

**BOLSOVER READING GROUP
READING EXERCISE**

Two Plagues

Extract from:

The Derbyshire village that sacrificed itself to save a nation in lockdown - and the lessons it can teach us

by David Bell, published Tuesday, 21st April 2020 in Derbyshire Times

<https://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/heritage-and-retro/heritage/derbyshire-village-sacrificed-itself-save-nation-lockdown-and-lessons-it-can-teach-us-2542597>

The Eyam Plague Story has endeared itself to the British public with its stirring accounts of personal sacrifice for the greater good. Two pandemics- one historical and another current- both with powerful parallels of lockdown, social distancing and self isolation.

All of a sudden life as we know it has suddenly stopped in its tracks. Our village, normally heaving with tourists and day trippers, is now eerily quiet.

As locals are stoically getting on with their new normal there is a feeling of déjà vu hanging in the air.

Can we learn anything from the original Eyam plague quarantine? Medical experts had no idea of basic medical concepts. Then, oxygen had yet to be discovered, and doctors still thought that blood was pumped round the body by the magnetic force of the moon! And the dangers of bacteria and the value of hygiene were still 2 hundred years away.

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Eyam, in 1666 did, however, show the value of love, compassion, togetherness and leadership. These are all powerful traits which should be all present now.

However, the vicar of Eyam at the time did send his children out of harm's way to relatives in Yorkshire while telling the villagers to stick with his lockdown plans!