



How was this tool used by doctors in the late 1800s?

[www.worcestermedicalmuseums.com/resources](http://www.worcestermedicalmuseums.com/resources)



## WHAT IS THIS?

This is called a trephine and is used for boring a hole into a person's skull. The procedure was used to treat head injuries, epilepsy and mental illness.

Trepanning, the process of boring a hole into a person's skull, has been seen in archaeological evidence from the Neolithic period. Hippocrates and Galen also describe trepanning and it continued to be performed throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

A similar procedure is used in medicine today. A section of skull is removed to gain access to the brain in order to carry out surgery. The section of skull is normally put back, unlike the trepanning that has been carried out in the past.

## HOW CAN I USE THIS IN THE CLASSROOM?

Display the picture and questions as students enter the room to generate questions about medical treatments in the 1800s.

Use with photographs of other medical tools and get students to match up the tool to their use.