**Exam-style question:**

‘There was rapid change in ideas about the cause of disease in the period c.1700-c1900’. How far do you agree with this statement?

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| The most important individuals in the development of germ theory were Pasteur and Koch. Without them it might have taken a lot longer for the theory of disease to develop. | Governments in Britain in the 19th century did not help to improve understanding of disease. They wanted a practical way to solve epidemics like cholera and typhoid. Germ theory did not offer a way to cure disease so they did not promote it. | The scientific revolution focused on finding answers to the big questions of science. There was a strong desire to prove new theories and provide practical solutions. |
| Improved communication allowed scientists to share their work with each other. Scientists could read the work of others in different fields of science. | Dozens of other scientists contributed to understanding the cause of disease, for example John Tyndall who discovered that there were small organic particles in the air. | The development of the microscope made the development of germ theory possible. Clearer images and higher magnification made it possible to spot most micro-organisms. |
| Attitudes in society were both a help and a hindrance to the widespread acceptance of germ theory. People were more interested in finding the reasons behind disease than they had been in previous centuries. | Robert Koch developed a way to grow microbes. His colleague, Joseph Petri, developed the Petri dish. By the end of the century, experiments with dyes had helped scientists to better observe bacteria. | Joseph Lister read Pasteur’s germ theory and linked it to infection problems patients had experienced after surgical operations. |
| Due to the Enlightenment, people were more interested in rational explanations for disease. | Overcrowded cities and poor living conditions led to dangerous outbreaks of disease. Many people were horrified by the sights on the street and the impact bad health had on the poor. | People were reluctant to change their minds about how disease spread. Pasteur’s work had little impact to begin with as his work focused on decaying and spoiled food, not disease. |
| The work of Robert Koch to identify which microbes caused which disease was a significant breakthrough. Koch proved that specific microbes caused a specific disease. After this people started to accept germ theory. | In 1861 Pasteur published the germ theory. It proved that microbes in the air cause disease and they can be killed by heating. He also showed that the air contains micro-organisms which are not evenly distributed. | Dr Henry Bastian, a powerful doctor in Britain in the 19th century, did not believe in germ theory. He was so well respected that few people disagreed with him. |

**Task:**

Divide the statements above into factors for change. You may wish to use the following factors: individuals, attitudes in society, technology, science, institutions (e.g. the British government).