Character List

Tituba

Rev. Parris

Betty Parris

Abigail Williams

Thomas Putnam

Ann Putnam

Mercy Lewis

Mary Warren

John Proctor

Elizabeth Proctor
Rebecca Nurse

Francis Nurse

Giles Corey

Martha Corey

Rev. Hale

Deputy Governor Danforth

Judge Hathorne

Sarah Good and Sarah Osbourne

Ezekiel Cheever

Marshal Herrick
The Crucible – Study Questions

Answer the following questions with complete sentences on a separate piece of paper. Most answers for questions for Acts I-IV should be at least 3-4 sentences long. Give enough detail to prove that you understand the play, its concepts and its background. (This also makes your answers more valuable when studying for the essay test.) The page numbers given are from the orange textbook unless otherwise noted.

Historical Background -- “Pilgrims and Puritans,” p. 5-6 in red txtbk (or online)

1. Who were the Pilgrims, and why did they decide to withdraw from the Church of England?
2. How were the Puritans different from the Pilgrims?
4. What is meant by the “Puritan ethic”?
5. What impact has Puritanism had on American values?

Literature of the Period -- “In Adam’s Fall / We Sinned All,” p. 7-9 in red txtbk (or online)

1. What was the primary purpose of most Puritan writing, such as histories, biographies and journals? Why did the Puritans NOT produce fiction or drama?
2. Why did the Puritans found Harvard in 1636? What else was evidence of the Puritan belief in education in 1647?
3. Who was Cotton Mather and why was he important?
4. Give 2 reasons why the Puritans believed in a plain style of writing.

Arthur Miller’s Commentary (Introduction) to The Crucible, p. 1126-1129

1. List at least two negative things we learn about Rev. Parris. (p. 1126)
2. Regarding Puritan life, list two things they didn’t have or didn’t do. (p. 1126-1127)
3. What was the purpose of the two-man patrol on Sundays? (p. 1127)
4. What did the Puritans believe about the forest? (p. 1127)
5. What does Miller find ironic about the Puritans, considering their original desire for religious freedom? (p. 1127)
6. What was the difference between the Virginia colony and the Massachusetts colony, both in their original purpose and the way each dealt with hardship? (p. 1128)
7. What does Miller say was the purpose of theocracy in Salem? (p. 1128-1129)
8. What does Miller think was the cause of the panic and the witch-hunt? (p. 1129)

Act I (p.1129-1157)

1. Describe Rev. Parris’s personality. Give specific examples from the play to support your answer. Why are some members of the Salem community, including the farmer John Proctor, unhappy with Parris?
2. What does the episode between Abigail and the other girls (p. 1136-1137) show us about Abigail’s personality? Describe Abigail’s personality. What does she desire? What does she fear?
3. How do we know that John Proctor is an honest, sincere, straightforward man from what we’ve seen of him so far? Give specific examples.
4. What do we know of Rebecca Nurse’s reputation in Salem? Why might people have disliked, or even resented, Rebecca and her husband Francis? What reasons do the Putnams, in particular, have to dislike Rebecca and Francis?
5. Why does Abigail blame Tituba? Why does Tituba change her mind and admit to devil worship?
6. What do we know about Rev. Hale, such as his background and personality, by the end of Act I? Why does Rebecca Nurse think that he should be sent back to his home parish?
7. Given what we’ve read so far, what can we determine about how the Puritans of Salem get along with each other? From what problems does this particular community suffer? Be specific.
8. How do the Puritans of Salem value money and material possessions? That is, compare what they say with what they actually do. Think especially about Rev. Parris and Mr. Putnam and then provide some concrete examples. Compare the value that the people of Salem give to worldly goods with the value that Anne Bradstreet gives to them in her poem “Upon the Burning of Our House.”
9. Many of the Puritans of Salem are truly afraid of witchcraft. But of what else are they afraid? Think abstractly—meaning, look beyond mere material concerns and consider the Puritans as a psychologist might see them. What specific evidence can you find in Act I to support your answer?

Act II (p. 1161-1181)

1. Why don’t John and Elizabeth Proctor get along very well? Why is John now trying hard to please his wife?
2. What do we learn about Elizabeth’s personality in the first part of Act II?
3. Describe Mary Warren’s personality.
4. When Rev. Hale shows up in this act he seems to have changed somewhat. How has he changed, and Why?
5. Why does the Salem court know that Elizabeth had a poppet? Why do they care?

Act III (p. 1187-1213)

1. What is the mood of the scene in the courtroom? Give examples from the play to support your answer.
2. Who has the most power in the court now? Why? (Don’t let yourself be fooled by appearances.)
3. Why is Mary Warren afraid of Abigail?
4. Why does Proctor confess his adulterous affair with Abigail?
5. Why does Elizabeth Proctor, a woman who supposedly will only speak the truth, lie when questioned about her husband’s infidelity?
6. Why, and how, is Abigail able to get power away from Judge Danforth in the courtroom?

Act IV (p. 1217-1233)

1. Proctor reports that Abigail has stolen money and fled. Why did she leave?
2. What has happened to the general quality of life in the village during the time of Act IV?
3. Why won’t Danforth pardon anyone who has not confessed?
4. What does John want from Elizabeth during the final scene alone together?
5. Why does Proctor come close to confessing to witchcraft? In confessing to witchcraft, what is he really confessing to, in his own eyes? In other words, what does Proctor think of himself as a man at this point in the play?
6. Name the many reasons why John finally insists on dying with this “name” intact.
The Crucible – Vocabulary

Define each of the following words as it’s used in the given sentence.

1. base (Putnam’s motive for taking part in the witch-hunt is rather *base*.)

2. compact (She entered a *compact* with the devil.)

3. deference (The people of Salem show great *deference* to Hale, especially at first.)

4. abomination (These ridiculous trial proceedings are an abomination.)

5. blasphemy (Don’t say such things, or people may accuse you of *blasphemy*.)

6. heresy [HAIR-uh-see] (Those who stray from the official doctrine of the Church may commit *heresy*.)

7. quail (I *quail* at the thought of a test on *The Crucible*.)

8. traffic (It is said that she may *traffic* with Lucifer.)

9. prodigious (Rebecca Nurse says that there is *prodigious* danger in seeking loose spirits.)

10. belie [bee-LIE] (Abigail’s actions in court grossly *belie* her intentions.)

11. deposition (Giles Corey delivers a *deposition* to Danforth, which brings about tragic consequences.)