

### Act Three Questions – *The Crucible*

1a. As the act opens, we only hear voices to the side of the stage. Who is being interrogated, and on what charge?

2a. Which three depositions are presented to the judges and on whose behalf?

2b. What is ordered to happen to the 91 supporters of Rebecca Nurse, Elizabeth Proctor, and Martha Corey?

2c. How do the judges discourage defenses of the accused?

3a. What three facts about John Proctor does Ezekiel Cheever feel compelled to reveal to Deputy Governor Danforth?

3b. What compromise, or deal, does Deputy Governor Danforth offer to John Proctor (hint: has to do with Elizabeth Proctor's unborn child)? Why does John Proctor not take the deal?

3c. What does John Proctor eventually confess to Deputy Governor Danforth?

3d. Why does John Proctor make this confession and what does his confession reveal about his character?

4a. What does the audience know, that Elizabeth Proctor does not know, when she is brought in to testify?

4b. What is the lie Elizabeth Proctor tells Deputy Governor Danforth?

4c. What are the consequences of her lie?

4d. From her lie, what was she hoping would happen to:

1) herself, 2) her husband John Proctor, 3) Abigail Williams?

4e. Speculate what could have happened if Elizabeth Proctor had told the truth. What would have happened to:

1) herself, 2) her husband John Proctor, 3) Abigail Williams?

5a. What does Giles Corey allege in his deposition about the behavior of Thomas Putnam?

5b. According to Giles Corey, what are the Putnam's motives?

5c. What legal maneuver does Deputy Governor Danforth use to declare Giles Corey in contempt of court?

5d. What happens to Giles Corey when he will not reveal a source's name?

6a. What truth does Mary Warren reveal about her involvement with "spirits"?

6b. What two devices do Abigail Williams and the other girls use to drive Mary Warren over the brink of hysteria?

6c. Why does Mary Warren change her testimony and turn on John Proctor at the end of the act?

7a. What does Reverend John Hale denounce at the end of Act Three?

7b. At what point does Reverend John Hale begin to show that he is less satisfied with the court's procedures?

7c. In Deputy Governor Danforth's dramatic exchange with Reverend John Hale, what erroneous idea underlies all his reasoning about the legal proceedings? Explain.

7d. In what sense does Deputy Governor Danforth's logical fallacy have ramifications far beyond the conviction of John Proctor?

8a. How does Abigail Williams threaten Deputy Governor Danforth?

8b. Why does she hold so much power over this court?

9. At the end of Act Three, who bears the most guilt for the fate of those hanged in the Salem witch trials - the girls who accused innocent people, Reverend Samuel Parris, John Proctor, or the judges who sentenced them to death? Explain your response.

10a. It is not until this act that Arthur Miller introduces one of the most important characters in the play, Deputy Governor Danforth. What are some of the elements of his complex personality in this act?

10b. How does the portrait of Deputy Governor Danforth contrast, for example, with the characterizations in this act of Reverend Samuel Parris and Judge Hathorne?

11. Although this act centers on the subjects of hypocrisy and hysteria in the court proceedings, we are also presented with several examples of courage and the assertion of integrity. How are the following characters linked with the subject of courage in this act:

a. Mary Warren

b. John Proctor

c. Giles Corey

d. Reverend John Hale