**Year of Wonders**: Chapter 12: **The Press of Their Ghosts** – Questions & Notes  
This is an important chapter – lots happens, and a lot of the key themes and ideas are developed.

1. Download and read ‘Chapter 12 Analysis.pdf’ and then write ‘Done’.
2. How is Anna able to ‘get over’ her father’s death?  
     
   Extension 1: What do we learn about her father, and how does this change our sympathies towards him?  
     
   Extension 2: **Why** do you think Brooks has bothered to include these extra details about her father’s life?
3. How does Anna change and become more assertive during this chapter?   
   Start a dot-point list and add to it as you read/listen/study this chapter.
4. As you read/listen/study this chapter, take some dot-point notes for **each** of the following:  
     
   a) What practical/physical impacts is the plague having on the village:  
     
   b) What emotional/human impacts is the plague having on the village:  
     
   *or you could mash them together into one list of dot-points:* effects of the plague on Eyam.
5. **Key Comparison:** compare how **Aphra Bont** uses fear and superstition to manipulate and ‘extort’ the local population for her own ends, versus how **Abigail Williams** manipulates the Salem villagers’ fears and superstitions for her own personal ends.   
     
   Discuss in terms of similarities and differences. *This could be good SAC material.*   
     
   Ultimately, for whom do we feel more sympathy? (if any for either?)  
     
   Use language of comparison: *on one hand, in text A, while for text a…, for text B…, similarly, whereas, however, on the other hand, dissimilarly, differently, contrastingly, etc.*  
     
   Extension: what ideas are being communicated about fear and superstition? Are they ultimately similar, the same, or different?

**Key idea/questions**: The Puritan John Gordon’s insistence that the plague has been sent as a curse from God, versus Mompellion’s belief that the curse was sent as a test of love, raises some interesting questions about the nature of God. To what extent does God interfere in the lives of humans? To what extent is God responsible for natural disasters? Should God be blamed for people’s misfortune? People certainly thank God for their good fortune…

**Also, interestingly, this *could* be interpreted as a criticism of Christianity, or any religion that seeks to interpret the will of God** (or was Brooks just criticising how it worked in Eyam in 1666?)

1. A) What change in thought does Anna have regarding the plague and ‘why it is here (there)’?  
   (it happens after she bumps her foot on a rock). What does she now believe/consider?

B) How are Anna’s views subversive (undermining) to the society at the time?  
  
Extension 3: do *you* think Brooks is communicating her own concerns about religion, here?  
Extension 4: what do you think she is communicating?  
  
Extension 5: do some research on Brooks and her own religious views, and use this to inform your answer.

1. Why does Anna smash the Mompellions’ dishes? What does this reveal about her? (p.229)