**Year of Wonders**: Chapter 7: **Wide Green Prison** – Questions & Notes

This chapter we are going to do some VVC practice!

1. Download and read ‘Chapter 7 Analysis.pdf’ and then write ‘Done’.

Thinking question: to what extent are we currently in our own “wide green prison”?

Extension 1: Explain the title of this chapter (its meaning/purpose) and any language techniques that are used to create this effect. **Irony is used to create a contrasting image of ‘wide green’ which seems to offer a sense of freedom, which is contradicted by the word ‘prison’ – creating a paradox of sorts.**

1. A) Describe the actions of the Bradfords and how they treat their servants.  
     
   Note that: despite Mompellion telling the colonel that there will be a “hissing” of the Bradford name, it does not happen – and they seem to get away with being cowards / doing what they want…  
     
   B) In one sentence, try to express what the author’s **view** or **concern** is here, regarding how rich people get away with whatever they want (try to write it as formally as you can)  
   e.g.   
   The author’s view is…..  
   The author believes that…   
   The author’s concern is…  
   The author is concerned that **tradition can stop progress** e.g. the people just watched the Bradfords leave because “that was what we had always done” (p.116) – even though they should have had things thrown at them!  
     
   **I am not going to give you more, because this is something that you will be marked on – being able to come up with the author’s VVCs in your own words (or ‘borrowing’ them from handouts, themes, or elsewhere online!).**

Extension 2: explain what is meant by: “The colonel’s egotism contrasts with the altruism of the rector [Mompellion]?” **it creates a dichotomy of selfless, altruistic acts for others (at one end) vs. self-centred acts done for personal reasons (at the other).**

1. Express the following quote in your own words as a VV or C :  
   “And so, as generally happens, those who have most give least, and those with less somehow make shrift to share.” (p.117).  
   **view: money has a way of corrupting people’s generosity.**   
   (there are MANY different ways you could express this).
2. How does Anna consciously/unconsciously end up continuing the legacy of Mem and Anys Gowdie? **By becoming midwives, even though only one has any practice (on animals). But, they do what they must, and almost ‘take the torch’ and continue this strong tradition – WITHOUT WHICH (no pun intended) we fear that the important knowledge of the Gowdies might have been lost to this village, forever.**

**Graphic content warning:** on page 120 there is some suggestive yet graphic potential imagery regarding Anna’s birth and how her mother died. The man involved in this, with his ‘rough hands’ and other tools, serves as a strong **contrast** to the nurture and care that the female midwives (first the Gowdies, then Anna and Elinor) show in helping the women in the village to give birth. (You could probably turn this into a VVC).

1. **vVc:**  
   Write a dot-point list of what you think the author **values** in this scene. One sentence for each value, e.g.  
   - The author values **a legacy of women working together and sharing female wisdom**.  
   - The author values **the power of natural medicine**  
   - The author values… **…**  
   - etc.

**Theme: Life and Death**

Thinking / extension: Consider the positive scenes of birth in these, and future chapters, and what they add to the story….

* Why has the author included these scenes?
* Do they provide hope?
* Or do they provide more despair (more young mouths to either starve or be orphaned)?
* Why is it important for Brooks to balance the death in the novel with life?
* Is it just the life and death of humans that Brooks conveys, or does she also convey the life and death (transformation) processes of nature as well? *If so, can you think of some examples?*
* Might these births be some of the “**wonders**” of which the title of the text speaks?

**It would be good to keep these questions in mind – if you don’t have answers now, hopefully by the end of the study you will.**

**Textual feature: foreshadowing:** how the very end of the Chapter again foreshadows something that is going to happen in the future (when she hides the vial of poppy).

These **hooks** are ways of keeping the reader engaged and wanting to ‘read-on’ to see what happens.