

Florence Nightingale: The Lady with the Lamp

Learning objective: To understand the significance of Florence Nightingale's contributions to nursing and hospital hygiene during the Crimean War.

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions. Use your knowledge of historical figures to help you provide detailed responses.

In 1854, Florence Nightingale travelled to the Scutari hospital in Turkey to assist wounded soldiers during the Crimean War. Upon arrival, she was appalled by the horrific conditions. The hospital was overcrowded, lacking basic sanitation, and infested with pests. Nightingale, a dedicated reformer, understood that poor hygiene was causing more deaths than the injuries sustained in battle. She implemented rigorous cleaning routines, ensured fresh air circulation, and organised nutritious meals for the patients. Her tireless work, often checking on soldiers late at night with a lamp in hand, earned her the iconic title, 'The Lady with the Lamp.' By applying her knowledge of statistics and healthcare, Nightingale drastically reduced the mortality rate. Her legacy transformed nursing from an unskilled task into a respected profession. Alongside Ellie the elephant, who loves history, we can reflect on how Nightingale's attention to detail during a time of crisis changed the way modern hospitals operate today, proving that cleanliness and compassion are as vital as medicine itself.

Word bank: sanitation · hygiene · Crimean War · nursing · Scutari · epidemic · compassion

1. Identify two specific changes Florence Nightingale implemented to improve the hospital environment in Scutari. (2 marks)

2. What was the main reason Florence Nightingale was called 'The Lady with the Lamp'? (2 marks)

3. Explain why Florence Nightingale's focus on sanitation was more effective than just treating individual wounds. (3 marks)

4. Infer how the soldiers' perception of the hospital might have changed after Nightingale's reforms. (3 marks)

5. Justify whether you believe Nightingale's use of statistics was as important as her bedside care. Explain your reasoning. (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing Florence Nightingale walking through a hospital ward at night, focusing on the light from her lamp and the improved cleanliness of the environment.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are a reporter in 1854. Write a 100-word diary entry from the perspective of a soldier who has just witnessed the changes in the hospital. Then, explain why modern hospitals still follow the hygiene standards that Nightingale pioneered.