



Digital Lectures Series: *The Scarlet Letter*, © May 2012
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ISBN 978-0-9823095-9-9
Item No. 308891

PRESTWICK HOUSE Digital Lecture Series



The Scarlet Letter
by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Objectives (8 slides)

Setting (1 slide)

Main Characters (14 slides)

Literary Terms (7 slides)

The Author and His Works (8 slides)

Puritanism (7 slides)

Motifs (6 slides)



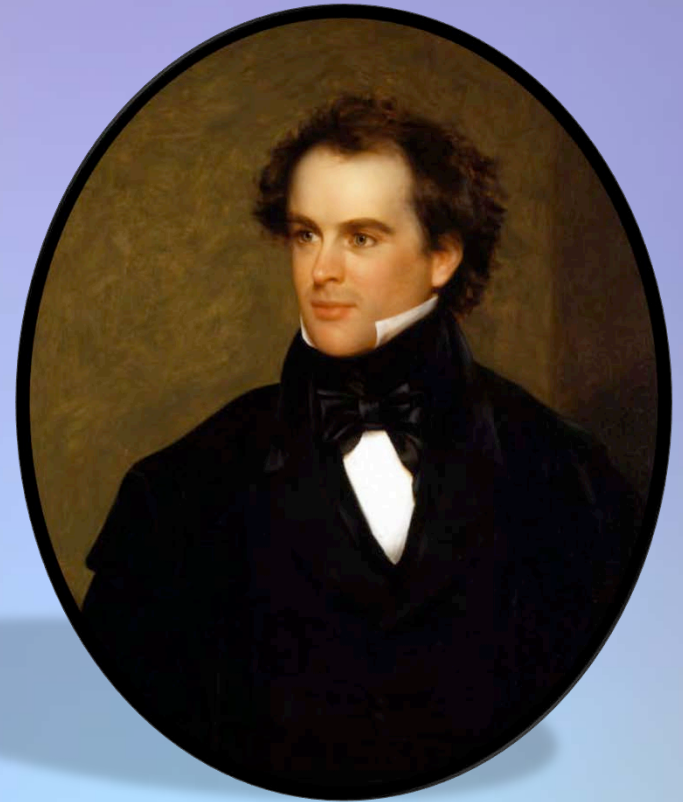
Objectives



This introduction to The Scarlet Letter will help you:

- Follow a brief biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne to see how his life might have influenced the book

- Become familiar with Hawthorne's style



Nathaniel Hawthorne



This introduction to The Scarlet Letter will help you:

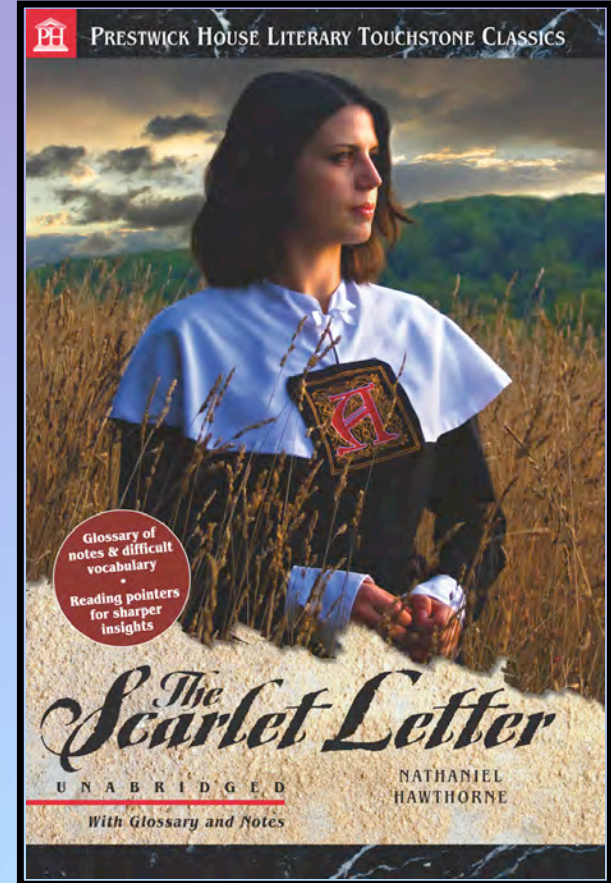
- ➔ Analyze some of Hawthorne's ideas on how sin, guilt, and punishment affect people

- ➔ Understand some of Hawthorne's symbolism



This introduction to The Scarlet Letter will help you:

- ➔ Place *The Scarlet Letter* in its proper historical time frame
- ➔ Grasp some basic principles of Puritanism
- ➔ See Pearl as both Hester's child and a symbol of Hester's adultery



Setting



The Scarlet Letter opens in the Market-Place of mid-17th century Boston. The varied reactions of the villagers show different levels of disapproval of Hester. How does she react?

Hester essentially ignores the villagers and thinks of her past life.



Main Characters



Hester Prynne – She is the protagonist of the novel. Before the book opens, Hester had arrived in Boston without her much older husband, Roger Chillingworth; she had an affair with the minister, Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, became pregnant, and was placed in jail. Her infant child, Pearl, was born in prison.

