

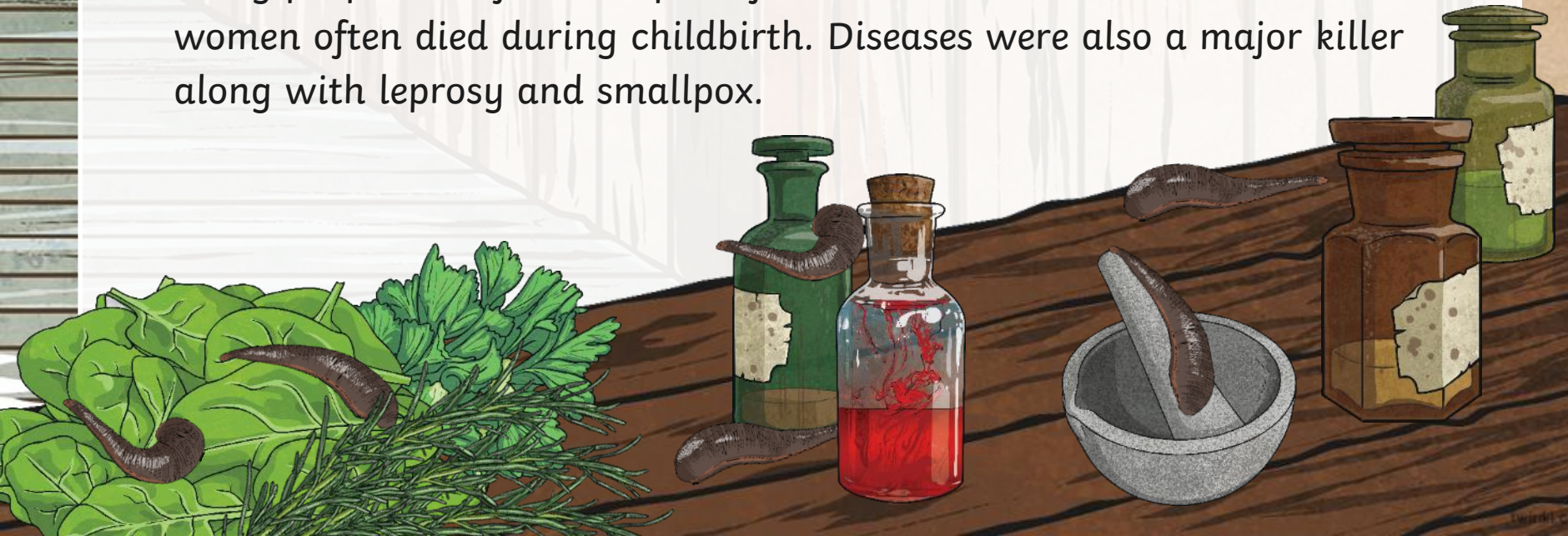
Medicine in the Middle Ages



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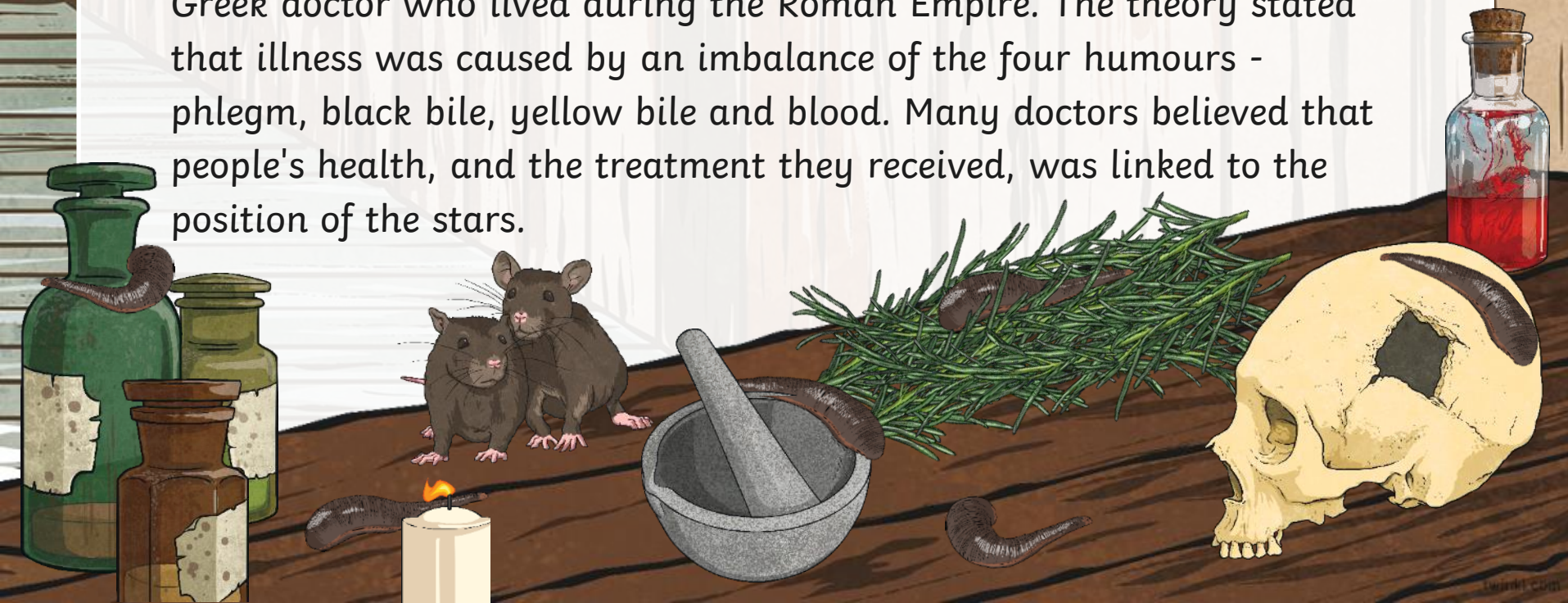
Medicine in the Middle Ages

The Middle Ages, 476 AD until 1453, was not a great time to be alive, especially if you got sick! People were only expected to live to about 30 years old and one in five children died before they turned one. Many people died from simple injuries like cuts or broken limbs and women often died during childbirth. Diseases were also a major killer along with leprosy and smallpox.



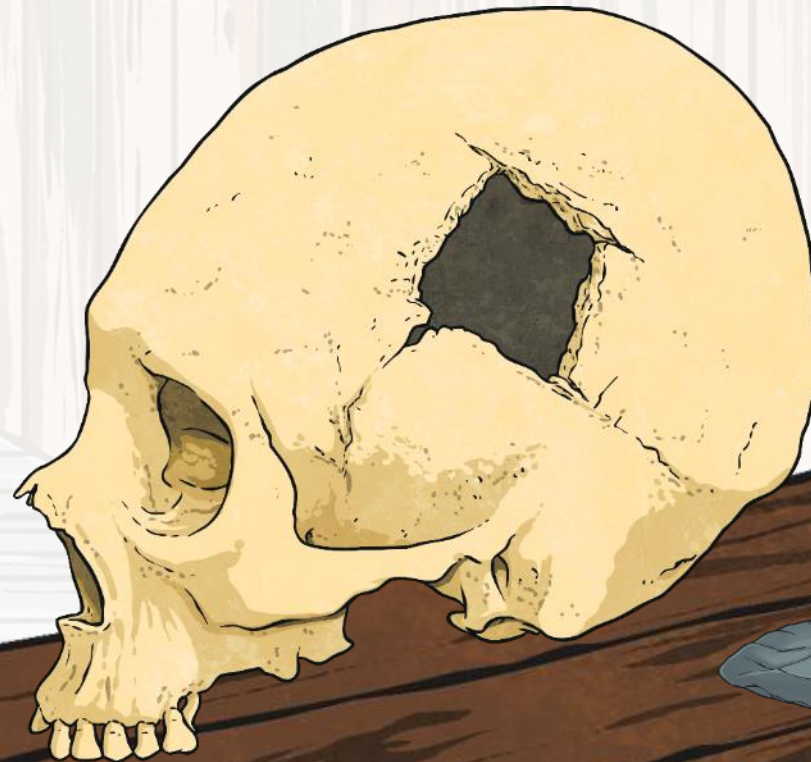
Medicine in the Middle Ages

Medieval doctors had little idea about what caused disease. Many believed in the theory of The Four Humours developed by Galen, a Greek doctor who lived during the Roman Empire. The theory stated that illness was caused by an imbalance of the four humours - phlegm, black bile, yellow bile and blood. Many doctors believed that people's health, and the treatment they received, was linked to the position of the stars.



Trepanning

Cutting a hole in the person's skull.



Bleeding

Cutting the patient and letting them bleed.



Applying Leeches



Vomit or Diarrhea

Giving the patient something to make them vomit or give them diarrhea.



Herbs

Giving them bunches of herbs to smell.



Herbs

Mixtures of various herbs.

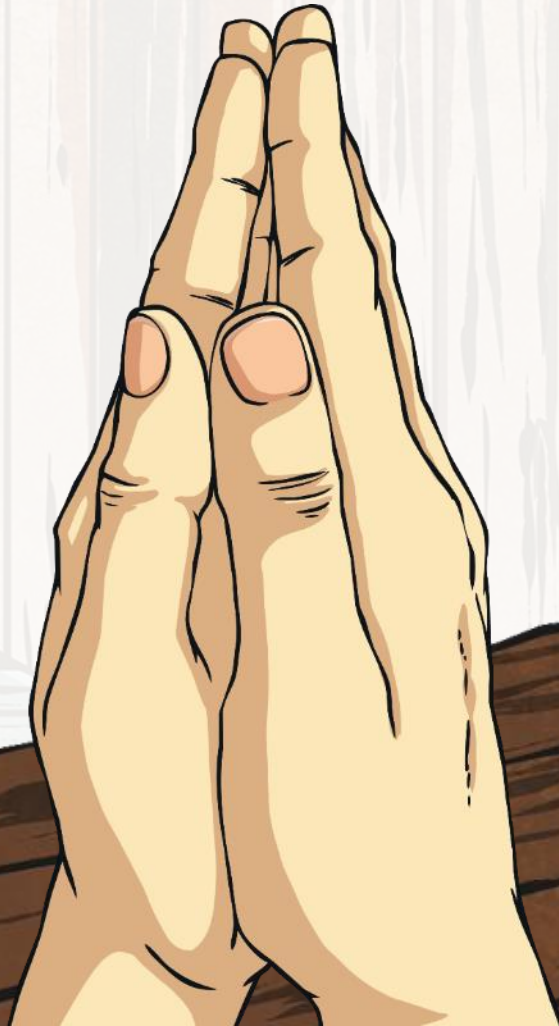


Baths

Making the patient take very hot or cold baths.



Praying



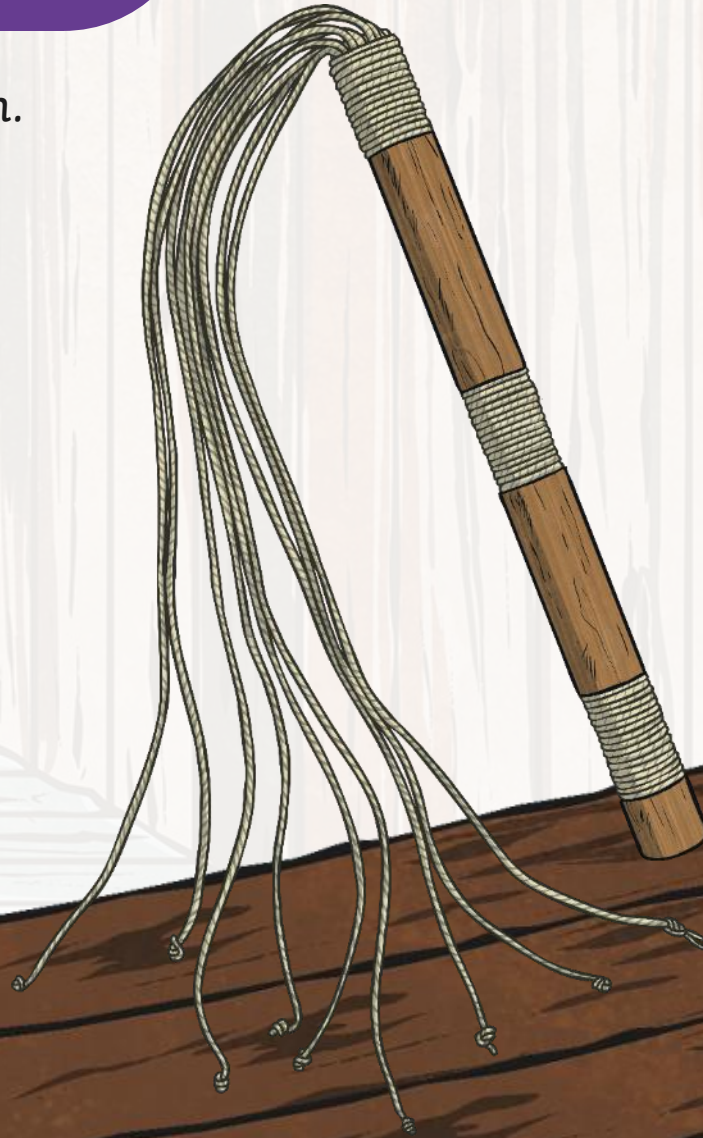
Smoke

Sitting in a smoky room.



Whip

Whipping the person.



Medieval Doctors and the Treatments They Administered

Although all these treatments are no longer used by modern medicine, the practice of using certain herbs was effective and is still used today.



Medieval Doctors and the Treatments They Administered

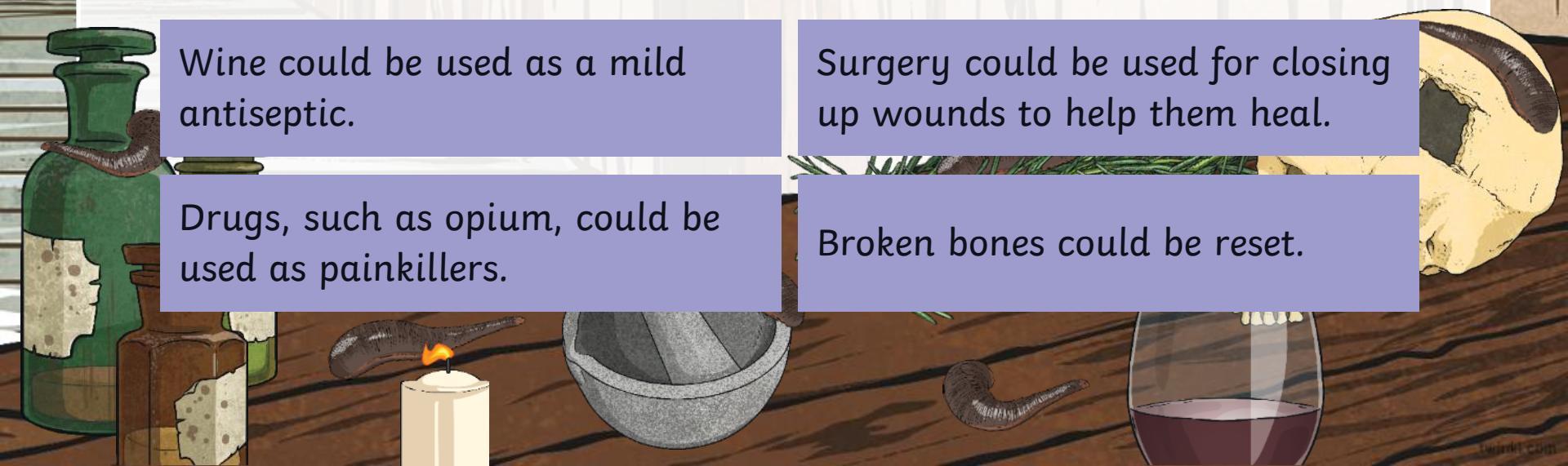
During the middle ages, there were many conflicts and the resulting wars gave doctors a chance to work on their surgical skills. These doctors made a few discoveries that proved to be major steps forward for medicine. They discovered the following:

Wine could be used as a mild antiseptic.

Surgery could be used for closing up wounds to help them heal.

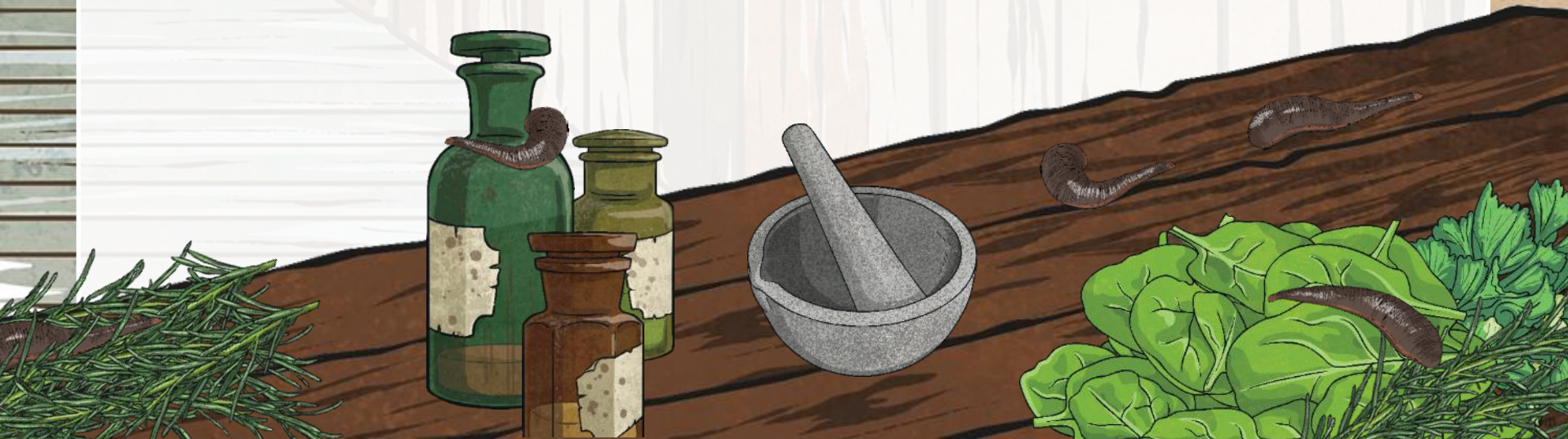
Drugs, such as opium, could be used as painkillers.

Broken bones could be reset.



Medieval Surgery

Monasteries set up hospitals to take care of the poor. Unfortunately, people who were often very ill were not allowed into the hospital as they were scared that the illness would spread to other patients. Many towns had good quarantine laws. The houses of plague victims were boarded up and they were isolated from others.



Public Health Care

Towards the end of the Middle ages (between 1347 to 1351), the bubonic plague, also known as the Black Death, spread through North Africa, Europe and Asia. The plague originated on black rats that had travelled to Europe on ships. It passed quickly from the rats to people who often lived in cramped conditions. It was mainly spread through flea bites (fleas from the rats) but could also be transferred through coughs and sneezes.





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