

Boston research helps fight polio

1949 | Grade 2 · Read & notice

Words to know

research — careful study to find out more

cooperate — work together

discover — find out something new to the person looking

Look closely



Modern topic illustration created for Massachusetts History Explorers. It is not a historical artifact.

Read the story

Researchers John Enders, Thomas Weller, and Frederick Robbins grew poliovirus in laboratory tissue cultures. Their work in Boston helped later vaccine research. Scientific progress often depends on many teams.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. What happened in this reading? Tell one fact.
2. Who or what is this reading mostly about?
3. Choose a word from the word bank. Explain it in your own words.
4. Look at the picture and its caption. What does it help you notice? Is it from the time of the event?

Follow-up reading: The Brink's robbery

1950

Robbers stole a large amount of money from Brink's in Boston. Investigators worked for years on the case. Newspapers gave it dramatic names. Studying a crime means checking evidence, not admiring the harm.

How are the two readings alike or different? Tell a partner one connection. Which event came first?

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.2.1: ask and answer questions; RI.2.2: identify a main topic; RI.2.7: use images and words; W.2.2 and SL.2.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: Researchers John Enders, Thomas Weller, and Frederick Robbins grew poliovirus in laboratory tissue cultures. Their work in Boston helped later vaccine research. Scientific progress often depends on many teams. The discovery was recognized with the 1954 Nobel Prize in medicine. It did not mean these researchers alone invented every polio vaccine. Distinguish a research method from later development and public use.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

Image: Original site illustration.

[Image source and rights record ↗](#)

The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.