

The Crucible, by Arthur Miller: (Background info)

Historical play--based on actual events

**(Communist "Red Scare")
(McCarthyism)**

"crucible"--what is it?

Setting:

time--1692

place--Salem, Mass (Puritan New England)

Causes:

**mass hysteria, social order, jealousy,
superstition, revenge**

Characters:

Rev. Parris

- preacher at the main church in Salem**
- not "liked" by everybody, and he is aware of this fact**
- as the religious figure, carries a certain degree of "power" anyway**
- widower**
- formerly, a successful businessman in Barbados**
- slave owner (brought with him from Barbados)**

Rev. Hale

- from a neighboring village (Beverly, MA)**
- considered an expert in supernatural / paranormal activities**

Tituba

--Parris' slave, brought from Barbados

--unmarried

--leads a group of Salem girls in a dance ritual in the woods outside of Salem

(discuss)

Betty Parris

--Parris' daughter (approx. 10 yrs old)

Abigail Williams

--Parris' niece (approx. 17 yrs old)

--pretty

--charismatic --former nanny, but now unemployed

--controlling

Other girls involved

- Mary Warren (17),**
- Mercy Lewis (17)**
- Susanna Walcott (17)**
- Ruth Putnam (10)**

Thomas / Ann Putnam

- influential people in Salem**
- Don't like Parris**
- 8 children, all but one child (Ruth) had died**

John / Elizabeth Proctor

- farmers who previously employed Abigail Williams as a nanny**
- now employ Mary Warren as nanny**

Giles / Martha Corey

- Older couple who are feisty, don't take "crap" from anybody**
- at odds with the Putnams**
- no kids**

Francis / Rebecca Nurse

- another old couple, but less feisty**
- 11 children, 26 grandchildren--all living**
- HIGHLY RESPECTED in Salem**

Judge Danforth, Judge Hathorne

- preside over the hearings in Salem**
- In real life, there were about 8 or so different judges**