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Advanced Placement in  
English Literature and Composition

Teaching Unit  
Individual Learning Packet

*The Crucible*

by Arthur Miller

Written by Anthony Varrato

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# *The Crucible*

## Objectives

*By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:*

1. analyze the purpose of the play by relating it to Miller's contemporary society of the 1950s.
2. analyze the characters of Proctor, Abigail, Elizabeth, Hale, and Danforth and their relationships to each other.
3. trace the development of John Proctor from his first mention in the play until his last, noting how and why he changes.
4. trace the development of Reverend Hale from his first mention in the play until his last, noting how and why he changes.
5. discuss the dramatic development of the play in terms of exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution.
6. analyze the importance of literary elements like foreshadowing and authorial intrusion on the development of the play.
7. analyze the structure of the play in relation to Miller's theme.
8. identify and analyze Miller's frequent use of allusions and metonymy to create a universal application of his theme.
9. identify and interpret the correlation between the social climate and events of the late 1600s and those of the mid-1900s.
10. respond to multiple choice questions similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition exam.
11. respond to writing prompts similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition exam.
12. offer a close reading of *The Crucible* and support all assertions and interpretations with direct evidence from the text, from authoritative critical knowledge of the genre, or from authoritative criticism of the play.

# *The Crucible*

## Cast of Characters

**REVEREND PARRIS:** the minister of Salem, Massachusetts. The witch scare began with his daughter's mysterious illness.

**BETTY PARRIS:** Reverend Parris' daughter, one of the initial accusers.

**TITUBA:** the Parris family's Caribbean slave.

**ABIGAIL WILLIAMS:** Parris' niece and chief among the accusers. Formerly a servant in the Proctor household.

**SUSANNA WALCOTT:** accused of witchcraft.

**MRS. ANN PUTNAM:** a bitter woman who sides with the accusers.

**THOMAS PUTNAM:** her husband for whom the witch trials are a means of increasing his already-considerable land holdings. An enemy of Reverend Parris.

**MERCY LEWIS:** the Putnams' servant. One of the accusers.

**MARY WARREN:** the Proctors' servant. One of the accusers.

**JOHN PROCTOR:** a prominent landholder and farmer in the Salem community.

**REBECCA NURSE:** a prominent citizen of Salem, famous throughout Massachusetts for her virtue and charity.

**GILES COREY:** a prominent landholder in Salem.

**REVEREND JOHN HALE:** another minister—from Beverly, Massachusetts—famous for his study of witchcraft and witches.

**ELIZABETH PROCTOR:** John's wife.

**FRANCIS NURSE:** Rebecca's husband.

**EZEKIEL CHEEVER:** town constable.

**MARSHAL HERRICK:** town jailer.

**JUDGE HATHORNE:** the inflexible judge in the witch trials. A distant ancestor of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

**DEPUTY GOVERNOR DANFORTH:** the Deputy Governor of Massachusetts and presiding officer of the court.

**SARAH GOOD:** one of the condemned.

**HOPKINS:** a guard in the jail.

# The Crucible

## Lecture

### I. Arthur Miller (1915 – 2005)

Arthur Miller was called the greatest living American playwright. Known best for writing *Death of a Salesman* and *The Crucible*, Miller's plays share the theme of morality vs. pressures from society and family. *The Crucible* won the Antoinette Perry award in 1953, but soon closed because the comparison between the Salem witch trials and McCarthy hearings made many viewers uncomfortable. In 1956, Miller was himself summoned before the very trials he criticized in his play. Like John Proctor, he refused to implicate his friends and was tried for and convicted of contempt of Congress. In 1958, his conviction was overturned.

### II. Senator Joseph Raymond McCarthy and the Communist trials of the 1950s

Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy (1908-1957), arguably the greatest demagogue in American history, gained national attention in 1950 when he claimed that the State Department had been infiltrated by Communists. In a speech in West Virginia, the Senator proclaimed, "I have in my hand a list of 205 cases of individuals who appear to be either card-carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist Party." For the next four years, he searched for Communist subversion through televised and highly publicized hearings before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He subpoenaed some of the most prominent entertainers of the era (e.g., Orson Welles, Lucille Ball, Dashielle Hammett, and Lillian Hellman) before HUAC, demanding "the naming of names." Careers and lives were ruined by McCarthy's accusations, which were based on unidentified sources, and weak evidence. In April 1954, McCarthy accused the Secretary of the Army of concealing foreign espionage activities. The Secretary countered that members of McCarthy's subcommittee staff had threatened army officials in order to obtain preferential treatment for an associate of the subcommittee who had been recently drafted. The Senator and his committee were cleared of these charges, but McCarthy was censured by the Senate, and his power slowly declined.

### III. Salem 1680

Shortly following the first English settlement of Plymouth in 1620, the Puritans founded New Jerusalem or Salem in 1626. They sought, among other things, freedom from religious persecution and considered themselves God's chosen people, as exemplified in the naming of their town. For the first few decades, the Puritans fought the cold, the strange land, and the savage natives. By 1680, the town was much more settled; however, the strict theocracy which helped them survive the tough settlement period did not adjust to the growing, evolving society.

Calling their settlement the "New Jerusalem" was more than merely choosing a name for a place. From the time that Old Testament King David established it as his capital, Jerusalem was a holy city to both Jews and Christians. As the center of Judaism and early Christianity, it was destroyed twice, first in 586 B.C.E. by the Babylonians and again in 70 C.E. by the Romans. It was rebuilt as the capital of the Jewish state in 538 B.C.E. It has never again been fully established as the Jewish capital since then. Many early Christians believed that the third restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple would signal the second coming of the Messiah and the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Book of Revelation. Thus, naming the colony the New Jerusalem indicated the fervent hope of the Puritans that they would be the generation and the people to usher in the final Kingdom of God.

#### IV. Dramatic License

While Miller freely admitted that this play was not intended to be a history, he researched the information for the witch trials from primary documents in Salem. He was careful not to misrepresent characters or their actions. Miller did make some changes for the sake of the story. One of the largest was the Abigail Williams and John Proctor affair. Miller inferred from actions noted in court documents that Abigail and John had a relationship. Miller created all conversations to support this idea. Furthermore, Abigail was actually eleven years old when the story takes place. While girls were often wed around her age, Miller made her older in his story to make his audience more comfortable with this plot line. Miller's other significant alterations are the exclusion of characters and the compression of time. For example, Parris was still married at the time and had two other children, and there were several other judges and afflicted witnesses. Likewise, in reality, Rebecca Nurse was hanged several weeks before John Proctor, and Giles Corey's "pressing" did not occur until a month or two later. These changes were most likely necessary to make the play "fit" onto the stage.

A more accurate timeline of the events of the witch trials follows:

**November, 1689:** Samuel Parris is named the new minister of Salem.

**October 16, 1691:** Villagers are dissatisfied with Reverend Parris and stop contributing to his salary.

**January 20, 1692:** Eleven-year-old Abigail Williams and nine-year-old Elizabeth Parris **begin behaving strangely.** Soon, Ann Putnam, Jr., and other Salem girls begin acting similarly. This is not the first case of "witchcraft" in Salem. Four years earlier thirteen-year-old Martha Goodwin, her brother, and sisters acted strangely after a fight with their laundress. Laundress Goody Glover was hanged as a witch.

**Late-February, 1692:** Pressured by ministers and townspeople, Elizabeth identifies the Parris's Indian slave Tituba as the cause of her odd behavior. The girls later accuse Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne of witchcraft. Sarah Good is a homeless beggar, and Sarah Osborne an elderly, quarrelsome woman who had not attended church in over a year.

**February 29, 1692:** Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne are arrested on charges of witchcraft.

**March 1, 1692:** Magistrates John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin examine Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne. Tituba confesses to practicing witchcraft and confirms Good and Osborne are her co-conspirators.

**March 11, 1692:** Ann Putnam, Jr., shows signs of affliction by witchcraft. Mercy Lewis, Mary Walcott, and Mary Warren later claim to be afflicted as well.

**March 12, 1692:** Ann Putnam, Jr., accuses Martha Cory of witchcraft.

March 19, 1692: Abigail Williams denounces Rebecca Nurse as a witch.

March 21, 1692: Magistrates Hathorne and Corwin examine Martha Cory.

March 23, 1692: Sarah Good's daughter, four-year-old Dorcas, is arrested.

March 24, 1692: Corwin and Hathorne examine Rebecca Nurse.

March 26, 1692: Hathorne and Corwin interrogate Dorcas.

March 28, 1692: Elizabeth Proctor is accused of witchcraft.

April 3, 1692: Sarah Cloyce defends her sister, Rebecca Nurse, and is accused of witchcraft herself.

April 11, 1692: Judges Hathorne and Corwin examine Sarah Cloyce and Elizabeth Proctor. John Proctor, who protested the examination of his wife, is arrested. He is the first *man* accused of witchcraft.

Early April, 1692: Mary Warren, the Proctors' servant and accuser, admits that she lied. She accuses the other girls of lying.

April 13, 1692: Ann Putnam, Jr., accuses Giles Cory of witchcraft and claims that a man who died at Cory's house also haunts her.

April 19, 1692: Giles Cory and Mary Warren are examined. Mary Warren reverses her statement made in early April and rejoins the accusers.

April 22, 1692: Mary Easty, another of Rebecca Nurse's sisters who defended her, is examined by Hathorne and Corwin.

May 10, 1692: Sarah Osborne dies in prison.

May 18, 1692: Mary Easty (Rebecca Nurse's sister) is released from prison but is again arrested after her accusers protest.

May 27, 1692: Governor Phipps issues a commission for a "Court of Oyer and Terminer" (meaning "Hearing and Determining") and appoints as judges John Hathorne, Nathaniel Saltonstall, Bartholomew Gedney, Peter Sergeant, Samuel Sewall, Wait Still Winthrop, and Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton.

June 15, 1692: Cotton Mather, an influential Boston minister and writer, writes a letter requesting the court not use "spectral evidence" and urging that the trials be speedy. The Court pays more attention to the request for speed and less attention to the criticism of spectral evidence.

June 29-30, 1692: Rebecca Nurse and Sarah Good are tried, pronounced guilty, and sentenced to hang.

July 19, 1692: Rebecca Nurse and Sarah Good are hanged at Gallows Hill.

August 5, 1692: John and Elizabeth Proctor are pronounced guilty and sentenced to hang.

August 19, 1692: John Proctor is hanged on Gallows Hill. Elizabeth Proctor is not hanged because she is pregnant.

September 9, 1692: Martha Corey and Mary Easty are pronounced guilty and sentenced to hang.

Mid-September, 1692: Giles Cory is indicted.

September 19, 1692: Sheriffs administer *Piense Forte Et Dure* (pressing) to Giles Cory after he refuses to enter a plea to the charges of witchcraft against him. After two days under the weight, Cory dies.

September 22, 1692: Martha Cory is hanged.

October 3, 1692: The Reverend Increase Mather, President of Harvard College and father to Cotton Mather, denounces the use of spectral evidence.

October 8, 1692: Governor Phipps orders that spectral evidence no longer be admitted in witchcraft trials.

October 29, 1692: Phipps prohibits further arrests, releases many accused witches, and dissolves the Court of Oyer and Terminer.

November 25, 1692: The General Court establishes a Superior Court to try the remaining witches.

January 3, 1693: Judge Stoughton orders the execution of all suspected witches who were exempted by their pregnancies. Phipps prohibits the enforcement of this order, and Stoughton resigns.

January 1693: 49 of the 52 surviving people charged with witchcraft are released because their arrests were based on spectral evidence.

1693: Tituba is released from jail and sold to a new master.



May 1693: Governor Phipps pardons those still in prison on witchcraft charges.

January 14, 1697: The General Court orders a day of fasting and soul-searching for the tragedy at Salem. Judge Samuel Sewall publicly confesses error and guilt.

1697: Samuel Parris is fired as minister in Salem.

1702: The General Court declares the 1692 trials unlawful.

1706: Ann Putnam, Jr., (now 26 years old) publicly apologizes for her actions in 1692. She is the only one of the accusers ever to offer such an apology.

1711: The colony passes a legislative bill restoring the rights and good names of those accused of witchcraft and grants 600 pounds in restitution to their heirs.

1752: Salem Village is renamed Danvers.

## V. Key Features of Miller's Literary Techniques

### 1. authorial intrusion

One of the most distinct techniques Miller uses in this play is authorial intrusion. In the Overture, he frequently interrupts the action in order to give the audience extra information, often information from Miller's life or the audience's current social experience. For example: when Proctor is introduced, Miller writes:

**"But as we shall see, the steady manner he displays does not spring from an untroubled soul...These people had no ritual for the washing away of sins. It is another trait we inherited from them, and it has helped to discipline us as well as to breed hypocrisy among us."**

In addition, Miller's sidebars offer his means of **direct characterization**.

"He was the kind of man—powerful of body, even tempered, and not easily led—who cannot support to partisans without drawing their deepest resentment. In Proctor's presence, a fool felt his foolishness instantly—and a Proctor is always marked for calumny therefore."

### 2. allusion and parable

Miller emphasizes his theme of morality versus social pressure with historical and social allusions throughout the play. References to the Inquisition, Martin Luther, Biblical stories, and the post-World-War-II "Red Scare" show periods of history when these types of events have occurred. Miller's goal is to show the circumstances causing this hysteria that echo throughout history including Miller's own period.

"When one rises above the individual villainy displayed, one can only pity them all, **just as we shall be pitied someday**. It is still impossible for a man to organize his social life without repression, and the balance has yet to be struck between order and freedom."

The **"we"** and **"yet"** insert a reference to Miller's lifetime to advance his theme.

**"Pontius Pilate! God will not let you wash your hands of this!"**

This allusion evokes a Biblical relationship to emphasize the moral injustice of Elizabeth's arrest.

### 3. metonymy

Miller strove to be accurate with each character's personality. He then used his most distinct characters to represent a **type** of character found in nearly every society.

Notice how Miller directly characterizes John Proctor, but also expands this description to include all people with similar personalities.

“In Proctor's presence a fool felt his foolishness instantly—and a **Proctor** is always marked for calumny therefore.”

Miller thus refers to all individuals who stand up to the inadequacies of society as Proctors.

In another example, Miller extends the genuinely good-hearted character, Rebecca Nurse, to all good-hearted, gentle, moral people.

“I used to weep for my sins when the wind lifted up my skirts; and blushed for shame because **some old Rebecca** called me loose.”

Abigail, the opposite of a Rebecca, shows open disdain for that type of person.

### 4. rhetoric

Rhetoric is the art of speaking or writing effectively. This art utilizes a well-planned presentation of facts and ideas in clear, persuasive, and attractive language.

The courtroom scenes in Acts III and IV are driven by rhetoric, as opposed to hard evidence.

Danforth: In an ordinary crime, how does one defend the accused? One calls up witnesses to prove his innocence. But witchcraft is *ipso facto*, on its face and by nature, an invisible crime, is it not? Therefore, who may possibly be witness to it? The witch and the victim. None other. Now we cannot hope the witch will accuse herself; granted? Therefore, we must rely on her victims—and they do testify. The children certainly do testify.”

Notice how the legal term “*ipso facto*” and an orderly, logical presentation of ideas make this supernatural court case nearly reasonable. Miller used rhetoric to create for Danforth a situation in which hearsay and circumstance are the only possible evidence in these trials.

As you read the court scenes, consider the parallel Miller is drawing between the Puritans and the Salem trials and the Communist trials.

Watch also for:

### METAPHOR

- “They held in their steady hands the candle that would light the world.”
- “Now you bid me tear the light out of my eyes?”
- “There are wheels within wheels in this village, and fires within fires!”

### DYNAMIC CHARACTER

- “She is a mouse no more”
- “You are a broken minister”

# *The Crucible*

## Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Based on Act I, why do you think Miller and the characters refer to Ann Putnam as Mrs. Putnam, but they refer to Rebecca Nurse as Rebecca?
2. Considering the number of characters he does comment on in the Overture, explain why Miller chose *not* to comment on Abigail?
3. Do you think Mary Warren truly believes that Sarah Good bewitched her? Cite evidence from the story to support your opinion.
4. Elizabeth's accusation is the reason Hale comes to the Proctor household in Act II. Why do you think Hale changes the focus of his interview to John Proctor?
5. Do you believe Mary is helping Abigail frame Elizabeth in Act II, or is she just an unwitting part of the scheme? Support your answer with proof from the story.
6. Critics disagree whether John Proctor or Abigail is the protagonist of this play. Adhering to the definition of the term, argue and support your choice of John Proctor or Abigail as the true protagonist.
7. Do a detailed character analysis for each of the following characters. Indicate both their actions and their motives. Also, point out their state of mind and what significant actions of their own, or others, affected them.
  - Abigail
  - Parris
  - John Proctor
  - Hale
  - Giles
  - Danforth
8. Critique Miller's use of the Overture to not only introduce his characters, but also to convey his theme. Consider and discuss the effectiveness of the parallel he has drawn between the Puritan society and the 1950s.

## Free-Response (Essay) Items

**EDITORIAL NOTE:** All text-dependent Free Response and Multiple Choice items on the Advanced Placement Exam in English Literature and Composition include the passage on which the items are based. For this reason, it is our general practice to include the passage as well and make our items appear as similar to actual test items as possible.

We apologize, therefore, that we were unable to secure permission from Penguin Books to reproduce their copyrighted material.

All act, scene, and page references for the following questions are from the Penguin Plays edition of *The Crucible*.

### PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 1:

Historically, Reverend Parris is often credited as the biggest contributor to the witch trial hysteria. However, this passage from Act I shows how Thomas Putnam may have had a larger role. Carefully read the passage on pages 14 – 15 that begins, “PARRIS: Now Goody Ann, they only thought that were a witch,” and ends, “PUTNAM: ...There are hurtful, vengeful spirits layin’ hands on these children.” Write a well-organized essay in which you analyze Putnam’s motivation and contribution to the trials shown first in this passage and later events in the drama. Avoid plot summary.

### PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 2:

Carefully read the passage from Act III in which Danforth explains his purpose, power, and education to Francis Nurse (page 94: “DANFORTH: No, old man, you have not hurt these people...I hope you will be one of those”). Then write a well-organized essay in which you explain the dramatic and verbal irony used.

### PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 3:

Throughout the drama, Miller portrays Giles Corey as a foolish character. However, this scene reveals a much different characteristic. Carefully read the passage from Act 3, (pages 96 – 97 beginning with, “DANFORTH: What proof do you submit ...” and ending, “ GILES: I will not give you no name”). Write a well-organized essay in which you analyze these two contrasting personality traits, their repercussions, and their significance to the Salem hysteria. Avoid plot summary.

#### PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 4:

Though the passage below from Act III is not the climax of the play, it is a climactic moment in John Proctor's life. Carefully read the passage on page 110, beginning with, "PROCTOR *his voice about to break*," and ending "... I know you must see it now," and write a well-organized essay explaining how this event meets all the criteria of a climax in relation to Proctor. Avoid plot summary.

#### PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 5:

One explanation for the witch trials is the insularity of the Salem society. In a well-organized essay, explain Anne Putnam's statement to Rebecca Nurse in Act I, "There are wheels within wheels in this village, and fires within fires!" In the 1996 movie version, the director gave this line to John Proctor talking to Reverend Hale when they first met. In terms of effectiveness, which speaker should have the line?

#### PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 6:

A foil is a character in literature who highlights certain traits of the main character by contrasting them. For example, a coward helps show the hero's bravery in a stronger light. Choose either Parris, Putnam, or Giles and write a well-organized essay in which you show how he serves as a foil for John Proctor. Do not merely summarize the plot.

#### PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 7:

The original version of *The Crucible*, published in 1953, included a second scene for Act II. Prior to 1971, Miller decided to excise this scene. In a well-organized essay, argue whether this scene should have been kept in the play or excluded.

## Multiple Choice Questions

### PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 1-10

Carefully read the passage from Act I, pages 34 – 35, beginning, “Our difficulty in believing” and ending, “... from that of the arbiter to that of the scourge of God” in order to answer the following questions.

1. From the passage, the reader can infer that Erasmus is a(n)  
(A) Communist proponent from the mid 1900s  
(B) long-deceased Lutheran leader  
(C) deceased man openly denounced by Martin Luther  
(D) ancient Greek philosopher  
(E) anarchist from the Napoleonic era
2. The word “abrogation” (line 24) most likely means a(n)  
(A) release in tension  
(B) secretive retreat  
(C) elaborate deceit  
(D) formal abolition  
(E) erosion through friction
3. The word “congerie” (line 27) most likely means a(n)  
(A) collection of things heaped together  
(B) non-hereditary disease  
(C) object corresponding or agreeing with a counterpart  
(D) inference based on limited evidence  
(E) elaborate spell
4. The word “scoffed” (line 15) is an example of  
(A) hyperbole  
(B) anadiplosis  
(C) archaism  
(D) euphemism  
(E) allusion
5. In line 11 of this passage, the sentence which begins, “I am not surprised at this...” is an example of  
(A) idyll  
(B) apostrophe  
(C) Homeric epithet  
(D) authorial intrusion  
(E) metonymy

6. The mention of the Inquisition (line 5) is an example of  
(A) paradox  
(B) hyperbole  
(C) allusion  
(D) motif  
(E) synecdoche
7. The phrase “a history which still sucks at the Devil’s teats” (line 17) is an example of  
(A) extended metaphor  
(B) absolute metaphor  
(C) active metaphor  
(D) submerged metaphor  
(E) dead metaphor
8. In the last line, Miller asserts that the government has changed from a(n)  
(A) judge to the ruin of the nation  
(B) mediator to a means of punishment  
(C) umpire to a plague on the society  
(D) adjudicator to a blessing in disguise  
(E) moderator to a solace for a troubled world
9. Miller states the danger of a government successfully equating its policy with virtue is that the citizens’ lives will be  
(A) scrutinized for actions against these government policies  
(B) converted to follow the government-dictated religious beliefs  
(C) invaded with further distracting propaganda  
(D) threatened by severe, potentially deadly, new laws  
(E) protected from their own goals
10. In this passage, Miller contends that a common irony throughout history is  
(A) governments that accuse others of diabolism have had evil ties themselves  
(B) both sides of a dispute gain support by claiming the opposition has sided with the devil  
(C) societies have spent centuries attacking demons where there are none  
(D) Lutherans and Catholics are more similar than they realize.  
(E) governments should be establishing political policies instead of arbitrating social inequities



**PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 11-20:**

Carefully read the passage from Act I, pages 5 – 6, beginning, “The edge of the wilderness,” and ending, “... this space so antagonistic to man” in order to answer the following questions.

11. In the context of paragraph five, the word “ingratiating” means
  - (A) humble
  - (B) suave
  - (C) flattering
  - (D) servile
  - (E) attractive
12. For the majority of paragraph three, Miller gives an example of
  - (A) verbal irony
  - (B) situational irony
  - (C) dramatic irony
  - (D) central irony
  - (E) Socratic irony
13. In paragraph five, Miller introduces the Jamestown settlers in order to add
  - (A) metaphor
  - (B) irony
  - (C) juxtaposition
  - (D) direct characterization
  - (E) allusion
14. Which of the following most accurately describes the settlers’ view of the wilderness in the first two paragraphs?
  - (A) trepidation and a sense of diabolism
  - (B) reverence and a sense of divine insight
  - (C) wonder and a sense of transcendentalism
  - (D) respect and a sense of spiritualism
  - (E) excitement and a sense of manifest destiny
15. The official name given to the Massachusetts colony is indicative of their
  - (A) desire for profit
  - (B) determination and work ethic
  - (C) perseverance to survive
  - (D) strong religious aspirations
  - (E) distrust of their neighbors

16. In paragraph five, Miller asserts that the Salem government was initially necessary for
- (A) control through severity
  - (B) freedom through individuality
  - (C) strength through motivation
  - (D) redemption through suffering
  - (E) survival through unity
17. In paragraph four, “the candle that would light the world,” is an example of
- (A) implied metaphor
  - (B) irony
  - (C) imagery
  - (D) juxtaposition
  - (E) apostrophe
18. In the second paragraph, Miller implies that a chief reason the people of Salem did not convert the Indians was
- (A) the Indians lived in the Devil’s last preserve
  - (B) the Salem townspeople would rather take land from heathens than Christians
  - (C) the Englishmen denied the Indians their religious freedom
  - (D) the Massachusetts settlers had lost relatives in Indian attacks
  - (E) the parishioners were suspicious of anyone different from them
19. The author’s comments in paragraph four demonstrate his underlying purpose was
- (A) invective
  - (B) hyperbolic
  - (C) figurative
  - (D) didactic
  - (E) ironic
20. The line, “We have inherited this belief, and it has helped and hurt us,” proves this play is meant to be a
- (A) satire
  - (B) tragedy
  - (C) parable
  - (D) melodrama
  - (E) neoclassic drama

## PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 21-25:

Carefully read the passage from Act IV, page 129, beginning, “DANFORTH: Now hear me” and ending, “...as you are bound by Heaven to do” in order to answer the following questions.

21. In line 8, the word “its” refers to
  - (A) reprieve
  - (B) God’s law
  - (C) the seven
  - (D) the petition
  - (E) postponement
22. In the sentence that begins, “I will not,” Miller strengthens Danforth’s rhetoric by using
  - (A) alliteration
  - (B) metaphor
  - (C) imagery
  - (D) hyperbole
  - (E) metonymy
23. In line 8, the sentence beginning with “If retaliation” is an example of
  - (A) extended metaphor
  - (B) hyperbole
  - (C) irony
  - (D) paradox
  - (E) antithesis
24. Danforth’s motivation in this paragraph is
  - (A) to carry out God’s law
  - (B) to hang anyone who defies the court
  - (C) to appear consistent in the town’s eyes
  - (D) to fulfill the village’s expectations
  - (E) to vindicate those who have already hanged
25. Danforth concludes with the rhetorical statement that if they
  - (A) recognize their duty to Salem, they must support him
  - (B) want the morally correct stance, they must support him
  - (C) choose not to face the same fate as the condemned, they must support him
  - (D) follow their conscience, they must support him
  - (E) are brave, Christian men, they must support him

## MULTIPLE CHOICE ANSWERS

### With Explanations

1. From the passage, the reader can infer that Erasmus is  
(A) a Communist proponent from the mid 1900's  
(B) a long deceased Lutheran leader  
(C) **a deceased man openly denounced by Martin Luther**  
(D) an ancient Greek philosopher  
(E) an anarchist from the Napoleonic era

Miller's point in the paragraph is that people and governments often use their adversaries as tools in order to gain support for their own cause. When Miller says that his professor was "A Lutheran, by the way," and that he felt some need to hide his discussion of Erasmus from the outside world, he is clearly implying that Erasmus was not in favor with Luther or the Lutheran church.

2. The word "abrogation" most likely means  
(A) a release in tension  
(B) a secretive retreat  
(C) an elaborate deceit  
(D) **a formal abolishment**  
(E) an erosion through friction

"Abrogate" means to cancel or nullify. When placed in the context of the sentence, "Political opposition...justifies the **abrogation** of all normally applied customs..." Miller is saying that the political system has found justification for abolishing the normal social discourse.

3. The word "congerie" most likely means a(n)  
(A) **collection of things heaped together**  
(B) popular theory  
(C) object corresponding or agreeing with a counterpart  
(D) inference based on limited evidence  
(E) elaborate conspiracy

This is a relatively easy word-in-context question. The sentence clearly suggests (A) that mistaking a political policy for a moral absolute creates a mass of conspiracies. B is tempting, but unsupported. E is redundant, and C and D are implausible in the context.

4. The word “scoffed” (line 11) is an example of  
(A) hyperbole  
(B) anadiplosis  
(C) archaism  
**(D) euphemism**  
(E) allusion

Miller put it nicely in saying that a professor who holds a séance during class would be only scoffed at. Such behavior would more likely result in outright ridicule or even disciplinary action.

5. In line 8 of this passage, the sentence which begins, “I am not surprised at this...” is an example of  
(A) idyll  
(B) apostrophe  
(C) Homeric epithet  
**(D) authorial intrusion**  
(E) metonymy

An idyll (A) is a pastoral poem, which this sentence clearly is not. There is no direct address of an abstract person or entity (B, apostrophe). Nor is there an adjective phrase repeated often throughout the work as in a Homeric epithet (C). Metonymy (E) is the identification of a characteristic of a thing for the thing itself. Clearly (D) is the correct answer as Miller interrupts the narrative flow to insert his own comments.

6. The mention of the Inquisition (line 4) is an example of  
(A) paradox  
(B) hyperbole  
**(C) allusion**  
(D) motif  
(E) synecdoche

This is a fairly easy figurative language question. Paradox (A) is the co-existence of two opposites. If anything this story about to be told is parallel to the Inquisition, not opposed to it. And given the number of people arrested, tried, and executed during the brief period, to compare it to the Inquisition is not a gross exaggeration (B, hyperbole). This mention would have to occur several more times in order to establish itself as a motif (D). Synecdoche (E) is the substitution of the part for the whole. The best answer is (C). It is, in fact, a historical allusion.

7. The phrase “a history which still sucks at the Devil’s teats” (line 12) is an example of  
(A) extended metaphor  
(B) absolute metaphor  
(C) active metaphor  
(D) **submerged metaphor**  
(E) dead metaphor

While the statement is clearly a metaphor, the issue is how extended and how direct is it? The point is not developed into a paragraph or more, so (A) is eliminated. (B) is tempting, but the thing sucking at the Devil’s teat is either evil itself or evil’s offspring, so it is difficult to support that the two terms have *no* literal basis for comparison. (C) is clearly wrong as this is not a simple equation of two terms (that person is a pig). Certainly (E) is eliminated by the fact that the idea of sucking at the Devil’s teat is hardly a cliché. The metaphor is, however, submerged (D) in that there is not direct comparison (the situation was ...) nor is the second term, that which is sucking at the Devil’s teat, ever made explicit.

8. In the last line, Miller asserts that the government has changed from  
(A) a judge to the ruin of the nation  
(B) **a mediator to a means of punishment**  
(C) an umpire to a plague on the society  
(D) an adjudicator to a blessing in disguise  
(E) a moderator to a solace for a troubled world

While the first statements of each answer are correct definitions for “arbiter,” the second half of the statement eliminates all but (B). A “scourge” is a punishment or whip.

9. Miller states the danger of a government successfully equating its policy with virtue is that the citizens’ lives will be  
(A) **scrutinized for actions against these government policies**  
(B) converted to follow the government-dictated religious beliefs  
(C) invaded with further distracting propaganda  
(D) threatened by severe, potentially deadly, new laws  
(E) protected from their own goals

In the last line of the paragraph, Miller explains that the government would look for anti-political actions and beliefs in each citizen.

10. In this paragraph, Miller contends that a common irony throughout history is  
(A) governments that accuse others of diabolism have had evil ties themselves  
(B) **both sides of a dispute gain support by claiming the opposition has sided with the devil**  
(C) societies have spent centuries attacking demons where there are none  
(D) Lutherans and Catholics are more similar than they realize.  
(E) governments should be making political policies instead of arbitrating social inequities; this is the topic sentence in this paragraph
11. In the context of paragraph five, the word “ingratiating” means  
(A) **humble**  
(B) suave  
(C) flattering  
(D) servile  
(E) attractive

The Jamestown men did not have that “parochial snobbery,” Miller mentioned. He also states that Virginia destroyed them while Massachusetts did not destroy the Puritans.

12. For the majority of paragraph three, Miller gives an example of  
(A) verbal irony  
(B) **situational irony**  
(C) dramatic irony  
(D) central irony  
(E) Socratic irony

Again, the paragraph is clearly ironic, so the challenge here is to identify the specific type of irony. Verbal irony (A) is essentially a contradiction of terms or the use of a word or phrase in a way other than its normal use. This is not the case here. Dramatic irony (C) is the situation in which the audience has information that the characters onstage do not. Again, this is not the case. “Central irony” (D) is a phrase used to identify the main or chief irony in a passage, and Socratic irony (E) is the situation of a wise man asking a foolish question to test another’s intelligence. Situational irony (B), however, is present in the description of how the oppressed became the oppressors in order to protect their vision of truth and goodness.

13. In paragraph five, Miller introduces the Jamestown settlers in order to add  
(A) metaphor  
(B) irony  
(C) **juxtaposition**  
(D) direct characterization  
(E) allusion

While Miller is, in fact, comparing the characters of the two settlements, it is not a metaphoric (A) comparison in which the nature of one is identified with the other. Nor is there anything particularly ironic (B) about the differences between the two groups. He does not offer a direct comparison (D) and the discussion of Jamestown is much more than a mere allusion. Therefore (C) is the only valid choice. The two settlements are placed side-by-side and examined.

14. Which of the following most accurately describes the settlers' view of the wilderness in the first two paragraphs?
- (A) **trepidation and a sense of diabolism**
  - (B) reverence and a sense of divine insight
  - (C) wonder and a sense of transcendentalism
  - (D) respect and a sense of spiritualism
  - (E) excitement and a sense of manifest destiny

The settlers were afraid of the forest; they thought it was the Devil's fortress.

15. The official name given to the Massachusetts colony is indicative of their
- (A) desire for profit
  - (B) determination and work ethic
  - (C) perseverance to survive
  - (D) **strong religious aspirations**
  - (E) paranoia against their neighbors

As indicated in the lecture notes, naming their settlement the New Jerusalem could have no other implications than religious.

16. In paragraph five, Miller asserts that the Salem Government was initially necessary for
- (A) control through severity
  - (B) freedom through individuality
  - (C) strength through motivation
  - (D) redemption through suffering
  - (E) **survival through unity**

The Salem settlers united under a near-totalitarian rule in order to survive.

17. In paragraph four, "the candle that would light the world," is an example of
- (A) **metaphor**
  - (B) irony
  - (C) imagery
  - (D) juxtaposition
  - (E) apostrophe

While ultimately the hypocrisy of the Puritans' belief would prove to be ironic, the emphasis here is that they *believed themselves to be* the candle. Thus (B) is eliminated. (C) might be tempting, but is discredited by the fact that the phrase merely offers a noun (candle) with no detail or description. Neither is there any side-by-side comparison or juxtaposition (D), nor direct address (E). Therefore (A) is the only possible answer.



18. Miller implies in paragraph two that a chief reason the people of Salem did not convert the Indians was
- (A) the Indians lived in the Devil's last preserve
  - (B) the Salem townspeople would rather take land from heathens than Christians**
  - (C) the Englishmen denied the Indians their religious freedom
  - (D) the Massachusetts settlers had lost relatives in Indian attacks
  - (E) the parishioners were suspicious of anyone different than them

As the paragraph clearly states, "they also preferred to take land from heathens rather than from fellow Christians," (B) is the only choice.

19. The author's comments in paragraph four demonstrate that his underlying purpose was
- (A) invective
  - (B) hyperbolic
  - (C) figurative
  - (D) didactic**
  - (E) ironic

Didactic (D) is the correct answer. Miller relates this passage to his audience's lives. He is trying to teach a lesson through this play. The tone of this passage is certainly not bitter or insulting (A) or terribly exaggerated (B). Aside from the candle metaphor, it is fairly straightforward, thus eliminating (C), and, as it is a straightforward passage, it cannot be read as ironic (E).

20. The line "We have inherited this belief, and it has helped and hurt us," proves this play is meant to be a
- (A) satire
  - (B) tragedy
  - (C) parable**
  - (D) melodrama
  - (E) neoclassic drama

While there is a hint of criticism in the statement, there is certainly no ridicule (A). While some may argue this play has tragic elements (B), that is not evident in this quotation. Nor is the passage, or the play, melodramatic (D). Finally, (E) is excluded by the fact that the play illustrates humanity's evil, not goodness. The passage does indicate, however, that the play will be a tale illustrating a moral lesson (C).

21. In line 8, "its" refers to
- (A) reprieve
  - (B) God's law**
  - (C) the seven
  - (D) the petition
  - (E) postponement

"While I speak God's law, I will not crack it..." Gramatically, "it" can only refer to (B), God's law.

22. In the sentence that begins, “I will not,” Miller strengthens Danforth’s rhetoric by using  
(A) **alliteration**  
(B) metaphor  
(C) imagery  
(D) hyperbole  
(E) metonymy

“...plea for pardon or postponement” is clearly alliteration (A).

23. In line 8, the sentence beginning with, “If retaliation,” is an example of  
(A) extended metaphor  
(B) **hyperbole**  
(C) irony  
(D) paradox  
(E) antithesis

(B) Hyperbole is the only plausible response: “If retaliation is your fear, know this—I should hang **ten thousand** that dared rise against the law, and an **ocean of salt tears** could not melt the resolution of the statutes.”

24. Danforth’s motivation in this paragraph is  
(A) to carry out God’s law  
(B) to hang anyone who defies the court  
(C) **to appear consistent in the town’s eyes**  
(D) to fulfill the village’s expectations  
(E) to vindicate those who have already hanged

“Postponement now speaks a floundering on my part.” Danforth does not want to appear weak to the province, for fear he may lose his power, as the court in Andover has done.

25. Danforth concludes with the rhetorical statement that, if they  
(A) recognize their duty to Salem, they must support him  
(B) want the morally correct stance, they must support him  
(C) choose not to face the same fate as the condemned, they must support him  
(D) follow their conscience, they must support him  
(E) **are brave, Christian men, they must support him**

First, Danforth attacks their masculinity, “Draw yourselves up like men,” implying they have been acting like women. Next, he attacks their religious convictions: “as you are bound by Heaven to do.” He is saying that if they are Christians, they will follow him. His audience is well aware what happens to non-Christians in Salem during the time.

# *The Crucible*

## Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition

### Study Guide Teacher's Copy

The setting is Salem, Massachusetts, in the year 1692. Someone once said of the Puritans that they did not leave Europe because they were persecuted, but that they were thrown out of Europe because they persecuted everyone else. As you read the opening of Act I, how do you suppose Miller would respond to that statement?

*While certainly aware of flaws in the Puritans' thinking and the society they tried to establish, Miller also seems to be aware of the integrity of their motivations and the stress under which they attempted to carve out their lives.*

### Act I

1. What purpose does the Overture serve?

*Miller uses the first act to introduce not only the characters but also his comparison between the Puritans and 1950s America. He accomplishes both of these in his lengthy sidebars as characters come into Ruth's bedroom.*

2. What does the "spareness" of the Puritan setting reveal about the lives of the townspeople of Salem?

*The setting mirrors the Puritans' beliefs. The lack of ornamentation demonstrates the Puritan aversion to vanity and frivolous pursuits.*

3. What Puritan primary fear is apparent in the philosophy, "In unity still lay the best promise of safety"?

*The environment with Native Americans, various wild animals, and the climate forced the Puritans to stick together in order to survive. Individuality or independence could cost lives. Therefore, fear kept the settlers in a state of conformist cooperation.*

4. Explain the significance of the forest to the Puritans.

*It was the epitome of evil. As far as the Puritans were concerned, the Native Americans were murderous heathens. The animals periodically attacked. There was no wilderness in England, so the unknown quality of the forest made it even more frightening.*

5. Explain the irony in the Puritans' pilgrimage to Salem to escape persecution.

*Though the Puritans left England to gain religious freedom, among other things, they granted no one in this new world any such freedom. They persecuted, often violently, those who were different.*

6. To what twentieth century situation is Miller referring when he declares:  
"They believed, in short, that they held in their steady hands the candle that would light the world. We have inherited this belief, and it has helped and hurt us."

*Miller is asserting that Americans often believe they possess the true "light" or value system that the rest of the world should follow. This ideology has helped us escape many pitfalls of other countries, but it has also caused other troubles.*

7. When Abigail enters, she is described as "a strikingly beautiful girl...with an endless capacity for dissembling." What does the phrase an "endless capacity for dissembling" suggest?

*She lies frequently and rather convincingly.*

8. When Susanna exits, Abigail makes a confession to Parris, which she recants near the end of the Act. What is the confession, and why does she change her mind?

*She confesses that there is no witchcraft. Abigail tells Parris she danced and she is willing to be whipped for punishment for this deed. Later she blames Tituba and others for bewitching the girls. She is motivated both by self preservation and a sense of power.*

9. Based on his words, what seems to be Parris's motivation for inadvertently causing the hysteria?

*Phrases like, "There is a faction sworn to drive me from my pulpit," and "They will howl me out of Salem for such corruption in my house," show that his only concern is for keeping his position in the church.*

10. Explain the relationship between Abigail and Goody (Elizabeth) Proctor.

*Goody Proctor fired her live-in servant, Abigail. The two obviously dislike each other since it is rumored that Goody Proctor called Abigail “soiled.” Abigail commented about Goody Proctor, “It’s a bitter woman, a lying, cold, sniveling woman, and I will not work for such a woman!”*

11. What are Putnam’s motivations for his actions in Salem?

*Thomas Putnam acts primarily out of family honor and greed. He is angry that his relative was not hired as minister of Salem, and he is determined to rectify that injustice. He also argues with Proctor over land ownership, claiming that a section of Proctor’s land rightfully belongs to him.*

12. Explain the dramatic irony when Parris says, “I know that you—you least of all, Thomas, would ever wish so disastrous a charge laid upon me.”

*Miller explains to the audience that Putnam secretly wants to ruin Parris, but Parris believes Thomas is his only true supporter.*

13. What role did Ann Putnam play in the dancing in the forest?

*Ann asked her daughter, Ruth, to conjure the spirits of Mrs. Putnam’s seven dead children.*

14. Explain briefly how Putnam coerces Parris to declare witchcraft.

*He explains that the congregation will love him if he seeks out and destroys the Devil in Salem. This feeds Parris’s paranoia about keeping his position as minister.*

15. What does Betty’s information about dancing in the forest reveal about Abigail’s true motivation?

*Abigail drank blood to put a death curse on Goody Proctor. The implication is that Abigail wants to marry John Proctor and wants Elizabeth, his wife, out of the way.*

16. What does the threat of a “pointy reckoning” reveal about Abigail’s true nature?

*When Abigail physically threatens the other girls in a visually descriptive way, the reader learns that she is a driving force in the plot and in the hysteria. Furthermore, the audience learns that the other girls are afraid of Abigail, and they will not dare to cross her.*

17. What does Miller mean by: “A Proctor is always marked for calumny”?

*Proctor is an individual who is openly critical of the status quo. Miller is stating that society will always try to protect itself from a character like Proctor, often by fabricating stories against him.*

18. Describe Mary Warren’s personality.

*She is submissive. She wants to tell the truth and take her punishment, but when Abigail threatens her, she withdraws. When Proctor threatens her, she withdraws. Miller later refers to her as a mouse.*

19. Contrast Proctor’s verbal excuse about why he has come to Parris’s house with what his actions indicate may be his true motivation for coming.

*Proctor claims he has come to see what Parris is doing; however, he does not talk to anyone but Abigail, privately. This would suggest that he has really come to see her.*

20. Explain Proctor and Abigail’s relationship.

*They had an affair while Abigail worked in Proctor’s house.*

21. What does Abigail say that leads Parris, Putnam, and Mrs. Putnam to believe Betty is bewitched?

*She claims Betty screamed because she heard the congregation singing.*

22. Describe Rebecca Nurse physically and by reputation.

*Rebecca is seventy-two, white-haired, and requires a walking stick. She is highly regarded in the community.*

23. What three grudges could the Putnams have against the Nurses?

*The Nurses owned three hundred acres. Putnam contested some of these acres as Putnam land. He also disapproved of the Nurses improving their status by gradually acquiring the land. The Nurses were some of those who worked to keep Putnam’s relative out of the Salem minister position.*

24. In Proctor’s argument with Rev. Parris, the theme of authority arises. What are the two points of view?

*Parris says that, as the minister, he is the final authority on what is good for the soul and what isn’t. Proctor argues that the individual heart and conscience are his authority.*

25. Describe Giles Corey both physically and personally.

*He is eighty-three and muscular. Personally, he is litigious and comments about rights often. Miller calls him “a crank, a nuisance, but innocent and brave.”*

26. What is Rebecca’s solution to Betty’s and Ruth’s ailments, and why does this solution anger Ann Putnam?

*Rebecca’s experience (eleven children and twenty-six grandchildren) has told her the girls will stop ailing when they are tired of playing. Ann Putnam has lost seven children and, therefore, she takes Rebecca’s experience as a personal insult.*

27. What is Reverend Hale’s motivation?

*He has dedicated his life to studying and searching for a true witch. He knows they exist, and he is determined to find one.*

28. In terms of indirect characterization, why is it significant that Hale recognizes one of the characters by reputation?

*Hale recognizes Rebecca. He says she looks, “... as such a good soul should.” Not only does it establish the universality of Rebecca’s reputation for goodness, it will also serve to point out the utter madness of the court, the accusations, and the hangings later on.*

29. What question does Giles ask Hale that shows his comical, innocent personality.

*He asks Hale why his wife reads “strange books” (i.e., books other than the Bible). These books disturb his prayers. Giles is merely asking questions. He does not realize that he is opening his own wife to prosecution.*

30. What effect does Miller create by lowering the curtain for this act during the girls’ cries of witchcraft?

*Ending the act as the girls are blurting out names gives the audience the idea that the names continue for some time, that the whole community is in danger. Dropping the curtain after the girls finish would give the audience a finite sense of accusation. A point in this play is that everyone is suspect. The well-timed curtain, subtly introduces this point.*

31. What motivates Abby and Betty to begin denouncing everyone?

*We have been told that Abby is a great dissembler, so presumably, she is “naming names” for sport and the power it gives her over other people. She is also “redeeming” herself through confession, so she will not be punished for other things she has done. Betty may be following Abigail’s lead, but it seems more likely that Betty is simply caught up in the hysteria of the situation.*

32. Explain how Miller uses the following dramatic conventions to establish character and create a basis for the tragedy in his Overture.

Foil character :

*One of the most obvious reasons Miller would assemble so many characters in Betty's room is so they can argue with one another. Some of the most important foils are introduced here. The audience sees Proctor and Abigail's conflict about the status of their relationship. Proctor and Parris show their different views on how society should be run. Rebecca and Ann Putnam interact to show their personalities while hovering over Betty. Abigail and Mary Warren each shows the extremes of her character's strength through their discussion.*

Direct Characterization:

*Unlike most plays, Miller often stops the action in this act to provide commentary on each character. Proctor, Putnam, Parris, Giles, the Nurses, and Hale all receive Miller's stated opinion of the personality of each. On page one, Miller states about Parris: "There is very little good to be said for him."*

Motivation:

*There is a tremendous amount of information about the major characters' motivations in this Act. Some comes from Miller in his sidebars, but more comes from the dialogue. Abigail, for example, makes it obvious that she wants to possess John Proctor. The audience finds this out from Abigail's conversation with Proctor, and Betty blurts out that Abigail was in the forest drinking blood to put a curse on Proctor's wife.*

Character Action:

*Aside from the shouting, several actions reveal character traits in this act. Abigail slaps Betty in an attempt to revive her. This shows Abigail's violent side, which is further established by her threats. In contrast, Rebecca temporarily stops Betty's wailing when she quietly kneels next to the girl, which shows Rebecca's gentle personality.*



## Act II, scene i

1. What does the reader learn about the Proctors' marriage through the discrepancy between what John Proctor does before he sees his wife and when he talks to her?

*John comes into the house, tastes the stew and adds seasoning. At dinner he compliments her seasoning of the meal. This lie shows how he does find fault with Elizabeth, but also that he will not be open and honest with her. There is an obvious barrier between the two that is demonstrated in the first few pages of this act.*

*Some students might argue that this early action of John establishes that he loves his wife and tries to please her, but Elizabeth remains separated from him. She appears somewhat aloof or withdrawn. This distance is obviously due to John's infidelity.*

2. In what ways is Miller's use of dialogue effective in the first two pages of this scene to show the rift between the couple?

*There is no flow to the conversation at first. Each makes statements, and the other responds, but there is no conversation. The coldness they feel toward each other comes across in this forced dinner dialogue.*

3. When Proctor kisses his wife, what does her reaction show about her feelings?

*Miller writes: "She receives it." Elizabeth does not return the affection; she allows herself to be kissed. This action demonstrates their aloofness and lack of intimacy.*

4. What does Proctor's hesitation to travel to Salem indicate about his inner conflict?

*While he would like to clear up the hysteria about witchcraft, he does not want to attack Abigail. The reason may be that he still has feelings for Abigail and/or the reason may be that he does not want his adultery to come out in court.*

5. Whom does Elizabeth call, "A mouse no more"? What does she mean by this metaphor?

*Mary Warren is the mouse. In act one, she showed her submissiveness to Proctor when he threatened to whip her and to Abigail when she told Mary to be quiet or be killed. In this scene, Elizabeth is telling her husband that Mary has decided to do as she pleases now that she is working for the court.*

6. Who is the head of the General Court? What significance does this have in the power given to the court?

*The Deputy Governor is in charge of the court. Therefore the court has supreme authority over the province.*

7. Explain the ironic ultimatum the head of the court has given to those who have been arrested.

*The accused must confess or die. If they claim to be innocent, they die. If they claim to be guilty, they live. Thus, ironically, they are punished for telling the truth yet rewarded for lying.*

8. Explain Proctor's quote: "If the girl's a saint now, I think it is not easy to prove she is a fraud, and the town gone so silly."

*The town's opinion of Abigail is so high that anyone who agrees with her is considered morally correct, but anyone who speaks against her is considered evil. Proctor is saying it will be difficult to prove to everyone that Abigail is wrong, and the entire town has been fooled, while he alone knows the truth.*

9. What lie does Elizabeth notice Proctor told? How does this feed her current suspicions?

*Proctor mentions that he was alone with Abigail at Parris's house. Previously he told Elizabeth that he and Abigail were in a group of people. In her mind, this confirms her suspicions that Proctor still has feelings for Abigail.*

10. Explain the metaphor: "The magistrate sits in your heart that judges you."

*Elizabeth is comparing Proctor's conscience with a judge that determines his guilty feelings. It is his own heart that condemns him, not a court.*

11. What present does Mary Warren give to Elizabeth? What does her making it and giving it to Elizabeth foreshadow?

*Mary Warren gives Elizabeth a poppet that she made while sitting on a bench in court. As poppets, or dolls, were tools used in Voodoo to bewitch others, the presence of a poppet in the Proctors' house could be used as evidence that one of them is a witch.*

12. How does Mary Warren save herself from a whipping? Who does Elizabeth believe accused her of witchcraft and why?

*Mary reveals that someone accused Elizabeth of witchcraft in court, and Mary was the one who came to Mrs. Proctor's defense. "We must all love each other now, Goody Proctor," is actually a threat. She is letting Elizabeth know that if the Proctors do not give Mary some freedom, she may not be able to defend her further. Elizabeth believes it was Abigail who accused her in order to marry the widowed John once Elizabeth is gone.*

13. What does Hale's motivation for visiting the Proctors tell the audience about his personality?

*He explains that he is not there on court business; he is looking to get a clearer picture of those who are accused. This shows he is a free-thinking individual. Though the court and he share a common goal, he is not the court's servant or messenger. It also suggests to the audience that he will be more careful in what he accepts as "true" and more willing than the court to examine all the sides of the issue.*

14. In what ways does Hale question John Proctor's religious strength?

*Hale questions John's infrequent church attendance, his disrespect for Parris, and his refusal to get his third son baptized.*

15. Explain how Hale tests Proctor's belief in God, as well as the irony in how Proctor fails Hale's test.

*Hale asks Proctor to recite the Ten Commandments. John momentarily forgets the commandment that he has broken: "Thou Shalt not Commit Adultery."*

16. Explain Hale's quote: "Man, remember until an hour before the Devil fell, God thought him beautiful in Heaven."

*Anyone is capable of evil, despite his or her past good behavior. Even Rebecca, who Hale believes is above suspicion, is conceivably in league with Satan.*

17. List and discuss the validity of the evidence by which Martha Corey and Rebecca Nurse are jailed.

*Martha is accused of bewitching pigs with her strange books, which Giles first mentioned in Act One. Rebecca is charged with the supernatural murder of the Putnams' babies. Neither of these charges is provable, yet the women are arrested.*

18. Explain Francis' metaphor: "My wife is the very brick and mortar of the church."

*Rebecca is being compared to the foundation of the church; therefore, she is very important to the church community. The "good soul" Hale had heard of in Beverly is well-respected and vital to the congregation in Salem.*

19. What evidence does Cheever have against Elizabeth?

*He finds a poppet that Abigail claims Elizabeth is using for voodoo.*

20. Explain how Abigail might have “set-up” Elizabeth Proctor. List the events chronologically.

*First, Abigail either witnessed or encouraged Mary Warren’s making the poppet during court. Abigail either instructed or knew Mary left the needle in the poppet and then took the poppet to Elizabeth. At dinner with Parris, Abigail stabbed herself with a needle and accused Elizabeth of supernaturally stabbing her.*

21. If Mary contradicts Abigail, how is she “charging cold murder on Abigail”?

*If Abigail is lying, the only reason would be that she wants Elizabeth to be found guilty and be sentenced to death. Therefore, Abigail would be trying to murder others with these lies.*

22. How is Hale a “broken minister”?

*Proctor interprets the lack of support from Hale to mean that he believes the court and is willing to let innocent people be sentenced.*

23. Explain Proctor’s quote: “Vengeance is walking Salem.”

*The accusers are carrying out their grudges in the courtroom by claiming their adversaries are witches.*

24. How have Hale’s opinions of the accused changed by the end of Act II.

*Hale is beginning to realize that the town has gone mad, and the accused may be falsely charged. Hale counsels Proctor, Giles, and Nurse to figure out who would want to hurt them in such a harsh way.*

25. Explain the demand Proctor makes of Mary Warren at the end of scene one and her significant response to his threat.

*Proctor tells Mary she will testify against Abigail, or he will bring her “guts up through her mouth.” Mary replies that Abigail will charge lechery on Proctor if he goes to court, showing that Mary has known about the affair for some time and knows Abigail is prepared to use it against Proctor.*

26. Who are the two dynamic characters in this scene and show their changes.

*Mary Warren is “a mouse no more.” She is subservient in Act I and bold in this scene. Reverend Hale is confident in his resolution to ferret out the witches in Act I, but by the end of this scene, and most notably the arrest of Rebecca Nurse, he questions the motives of the accusers and suspects that vengeance, not Satan, is controlling the town’s madness.*

27. How are the golden candlesticks symbolic of Parris's personality?

*Parris is not satisfied with lead candlesticks, which would symbolize the Puritan proscription against vanity. He wants golden candlesticks just as he wants more money and a finer church. As a former businessman, Parris is more concerned with monetary issues than with religious ones.*

28. How is the poppet a symbol of Abigail's control of the society?

*Abigail has been able to bend and control the town as she could a doll. The idea that the doll is a sort of voodoo doll further adds to the comparison, since voodoo dolls curse the intended victim, as she has done in court.*

## Act II, Scene ii (Appendix to the Penguin edition, pp148 – 152)

**Optional:** This scene appeared in the original production; however, it has not been performed in most productions since 1958. Arthur Miller deleted the scene in his later editions published prior to 1971.

1. Given the Puritans' view of the forest, what atmosphere does Miller create by setting this scene in the woods?

*The forest is evil, unknown. Miller creates a sense of tension and suspense by setting it in the woods and at night. The forest setting also suggests that there is something illicit about this meeting: at night, in the forest, just like the first clandestine meeting that began the whole hysteria.*

2. What evidence is there that Abigail's saintly reputation mentioned in Act II, Scene I is changing?

*She feels alone. She is not receiving respectful gazes anymore; she receives only lewd stares. She is powerful, but not respected.*

3. In what way has Abigail become the poppet?

*Her body is marked in many places where she has stuck herself with needles in order to accuse Elizabeth. Her body has become a tool to prosecute others. She has to manipulate it like the doll to make others do what she wants.*

4. Discuss the verbal irony in her line: "Oh John, the world's so full of hypocrites."

*Abigail may be the biggest hypocrite of all, since she confessed there is no witchcraft in Act I, merely girls playing; however, she is now accusing others of bewitching her.*

5. What motivation does Abigail give for making the world "white again"?

*When the world is white again, Abigail will want to marry John.*

6. Discuss Proctor's implied motivation for warning Abigail of his intentions in court the next day.

*He cares for Abigail, and would rather she recant her testimony than fight her in court. Considering the guilt Proctor has kept that has been eating away at him since the affair, he also doesn't want his sin to come out in court.*

7. Discuss the verbal irony in Abigail's line: "Fear naught. I will save you tomorrow."

*She is saying she will save him from himself in court by setting him free of his wife. However, Abigail is also telling him that she will defeat him, if he tries to stand against her. The death of his wife caused by the woman with whom he had an affair would emotionally kill Proctor.*

### Act III

1. Who is on trial when Giles Corey interrupts the court? How have the charges against this person changed since Act II?

*Martha Corey is on trial, not for bewitching pigs as in Act II, but now for bewitching the girls.*

2. Explain the charge Giles makes against Putnam?

*“Thomas Putnam is reaching out for land.” Giles is accusing Putnam of orchestrating this whole trial in order to rob the land of those convicted, since he is the only man in Salem with enough money to buy their land when the government takes it away from them as punishment for being witches.*

3. How has Giles “broke charity with the woman”?

*Giles mentioned his wife’s “strange reading” in Act I, and it has come back to condemn her in this act. The audience understands that he did not mean to accuse her, but he feels responsible for her charges.*

4. Explain how Francis offends Deputy Governor Danforth.

*Francis tells Danforth that the girls have deceived the court. Danforth reveals that four hundred people are in jails and seventy-two people are sentenced to hang based on his decisions; therefore, he is offended that Francis states that the Deputy Governor has been tricked into sentencing many of these people. Danforth considers himself the most intelligent man in the province.*

5. Why do you think Danforth is concerned whether Proctor has told anyone else about the girls’ lies?

*Danforth is predominantly considered with his reputation. If no one outside of the court has heard about these charges, he can contain the bad publicity. If Proctor has already told others, Danforth’s reputation is already ruined.*

6. Explain Danforth’s statement: “We burn a hot fire here; it melts down all concealment.”

*One definition of crucible is a vessel used to melt metal; therefore, it can withstand great temperatures in order not to melt under the intense heat.*

7. What words demonstrate Parris's reaction to having John Proctor in the court?

*"Beware this man, Your Excellency, this man is mischief." "They come to overthrow the court, sir! This man is—"*

8. What two things does Cheever reveal to the court as evidence against Proctor's good character? What could this evidence prove in court?

*Proctor cursed the court and ripped Elizabeth's warrant. He plows on Sunday. This evidence shows his contempt for the court and a disregard for church law.*

9. When Proctor hears that his wife claims to be pregnant, what reason does he give for believing her?

*Proctor says that she has never told a lie.*

10. Discuss the evidence Proctor gives Danforth proving Elizabeth, Rebecca, and Martha's innocence, in terms of credibility and outcome.

*Proctor gives Danforth an affidavit signed by ninety-one townspeople declaring the innocence of the three women. Danforth summons all ninety-one signers to be cross-examined or tried in court. They will all go to jail.*

11. How does this episode help to establish Miller's connection of the Salem witch trials with the McCarthy hearings?

*Speaking up in defense of any of the accused immediately makes someone a suspect. The McCarthy hearings used similar tactics. Danforth says that those who are not on the side of the court in trying times are against the authority of the court and the church, which was another ploy used in the House hearings.*

12. What is the charge that Giles Corey makes against Putnam?

*Corey charges that Putnam has encouraged his daughter to cry out against neighbors who have large landholdings. The neighbors, once convicted of witchery, will forfeit their land to the state and then Putnam will be able to buy it cheaply.*



13. What is Giles Corey's proof for his charge, and why will he not supply the proof to the court? What parallel does this have in the HUAC hearings?

*His proof is that another person heard Putnam speak of his intention to get George Jacobs' land. Corey will not divulge the name, however, because he does not want to endanger that person. In the McCarthy Hearings defendants were frequently forced to "name names." Miller himself was convicted of contempt because he refused to disclose the names of people who had attended meetings that he had attended.*

14. What does Hale ask Parris about those who attack the court? What is Parris' ironic response?

*Hale asks whether those who defend themselves are automatically considered to be attacking the court. Parris retorts that the innocent are happy with the court, and these ninety-one people clearly are not happy. The irony is that the innocent were the ones who died in the court. Those who claimed to be guilty or were knowingly convicting innocent people were happy with the court.*

15. What evidence does Giles give the court?

*Giles gives a deposition against Thomas Putnam by a witness who heard Putnam thank his daughter for convicting George Jacobs.*

16. Why does Giles not reveal his witness?

*Giles saw what happened to the ninety-one people on Proctor and Nurse's list. Giles knows if he gives the court the witness' name, the witness will be jailed.*

17. Why do you think Hale wants Proctor to have a lawyer?

*Hale knows the seriousness of Proctor's charges against Abigail. This charge would prove that the courts were wrong to jail or hang everyone to date. Hale recognizes that Proctor is not educated enough to represent himself in court against Danforth.*

18. Explain Mary Warren's predicament. What consequences does she face from Abigail and the other girls, Danforth, and Proctor if she goes against each of them?

*Abigail and the girls will try to convict her if she testifies against them. Danforth promised to hang her if she lies. Proctor has threatened to kill her if she does not testify against the girls.*

19. According to Mary, what circumstances allowed her to pretend in court, but not in the vestry?

*She explains that she had a “sense” of it in court because the other girls were doing it and she fell in with them. There is no inspiration in the vestry, so she cannot do it.*

20. What threat does Abigail give Dansforth when he accuses her of lying?

*She says, “Let you beware, Mr. Danforth.” She is telling him that she may accuse him next. She is claiming to be more powerful than the court, and he had best leave her alone or she will denounce him.*

21. How do Abigail and the other girls turn the accusation against Mary Warren?

*In the heat of Danforth’s questioning of Abigail, first Abigail, then the other girls pretend to get chills and be supernaturally attacked by Mary Warren.*

22. Why is Danforth temporarily persuaded by Proctor’s accusation of Abigail?

*Proctor confesses his affair with Abigail, which would prove she has motive to kill Elizabeth Proctor. Since lechery was a capital crime, Danforth would seriously listen to a man who would openly claim this offense and risk the death sentence.*

23. Cite Abigail’s answer when Danforth questions her about being a harlot. What is strange about her denial?

*There is no denial. She refuses to answer the question, as if the answer is beneath her.*

24. Why does Danforth put so much faith in Elizabeth’s testimony?

*By Proctor’s own admission, his wife has never lied.*

25. What sacrifice does Elizabeth make for her husband? How is the result of this sacrifice ironic?

*For the first time in her life, Elizabeth lies. She does this in order to save her husband from the charge of lechery; however, by saving him from that charge, she has instead convicted him of attempting to murder Abigail through court execution.*

26. When Hale verbally attacks Abigail, how does she defend herself?

*Abigail distracts everyone again by claiming Mary Warren is attacking her in the form of a bird.*

27. How does Mary, in turn, defend herself from the girls?

*Mary turns and accuses John Proctor of working for the Devil and trying to enlist Mary to serve him.*

28. On what charges are Proctor and Corey arrested?

*Proctor is arrested for witchcraft, and Giles is arrested for withholding evidence.*

29. In what way has Hale completed his transformation as a dynamic character by end of Act III?

*He leaves the court and directly opposes it because of the arrest of John and Giles.*

30. Upon finishing this act, explain how Proctor's earlier advice to Mary Warren is ironic to both of their situations. "Do that which is good, and no harm shall come to thee."

*When Mary told the truth, she was attacked and her life threatened. When she recanted, even falsely convicting Proctor, she was rewarded and given safety. When Proctor told the truth, he was sentenced to jail as a witch.*

## Act IV

1. What is Miller's purpose setting this scene in a jail cell?

*The cell visually allows the audience to know the conditions of the incarceration: the neglect, the filth, and the mental effects.*

2. Explain Miller's use of comic relief at the beginning of this act. How is this scene ambiguous?

*Sarah Good, Tituba, and a drunken Herrick talk about flying to Barbados. Tituba mistakes a wandering cow for Satan. This affords a brief mental break from the intensity of the last three acts. On a literal level, Miller may be giving the audience a sense of the insanity associated with long-term isolation in jail. On the other hand, the talk of flying to Barbados and drunkenly mistaking the cow for Satan is ludicrous. Miller is making fun of those whose ignorance allows them to believe such ridiculous accusations against others.*

3. Danforth, Hathorne, and Cheever's conversation tells the audience about what changes in Salem in the months that passed between Act III and IV?

*Parris is mentally breaking down. Hale has just returned to town and is talking to the condemned. Cows have wandered off their farms, since their owners are jailed for witchcraft. The townspeople are fighting among themselves about who has legal possession of the livestock. The town is obviously in chaos outside of the jail walls.*

4. Explain Parris's comment: "Hale has returned to bring Rebecca Nurse to God."

*Hale has come back to town to convince Rebecca and the others who are condemned that they should lie and confess so they can save their lives. Parris and Danforth, still harboring the delusion that there is indeed witchcraft in the town and that they are men of God, believe this perjury to be the condemned's spiritual salvation, so Parris refers to it as "coming to God." Danforth refers to it as "a Providence."*

5. What is the relationship between the rebellion in Andover and the flight of Abigail and Mercy Lewis?

*In Andover, townspeople are rebelling against the trials. Rev. Parris is suggesting that Abigail was feeling uneasy about the rebellion in Andover. He was afraid that this questioning of authority might spread to Salem. If it did, it would mean trouble for her.*

6. Why is Parris upset?

*When Abigail left, she stole all his savings, leaving him penniless. More than that, though, he seems to fear a rebellion if all the accused are hanged; most of those arrested are all highly respected people in the town. He worries for his life and is afraid to go outside at night because someone had left a dagger in his door.*

7. Why is it important for the court to get one of the accused “respectable citizens,” such as John Proctor or Rebecca Nurse to confess?

*If just one such suspect confesses, it will establish the validity of the trials, condemnations, and executions.*

8. Parris brings what news that further disturbs Danforth?

*Abigail and Mercy Lewis have stolen Parris’ savings and have presumably fled on a ship. These girls were the foundation of the court’s evidence, and they are now gone.*

9. Explain Parris’s comment that Rebecca will “wake a vengeance” on Danforth.

*With the rebellion in Andover, and the Salem chaos, well-respected Rebecca’s execution may cause a riot in Salem to overthrow Danforth and the court.*

10. Name the recent event that has made Parris afraid for his life and explain its social significance.

*Someone threw a dagger at him as he stepped out of his house. This action shows a near-complete unraveling of the social order of the town.*

11. Why has John Proctor become the court’s last hope to save its credibility?

*He has not seen his wife in the three months since his arrest. She is carrying his unborn child, and he is the only one left that Hale has not tried to convince to lie. If he will confess—having strong reasons to want to live—he will restore the people’s faith in the other accusations and condemnations. If he refuses to confess, he will fuel the people’s growing discomfort with the process.*

12. In what way is Reverend Hale doing the Devil’s work?

*He is a reverend convincing Puritans to lie to save their lives. Puritans believed a lie was a mortal sin. In effect, he is asking them to live, but condemn their souls.*

13. Explain Miller's purpose in writing Hale's warning in general terms: "Cleave to no faith when faith brings blood. It is mistaken law that leads you to sacrifice."

*Miller is reminding the audience about his purpose in this play. Hale has become Miller's herald to the audience about the injustices of the Communist trials in which people were forced to point out others in order to save themselves.*

14. When Proctor questions whether anyone has confessed, what does this reveal about his inner conflict?

*He wants to live, but he needs a reason to keep living. He is hoping Rebecca or someone who is good in his eyes will submit to the court so that he may submit without shame*

15. Explain Giles' fate.

*Giles refused to either confess or deny the charges, in order to protect his sons' land. The court ruled that he must answer, or have large stones laid upon his chest until he does. Giles last words were a defiant "more weight" before the guards laid the fatal stone that crushed the old man's chest.*

16. Explain the metaphor, "a thread to weave into his agony: 'More weight.'"

*Proctor is searching for a good person who has taken the easy way out. He desperately wants to live, but he knows it is wrong. It would be easier to make the morally wrong choice and save his own life if someone he considered morally good would make the same decision. However, Rebecca and Giles are willing to die to do the right thing. Therefore, Giles' statement of courage adds to Proctor's feeling of self loathing.*

17. When John asks his wife for forgiveness, what revelation does the audience receive about Elizabeth's character?

*The coldness she has shown her husband has resulted in her own feelings of guilt about not being a good wife.*

18. Explain the paradox of John's statement that it would be a fraud for him to die for the truth.

*He believes he is not worth dying with a saint like Rebecca. He is a sinner, so it would be more honest for him to sin again and lie.*

19. What responsibility does Elizabeth accept for Proctor's lechery? What does she advise him to do?

*She says that because of her own insecurities, she had not been a passionate woman, and this is what caused him to sleep with Abigail. She advises him to do what he thinks he must; whatever his decision, she will accept it.*

20. What event makes Proctor recant his confession? What is the significance of this event?

*Danforth orders him to sign the confession, which will then be hung on the church door. Proctor refuses because every day his children will see the confession and know that their father lied to save his life, while his friends died to protest their innocence.*

21. How is this recantation a climax for John Proctor?

*By ripping up the confession, John Proctor finally redeems himself.*

22. How is this recantation also a climax for the court in Salem?

*As Hale and Parris explained to Danforth, if neither Rebecca nor Proctor confessed, the town would rise up and overthrow the court.*

23. What purpose would Miller have in giving this play a tragic ending?

*He wrote this during the Communist Witch Hunt of the 1950s. His point is to focus on the destruction of good and innocent people when the mob mentality rules, ignoring rule by law, evidence, and reason.*

# *The Crucible*

## Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition

### Study Guide Student Copy

The setting is Salem, Massachusetts, in the year 1692. Someone once said of the Puritans that they did not leave Europe because they were persecuted, but that they were thrown out of Europe because they persecuted everyone else. As you read the opening of Act I, how do you suppose Miller would respond to that statement?

#### Act I

1. What purpose does the Overture serve?
2. What does the “spareness” of the Puritan setting reveal about the lives of the townspeople of Salem?
3. What Puritan primary fear is apparent in the philosophy, “In unity still lay the best promise of safety”?
4. Explain the significance of the forest to the Puritans.
5. Explain the irony in the Puritans’ pilgrimage to Salem to escape persecution.



6. To what twentieth century situation is Miller referring when he declares:  
“They believed, in short, that they held in their steady hands the candle  
that would light the world. We have inherited this belief, and it has helped  
and hurt us.”
7. When Abigail enters, she is described as “a strikingly beautiful girl...with an endless  
capacity for dissembling.” What does the phrase an “endless capacity for dissembling”  
suggest?
8. When Susanna exits, Abigail makes a confession to Parris, which she recants near the  
end of the Act. What is the confession, and why does she change her mind?
9. Based on his words, what seems to be Parris’s motivation for inadvertently causing the  
hysteria?
10. Explain the relationship between Abigail and Goody (Elizabeth) Proctor.
11. What are Putnam’s motivations for his actions in Salem?
12. Explain the dramatic irony when Parris says, “I know that you—you least of all,  
Thomas, would ever wish so disastrous a charge laid upon me.”

13. What role did Ann Putnam play in the dancing in the forest?
14. Explain briefly how Putnam coerces Parris to declare witchcraft.
15. What does Betty's information about dancing in the forest reveal about Abigail's true motivation?
16. What does the threat of a "pointy reckoning" reveal about Abigail's true nature?
17. What does Miller mean by: "A Proctor is always marked for calumny"?
18. Describe Mary Warren's personality.
19. Contrast Proctor's verbal excuse about why he has come to Parris's house with what his actions indicate may be his true motivation for coming.
20. Explain Proctor and Abigail's relationship.

21. What does Abigail say that leads Parris, Putnam, and Mrs. Putnam to believe Betty is bewitched?
22. Describe Rebecca Nurse physically and by reputation.
23. What three grudges could the Putnams have against the Nurses?
24. In Proctor's argument with Rev. Parris, the theme of authority arises. What are the two points of view?
25. Describe Giles Corey both physically and personally.
26. What is Rebecca's solution to Betty's and Ruth's ailments, and why does this solution anger Ann Putnam?
27. What is Reverend Hale's motivation?
28. In terms of indirect characterization, why is it significant that Hale recognizes one of the characters by reputation?

29. What question does Giles ask Hale that shows his comical, innocent personality.
30. What effect does Miller create by lowering the curtain for this act during the girls' cries of witchcraft?
31. What motivates Abby and Betty to begin denouncing everyone?
32. Explain how Miller uses the following dramatic conventions to establish character and create a basis for the tragedy in his Overture.

Foil character :

Direct Characterization:

Motivation:

Character Action:

## Act II, scene i

1. What does the reader learn about the Proctors' marriage through the discrepancy between what John Proctor does before he sees his wife and when he talks to her?
2. In what ways is Miller's use of dialogue effective in the first two pages of this scene to show the rift between the couple?
3. When Proctor kisses his wife, what does her reaction show about her feelings?
4. What does Proctor's hesitation to travel to Salem indicate about his inner conflict?
5. Whom does Elizabeth call, "A mouse no more"? What does she mean by this metaphor?
6. Who is the head of the General Court? What significance does this have in the power given to the court?
7. Explain the ironic ultimatum the head of the court has given to those who have been arrested.

8. Explain Proctor's quote: "If the girl's a saint now, I think it is not easy to prove she is a fraud, and the town gone so silly."
9. What lie does Elizabeth notice Proctor told? How does this feed her current suspicions?
10. Explain the metaphor: "The magistrate sits in your heart that judges you."
11. What present does Mary Warren give to Elizabeth? What does her making it and giving it to Elizabeth foreshadow?
12. How does Mary Warren save herself from a whipping? Who does Elizabeth believe accused her of witchcraft and why?
13. What does Hale's motivation for visiting the Proctors tell the audience about his personality?
14. In what ways does Hale question John Proctor's religious strength?
15. Explain how Hale tests Proctor's belief in God, as well as the irony in how Proctor fails Hale's test.

16. Explain Hale's quote: "Man, remember until an hour before the Devil fell, God thought him beautiful in Heaven."
17. List and discuss the validity of the evidence by which Martha Corey and Rebecca Nurse are jailed.
18. Explain Francis' metaphor: "My wife is the very brick and mortar of the church."
19. What evidence does Cheever have against Elizabeth?
20. Explain how Abigail might have "set-up" Elizabeth Proctor. List the events chronologically.
21. If Mary contradicts Abigail, how is she "charging cold murder on Abigail"?
22. How is Hale a "broken minister"?

23. Explain Proctor's quote: "Vengeance is walking Salem."
24. How have Hale's opinions of the accused changed by the end of Act II.
25. Explain the demand Proctor makes of Mary Warren at the end of scene one and her significant response to his threat.
26. Who are the two dynamic characters in this scene and show their changes.
27. How are the golden candlesticks symbolic of Parris's personality?
28. How is the poppet a symbol of Abigail's control of the society?



## Act II, Scene ii (Appendix to the Penguin edition, pp148 – 152)

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2. What evidence is there that Abigail's saintly reputation mentioned in Act II, Scene I is changing?
3. In what way has Abigail become the poppet?
4. Discuss the verbal irony in her line: "Oh John, the world's so full of hypocrites."
5. What motivation does Abigail give for making the world "white again"?
6. Discuss Proctor's implied motivation for warning Abigail of his intentions in court the next day.
7. Discuss the verbal irony in Abigail's line: "Fear naught. I will save you tomorrow."

### Act III

1. Who is on trial when Giles Corey interrupts the court? How have the charges against this person changed since Act II?
2. Explain the charge Giles makes against Putnam?
3. How has Giles “broke charity with the woman”?
4. Explain how Francis offends Deputy Governor Danforth.
5. Why do you think Dansforth is concerned whether Proctor has told anyone else about the girls’ lies?
6. Explain Dansforth’s statement: “We burn a hot fire here; it melts down all concealment.”
7. What words demonstrate Parris’s reaction to having John Proctor in the court?
8. What two things does Cheever reveal to the court as evidence against Proctor’s good character? What could this evidence prove in court?

9. When Proctor hears that his wife claims to be pregnant, what reason does he give for believing her?
10. Discuss the evidence Proctor gives Danforth proving Elizabeth, Rebecca, and Martha's innocence, in terms of credibility and outcome.
11. How does this episode help to establish Miller's connection of the Salem witch trials with the McCarthy hearings?
12. What is the charge that Giles Corey makes against Putnam?
13. What is Giles Corey's proof for his charge, and why will he not supply the proof to the court? What parallel does this have in the HUAC hearings?
14. What does Hale ask Parris about those who attack the court? What is Parris' ironic response?
15. What evidence does Giles give the court?
16. Why does Giles not reveal his witness?

17. Why do you think Hale wants Proctor to have a lawyer?
18. Explain Mary Warren's predicament. What consequences does she face from Abigail and the other girls, Danforth, and Proctor if she goes against each of them?
19. According to Mary, what circumstances allowed her to pretend in court, but not in the vestry?
20. What threat does Abigail give Danforth when he accuses her of lying?
21. How do Abigail and the other girls turn the accusation against Mary Warren?
22. Why is Danforth temporarily persuaded by Proctor's accusation of Abigail?
23. Cite Abigail's answer when Danforth questions her about being a harlot. What is strange about her denial?

24. Why does Danforth put so much faith in Elizabeth's testimony?
25. What sacrifice does Elizabeth make for her husband? How is the result of this sacrifice ironic?
26. When Hale verbally attacks Abigail, how does she defend herself?
27. How does Mary, in turn, defend herself from the girls?
28. On what charges are Proctor and Corey arrested?
29. In what way has Hale completed his transformation as a dynamic character by end of Act III?
30. Upon finishing this act, explain how Proctor's earlier advice to Mary Warren is ironic to both of their situations. "Do that which is good, and no harm shall come to thee."

## Act IV

1. What is Miller's purpose setting this scene in a jail cell?
2. Explain Miller's use of comic relief at the beginning of this act. How is this scene ambiguous?
3. Danforth, Hathorne, and Cheever's conversation tells the audience about what changes in Salem in the months that passed between Act III and IV?
4. Explain Parris's comment: "Hale has returned to bring Rebecca Nurse to God."
5. What is the relationship between the rebellion in Andover and the flight of Abigail and Mercy Lewis?
6. Why is Parris upset?
7. Why is it important for the court to get one of the accused "respectable citizens," such as John Proctor or Rebecca Nurse to confess?
8. Parris brings what news that further disturbs Danforth?

9. Explain Parris's comment that Rebecca will "wake a vengeance" on Danforth.
10. Name the recent event that has made Parris afraid for his life and explain its social significance.
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12. In what way is Reverend Hale doing the Devil's work?
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15. Explain Giles' fate.
16. Explain the metaphor, "a thread to weave into his agony: 'More weight.'"

17. When John asks his wife for forgiveness, what revelation does the audience receive about Elizabeth's character?
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19. What responsibility does Elizabeth accept for Proctor's lechery? What does she advise him to do?
20. What event makes Proctor recant his confession? What is the significance of this event?
21. How is this recantation a climax for John Proctor?
22. How is this recantation also a climax for the court in Salem?
23. What purpose would Miller have in giving this play a tragic ending?



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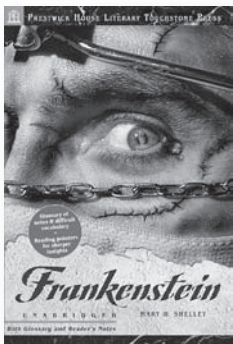
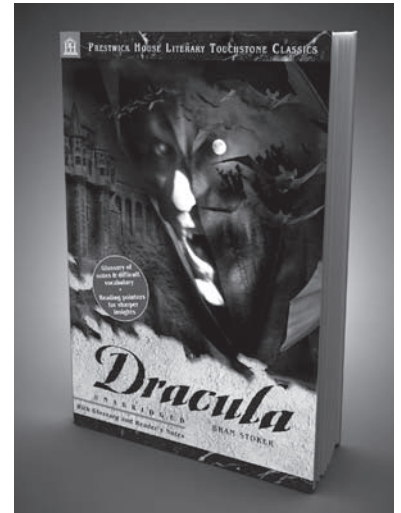
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