had studied at university
- All men
- Knew work of Galen, Vesalius, and other individuals
- Charged large fees

Medicine Through Time

RENAISSANCE

Do you know your stuff?

1. Who were quack doctors and what did they sell?
   Untrained + unlicensed healers, sold patent medicines

2. Why were wise women trusted?
   Broad knowledge of herbs

3. Who could become a physician in the Renaissance?
   Only men, studied at university

4. How did surgeons learn how to operate on their patients?
   Long apprenticeship - watched other surgeons & copied methods