

Station C: Medicine

1. **Read the information about medicine and list major achievements.** Carefully read and discuss the information below about the ancient Greeks' achievements in the field of medicine. Then, list three major ancient Greek achievements in the field of medicine in the Station C section of **Student Handout 4.1A**.

Initially, the Greeks had little knowledge of medicine. They believed that the Gods caused diseases. To cure patients, doctors chanted verses to the Gods, and used charms and magical ointments. Sometimes they advised a sick person to make sacrifices to the Gods.

In the fifth century B.C.E., a physician named Hippocrates (pronounced hih-PAH-krah-teez) began a medical school. He and his followers introduced new teachings and practices that changed the entire field of medicine. Hippocrates and his associates argued that it was disrespectful to the Gods to claim they would deliberately cause diseases and harm the human body. Instead, they argued, physicians should examine the effects of water, food, and climate upon a person's health. Furthermore, Hippocrates taught his students to observe and record the stages of an illness. He believed that after repeatedly observing a disease, a doctor could make an accurate prediction about the course that the disease would take.

The most famous contribution the Greeks made to modern medicine is the *Hippocratic* (pronounced hih-poh-KRA-tik) *Oath*. Doctors taking this oath promise to honor their teachers, do their best for the sick, never give anyone poison, and keep the secrets of their patients. Hippocrates probably did not write the oath, but students at his school most likely took a similar pledge before they were allowed to study there. The Greeks thought an ethical code for doctors was necessary because the practice of medicine was not regulated by the government—making it easy for dishonest individuals to take advantage of the sick. Over time, the medical profession has changed the original Hippocratic Oath to fit the modern practice of medicine. Nevertheless, the oath doctors take today still emphasizes patients' dignity and confidentiality, and the doctor's responsibility to use knowledge appropriately.

2. **Complete the following task and record your findings.** Carefully read and examine the symbols in the excerpt from the Hippocratic Oath. Then, decide which word from the list below corresponds to each symbol. Sketch the symbols labeling each with the corresponding word on **Student Handout 4.1A**.

swear

judgment

house

see

physician

poison

love

abroad

carry

holy

women