

Name: _____

Dealing With Drug Resistance

Directions: Read the article “When Drugs Don’t Work” (page 8) and the chart below. Then complete the activity.

1900: Lung problems such as pneumonia and tuberculosis and intestinal conditions such as diarrhea and enteritis are leading causes of death in the U.S.

1928: Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin.

1942: Doctors start using penicillin to treat patients and save lives.

1940s–50s: Scientists discover many new antibiotics.

1945: Fleming warns about possible antibiotic resistance.

1946: First penicillin-resistant bacteria appear.

2003: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention starts “Get Smart: Know When Antibiotics Work,” a program to help deal with antibiotic resistance.

Now: The Food and Drug Administration has approved only a handful of new antibiotics since 1998.

Thanks to antibiotics, death rates for tuberculosis, pneumonia, and many other bacterial diseases have fallen—but they’ll only remain low as long as antibiotics work.

Research what life was like before the emergence of antibiotics. You can look for information online or at the library, or interview an older relative or neighbor. Using that information and what you have learned from the article, consider what might happen if we could no longer rely on antibiotics to cure bacterial infections. Write your thoughts in the space below.
