



Prestwick House
Teaching Unit™

Sample

Prestwick House
Literature
Teaching Unit
Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



The Crucible

by Arthur Miller

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



Click here
to learn more
about this
Teaching Unit!



Click here
to find more
Classroom Resources
for this title!



 **Prestwick House**

More from Prestwick House

Literature

Literary Touchstone Classics
Literature Teaching Units

Grammar and Writing

College and Career Readiness: Writing
Grammar for Writing

Vocabulary

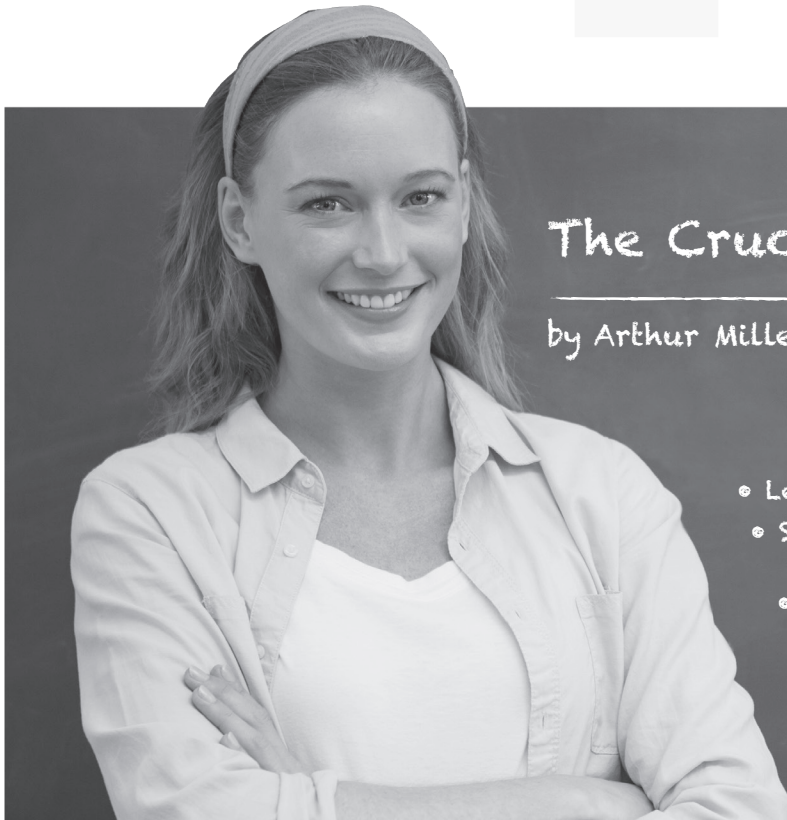
Vocabulary Power Plus
Vocabulary from Latin and Greek Roots

Reading

Reading Informational Texts
Reading Literature

Literature Teaching Unit

Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



The Crucible

by Arthur Miller

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms

 **Prestwick House**

P.O. Box 658, Clayton, DE 19938
www.prestwickhouse.com
800.932.4593

ISBN: 978-1-58049-011-5

Copyright ©2017 by Prestwick House Inc.

All rights reserved. No portion may be reproduced without permission in writing from the publisher.

Item No: 300226

The Crucible

Objectives

By the end of this Unit the students will be able to:

1. write an essay in support of the following thesis: “Putting aside any contemporary, social concerns and any historical considerations, this play is, first and foremost, the story of one man’s personal crisis.”
2. relate the Salem witch hunts of 1692 to what was happening in the United States in the 1950’s.
3. define a tragic hero and state to what extent John Proctor does or does not measure up to the definition.
4. identify and discuss the following themes in this drama:
 - Authority: where it comes from and its proper and improper use
 - Justice and injustice
 - Courage, weakness, and truth
5. identify and discuss how the following elements fueled the plot in this drama:
 - Superstition
 - Greed and revenge
 - Mass hysteria
6. write a character analysis in which the actions are described and motivation revealed for each of the following characters:
 - John Proctor
 - Elizabeth Proctor
 - Abigail Williams
 - Rev. John Hale
 - Rev. Samuel Parris
 - Giles Corey
 - Governor Danforth
7. write an essay supporting or attacking the following thesis: “Despite their clothing, John Proctor, Elizabeth Proctor, and Abigail Williams are thoroughly modern people.”
8. identify and discuss those features that Miller suggests characterize the Puritan society and its thinking.

The Crucible

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. In what way is John Proctor the tragic hero in this play?
2. What does this play say about “authority”? Be sure to consider the significance of Proctor’s death at the end in your answer.
3. Prove the following statement: “This play is essentially about courage, weakness and truth.”
4. Why is Governor Danforth *not* a monster in this play?
5. Although touching on many other points, this play is foremost a drama depicting the relationship between John and Elizabeth Proctor. Trace this relationship as it develops throughout the play.
6. Identify how each of the following contributed to the insanity of Salem: greed and revenge, mass hysteria, and superstition.
7. Identify and discuss at least three points in this play that have a relevance to what was happening in the United States in the 1950’s.
8. Describe the personal strengths and weaknesses of the following people: Elizabeth Proctor, Giles Corey, Rev. Hale, and Rev. Parris.
9. Abigail’s faults are quite obvious, but if you were given the job of her defense attorney, what arguments could you make in her favor?
10. A crucible is a pot which, because it can withstand great heat, is used to melt iron and other metals. The word “crucible” is also used to describe a severe test or a hard trial. Finally, “crucible” is also used as an adjective to describe a very high grade steel. With these possibilities in mind, why do you suppose Miller called his play *The Crucible*?

2. Who is Betty and what is wrong with her?

3. 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?

4. Why does Rev. Parris become upset at the thought that Betty’s illness is a result of unnatural causes?

5. What negative aspect of his character does this reveal?

6. What innuendo does Rev. Parris make about Abigail’s character?

7. How does Abigail respond?

8. How does Goody Putnam move the plot along?

Act III

Vocabulary

anteroom – “before room,” foyer
apparitions – ghosts; visions
base – low; vulgar
befuddled – confused; muddled
blanched – paled
callously – cruelly
denounce – to publicly pronounce something evil; to accuse
deposition – testimony under oath
effrontery – shameless boldness
immaculate – pure
ipso facto – “by that very fact;” therefore
partitioning – dividing
perjury – lying under oath
placidly – calmly
probity – uprightness
quail – to falter; to recoil
qualm – doubt; worry
remorseless – without a regret
slovenly – untidy
sublime – supreme; grand
unperturbed – not bothered; not upset
vestry – room used for church meetings and classes

1. Why does Giles say that he “broke charity” with his wife?

2. In what sense does the Corey’s situation reflect on John and Elizabeth Proctor?

12. How does the questioning of Mary Warren differ from the questioning of Abigail? Why?

13. Why can't Mary faint when asked by the court?

14. When Abigail is questioned by Danforth, how does she respond?

15. In calling Abigail a whore, what charge and punishment does Proctor open himself to? Why has he made this confession?

16. What test is Elizabeth given, and how does she fail it? Why?
