

OUTLINE FOR A DEMO ELEMENT WE CALL
 “THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS”

Purpose: To demonstrate the potential medieval mortality rate from causes modern science has rendered largely Non-Fatal.

Have everyone stand up, if space permits, otherwise have them raise their hands and substitute “put your hand down” for “sit down” in the following instructions.

Tell your audience:

- 1) If you have ever had **smallpox or the plague**, sit down.
- 2) If you have ever had **scarlet fever, rheumatic fever, or whooping cough**, sit down.
- 3) If you have ever been **hospitalized for more than one day for surgery**, sit down.
- 4) If you **take any sort of prescription medication every day**, sit down.
- 5) If you have ever had a **compound fracture, where a bone broke your skin**, sit down.
- 6) If you’ve ever had **an allergic reaction that made it very hard to breathe**, sit down.
- 7) (older groups only) If you were **born by c-section** or have experienced **complications in pregnancy**, sit down.
- 8) If you have ever **run a high fever and had to take antibiotics for a severe infection** (like cellulitis, pneumonia, or influenza), sit down.

Congratulate those left standing (or holding their hands up), as **they would probably be the only ones in the group who had survived to their present age** during the Middle Ages.

***Members of the Presenting Team can take turns issuing the seven-eight instructions above, but **be sure to go in the same sequence each time**, as the “ailments” grow increasingly familiar and “trivial” by modern standards, but should account for a growing number of “casualties” at the same time. If you happen to “wipe out” your entire audience, it can be pointed out that more than 1,300 villages were completely depopulated in England ALONE, during the Middle Ages. While “The Black Death” or Bubonic Plague was a major cause, it was not the ONLY illness that the populace did not understand and could not control. There were also typhoid, cholera, and other epidemics which modern medical science and hygiene practices can help treat or prevent.