**The Black Death**

Introduction and Chapter 1

1. Where and when was the plague a problem?
2. What does the author mean when they say ‘spread like fire’?
3. Why were the children checking themselves?
4. Why did Lizzie slap Robin and not Christopher?
5. How did the author describe Robin’s puppy?
6. Why was Lizzie bossy?
7. What did Lizzie used to do before the plague?
8. What is ‘Cucklett Delph’?
9. Why can’t they use the church anymore?
10. How did the plague get to their village?

**Extension:** list the symptoms of plague

Chapter 2

1. Why were they not allowed to leave the village anymore?
2. How were they going to get food?
3. What does the author mean when they say until the plague had ‘burnt itself out’ (p14)?
4. What did they do to try to keep the plague out of the house?
5. Why did Lizzie take Fathers arm?
6. Why did Joan grab Lizzie's dress?
7. Why did Sarah panic when Robin sneezed?
8. What did Sarah love to do for Mrs Unwin?
9. Why did Mum plant ‘Pennyroyal’?
10. Why did Marshall Howe the only one able to go into plague houses?
11. Why did Marshall Howe want Penn?

**Extension:** look up these words in the dictionary:

sturdily (p16) strained (p19) hunched (p22) burden (p23)

Chapter 3

1. How could they tell Penn hadn’t been stolen but had run off?
2. Why would Lizzie not open the window?
3. What was Sarah worried could have happened to Robin on Cucklett Delph?
4. What was Robin worried would happen to Penn if he couldn’t catch her?
5. Why do you think Robin clenched his fists when he saw Marshall Howe coming towards them?
6. What had they started to do in London to try and stop the spread of plague?
7. What does the word ‘hoarse’ (p31) mean?
8. What actually happened to Mr Unwin’s dog?
9. How did people in Eyam find out news?
10. Do you think Robin heard Father and Sarah talking? Why?

**Extension:** write a summary of the story so far. Remember to include important details and to write in sentences.

Chapter 4

1. Where did Sarah want to be on Monday?
2. Why were the people of Eyam leaving money at the boundary stone?
3. What does the word ‘dishevelled’ (p36) mean?
4. Why did Robin and Penn look small?
5. Why was Mr Merrill living in the hills?
6. Why do you think the thought of asking Lizzie for food frightened Sarah?
7. What does the author mean by ‘it wasn’t luxury’ (p41)?
8. Why was Joan’s face red?
9. How did Sarah know Lizzie had just put fresh herbs at the window?
10. What do you think was making the sobbing noise?

**Extension**: Make a list of 10 things you would take with you if you were going to live in a cave?

Chapter 5

1. What looked like a discarded gown?
2. What does the word ‘ashamed’ (p44) mean?
3. Why was Lizzie upset?
4. Did Lizzie react as Sarah had expected when she told her about Robin? Describe how she reacted.
5. What does the author mean when they say ‘the plague defeated her’ (p48)?
6. What did the girls talk about the cheer themselves up?
7. What did Robin like about living outside?
8. What did Robin and Sarah do at night?
9. What did Sarah **not** miss about her bed at home?
10. What does the author mean when they say ‘exchanged news’ (p51)

**Extension:** list ten verbs from the chapter.

Chapter 6

1. What does the word ‘oppressive’ (p54) mean?
2. How did Sarah know she was sick?
3. What had helped Sarah and Lizzie to become friends?
4. Why did Sarah get upset thinking about Robin?
5. What did Penn run away to catch?
6. Why was Sarah worried about Marshall Howe being in Mrs Unwin’s house?
7. What was making the thumping sound?
8. Why has the author used capital letters for the words Mr Unwin says on page 59?
9. Why did Marshall Howe run away down the street?
10. Why did Sarah feel safe going into a house of plague?
11. What was not quite right in the parlour?

**Extension:** using your knowledge of speech marks write a conversation where Sarah explains what happened in the chapter to Lizzie.

Chapter 7 and 8

1. Why do you think Marshall Howe was ‘white-faced’ (p62)

(hint: think about what happened at the end of the last chapter)

1. Who did Sarah say would be waiting for Marshall Howe when he died?
2. What does the word ‘staggered’ (p65) mean?
3. Where was Sarah going when she collapsed?
4. What was happening when Sarah regained consciousness?
5. What had actually caused Sarah to be unwell?
6. What was odd about the roads in Sarah’s dreams?
7. Why did Sarah’s family and the Unwin’s keep their dogs?
8. Apart from rats what else had Sarah’s family never had?
9. How did **Lizzie** say plague was spread?

**Extension:** use the internet to find out how plague was actually spread.

Chapter 9 and Story background

1. Why did they ‘dare to hope’ (p73)?
2. Why was there a great burning?
3. What does the word ‘livid’ (p73) mean?
4. Why were people from Eyam not welcome anywhere else?
5. Why were the other people at the market acting normally?

(Hint: what had they **not** had to do?)

1. What was the promise that Eyam had kept?
2. Why would things never be the same?
3. What is Cucklett Delph now called?
4. Why can’t you go into the cottages where the plague first broke out?
5. When is plague Sunday and what will you see on Mrs Mompesson's grave?

**Extension:** make a list of what was real and what was made up in the story (p79)