

Directions: *Read Student Handout 2- What is a Quarantine Station? Answer the questions to develop background knowledge.*

1. What Latin word is rooted in the term “quarantine” “*Quadragesima*” or forty
2. Why was “quarantine” used in the 1300s? *Because of the Black Plague and the spread of disease, cities in Europe began isolating ships and the people on them for forty days. The ships and visitors were not permitted into the city as a way to prevent the spread of disease. *NOTE: Teachers could use this opportunity to state that while forty days was enforced in the 1300s, it was not the case in later quarantines.*
3. What nickname was often given to “quarantine” stations and hospitals? Why? *Quarantine stations were often nicknamed “lazarettos” after the patron saint of lepers and hospitals. St. Lazarus and his followers cared for the poor, sick, and outcast, like the quarantine stations were designed to do.*
4. Describe some of the symptoms of deadly diseases that plagued the United States in the eighteenth century (1700s).

a) Some deadly symptoms of *smallpox* included fever, body-aches, and rash.

b) *Yellow fever* victims’ symptoms included black vomit, high fever, and liver failure- which caused a yellowing of the skin and eyes.

*Another disease, which would become prominent later was **cholera** – marked by diarrhea for days or weeks, dehydration, vomiting, and muscle-cramping.*

5. Describe Philadelphia’s experiences with yellow fever in 1793.

In 1793, the city of Philadelphia, then the capital of the United States, experienced a yellow fever epidemic so severe, that thousands of residents fled, including

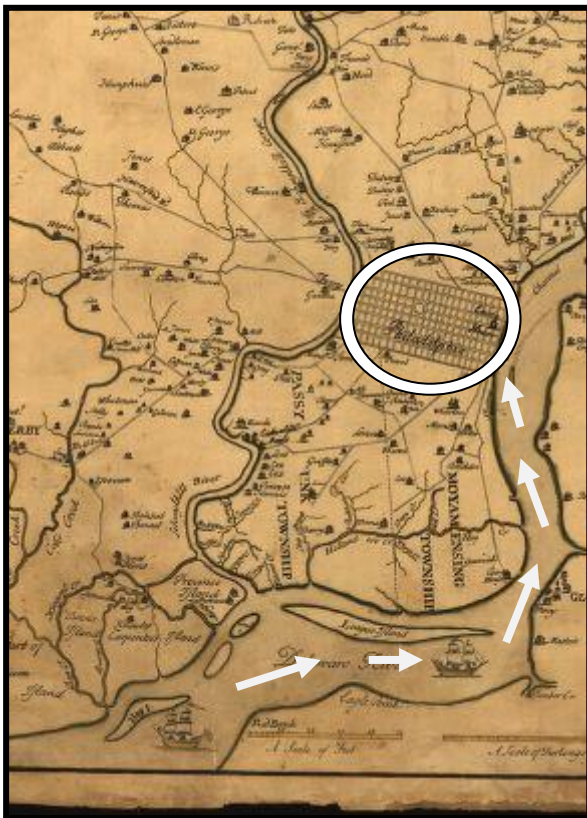
President George Washington. It is estimated that almost 5,000 people died (1/10th of Philadelphia's population).

6. What was Philadelphia's response to the epidemic of 1793?

By 1794, the city of Philadelphia set up a hospital just outside of the city's limits to quarantine the sick. The hospital was known as the Marine Hospital and sometimes referred to as the *Lazaretto*. This first hospital was built on Province Island.

7. Why was the hospital on Province Island no longer effective? (Hint: Consider the other epidemics of the late eighteenth century.)

Yellow Fever hit the city almost every year following – 1794, 1796, 1797, 1798. Officials argued Province Island was too close to the city and the disease was not isolated enough.



8. Using the map to the left. Trace your finger up the Delaware River going to Philadelphia. The city is marked by a cross-section grid.

**A map of Philadelphia and parts adjacent: with a perspective view of the State-House (1752), Courtesy of the Library of Congress
Detail 1 : Philadelphia and Delaware River**

9. Using the second map (and the reading), label Province Island (#1) and then Tinicum Island (#2). Why is Tinicum Island better suited as a quarantine station?



Tinicum Island is farther away from the city of Philadelphia than Province Island is. People at the turn of the nineteenth century did not understand how disease was spread. They thought the more isolated, the better. (Later doctors would learn that yellow fever is spread by mosquitoes.) But cholera could be spread through cloth – so quarantine could be effective.

*Hog Island is currently the southwest part of the Philadelphia International Airport. These islands have been filled-in with dirt.

**A map of Philadelphia and parts adjacent: with a perspective view of the State-House (1752), Courtesy of the Library of Congress
Detail 2: Zoom in on Delaware River and islands south and west of Philadelphia**

10. In order to go to the city of Philadelphia, what did visitors and vessels have to do at the Lazaretto on Tinicum Island?

“all arriving ships, passengers, and cargo were inspected and quarantined if necessary.”

11. What was the main purpose of the *Lazaretto* according to historian Dr. David Barnes? To stop the spread of disease.

12. According to historian Dr. David Barnes, the quarantine station and hospital... provided care to “sick passengers on arriving vessels” and “protection to the healthy citizens of Philadelphia.” Thousands of patients were “treated, clothed and fed there over the years.”

13. Why is the *Lazaretto* of Tinicum island significant or important today?

The Lazaretto was built in 1799 and was in operation from 1801-1895. The Lazaretto managed healthcare and immigration for the city of Philadelphia during a time of increased immigration and growth in the United States. It is the oldest quarantine station that STILL STANDS in the United States today (and in the western hemisphere, for that matter!) The building that still stands on Tinicum Island represents the main building or hospital. Other buildings that exist are the physician’s house and quarantine master’s house.