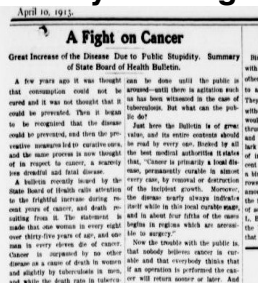


## Assessing with Primary Sources

**Grade Level:** High School (Grades 9-10)

**Standards or Objectives:** CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.2  
Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.  
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.4  
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

### Library of Congress Resources:



“A Fight on Cancer” from *The Citizen*, (Berea, Ky.)  
April 10, 1913, Page 5

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85052076/1913-04-10/ed-1/seq-5/>

### Topic Background:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists cancer as the second leading cause of death in the United States in 2014, with 591,699 deaths, second only to heart disease, with 614,699. The third leading cause of death in 2014 was a very distant third with 147,101 deaths.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/leading-causes-of-death.htm>

Today, there is still no “cure” and various approaches to treating cancer are just as controversial, uncertain, and misunderstood as they were over a hundred years ago.

### Source(s) Used:

The source used for this assessment is a newspaper article appearing in *The Citizen*, a Kentucky newspaper, on April 10, 1913. In the article, the author explains that death rates from cancer are increasing at an alarming rate, but states that these deaths are actually being caused by the public’s ignorance in regards to the importance of early detection and treatment, rather than by the cancer itself.

### Multiple Choice Answer Key:

Question 1 – C  
Question 2 – B

# THE CITIZEN

Devoted to the Interests of the Mountain People

BEREA, MADISON COUNTY, KENTUCKY, APRIL 10, 1913

A

## Fight on Cancer

Great Increase of the Disease Due to Public Stupidity  
Summary of State Board of Health Bulletin

A Bulletin recently issued by the State Board of Health calls attention to the frightful increase during recent years of cancer, and death resulting from it. The statement is made that one woman in every eight over thirty-five years of age, and one man in every eleven die of cancer. Cancer is surpassed by no other disease as a cause of death in women and slightly by tuberculosis in men, and while the death rate in tuberculosis is declining, the death rate from cancer is increasing at a rate, if unchecked, will within a few centuries sweep the human race out of existence.

...the Bulletin [issued by the State Board of Health] is of great value, and its entire contents should be read by everyone. Backed by all the best medical authorities it states that, "Cancer is primarily a local disease, permanently curable in almost every case, by removal or destruction of the incipient growth. Moreover, the disease nearly always indicates itself while in this local curable stage, and in about four fifths of the cases begins in regions which are accessible to surgery."

Now the trouble with the public is, that nobody believes cancer is curable and that everybody thinks that if an operation is performed the cancer will return sooner or later. And for this reason, since there is no pain for some months after the disease begins, an operation is put off until it is too late, and the cancer does return after an operation. It may be said, therefore, that it is delay and not the cancer that kills.

...the advice of the Bulletin is that a good surgeon should be consulted for every tumor, scar, blemish or sore, and that no quack or ignoramus or almanac should be listened to that encourages procrastination or offers a cure by any other method.

And the public is promised in the Bulletin if this advice is carried out that prevention will soon overtake the disease, and that ultimately the terrible scourge may vanish – possibly before a real cure is discovered.

### Questions:

1. Which phrase or sentence from the article best represents the central idea of the article? (CCSA.ELA.RI.9-10.2)
  - a. "the death rate from cancer...will within a few centuries sweep the human race out of existence ..."
  - b. "... the Bulletin [State Board of Health] is of great value, and its entire contents should be read by everyone."
  - c. "It may be said ... that it is delay and not the cancer that kills ..."
  - d. "... prevention will soon overtake the disease ... the terrible scourge may vanish ..."
2. Which of these words is closest in meaning to the underlined word incipient? (CCSA.ELA.RI.9-10.4)
  - a. Curable
  - b. Early
  - c. Mature
  - d. Accessible