

Florence Nightingale: The Lady with the Lamp

Learning objective: To analyse the impact of Florence Nightingale's work on nursing standards and hospital hygiene during the Crimean War.

Read the questions carefully and use your historical knowledge to provide detailed, evidence-based answers. Use the word bank to support your explanations.

Ellie the elephant has been reading about the history of medicine. She wants you to investigate the remarkable changes Florence Nightingale introduced to the British military hospitals in the mid-19th century.

Word bank: Scutari · sanitation · mortality rate · hygiene · Crimean War · nursing reform · statistics · infection

1. Explain why the conditions in the Barrack Hospital at Scutari were considered dangerous for wounded soldiers before Florence Nightingale's arrival. (2 marks)

2. Florence Nightingale was a pioneer in using data. Describe how she used statistics to justify her demands for improved hospital conditions to the British government. (2 marks)

3. Compare and contrast the typical hospitals of the 1850s with the modern standards of cleanliness we expect in the NHS today. (3 marks)

4. Justify why Florence Nightingale is often remembered as a reformer rather than just a nurse who tended to the wounded. (3 marks)

5. What might happen to the mortality rate of a hospital if the staff stopped following the strict hygiene protocols established by Nightingale? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a diagram of a Victorian-era hospital ward. Label at least four features that Florence Nightingale would have insisted upon to keep the environment clean and sanitary.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are a reporter in 1855. Write a short diary entry from the perspective of a soldier at Scutari. Describe the atmosphere of the ward at night when Florence Nightingale makes her rounds with her lamp. Consider the sensory details: what does the room smell like, what sounds can you hear, and how does her presence change the mood of the wounded men?