# The Crucible Lesson Plan #1

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<th>GRADE LEVEL / AGE GROUP</th>
<th>11th grade/ Juniors</th>
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<td>CONTENT AREA</td>
<td>English 11- American literature</td>
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<td>FOCUS AREA / CENTRAL FOCUS</td>
<td>Introduction to McCarthyism, historical information on <em>The Crucible</em>, and background information on the correct way to read a drama.</td>
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## STANDARDS CONNECTION

**Common Core Standards:**

RL. 11-12.9 Demonstrate knowledge of 18th, 19th, and early 20th century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes. Students should be familiar with different forms of fiction and genres (novel, drama, etc.)

## GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The goal of this lesson is to provide students with background information on the age of McCarthyism and to provide them with information that is necessary to know prior to reading a play that is meant to be acted out on a stage. The play will be clearer and stage directions can be taken into consideration when students are reading. Students will also become familiar with The Salem Witch Trials of the 17th century in the newly founded American colonies.

### Academic Language Demands and Vocabulary

In order to read a play successfully and understand the full meaning of the text, the students will use the terms “act”, “scene”, and “rising action”. These terms were presented in the presentation attached to this lesson.

## PRE-REQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Students in this class have already completed their studies on two different eras in American literature prior to the study of McCarthyism. Those two eras include: Realism (students read *The Declaration of Independence*) and the Romantic era along with the dark side of Romantic literature, gothic American literature (students read *The Devil and Tom Walker* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving). As well as the reading of these texts, students have studied this time period in American history in both their 8th grade history class as well as in their 10th grade history class. They are familiar with the events that the United States were founded upon as well as the movement into a democratic nation.

### Rationale of Learning Activities / Tasks:

Content Pedagogy: Research shows that quickwrites are a way for students to let their thoughts flow without stopping to make revisions or correct misspelled words. The focus for a quickwrite is to generate ideas and reflect what they know on a topic. In this lesson, the quickwrite at the beginning of the lesson will allow students to write what they already know about the Salem Witch Trials (Tompkins 99).

### INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, RESOURCES, EQUIPMENT

For this lesson, the required materials are: teacher computer, YouTube link to the video for the hook of the lesson, dry erase board for pre-assessment, SmartBoard, projector, PowerPoint presentation of the material (saved electronically on the computer), and a copy of the presentation for student with 504 plan.

### USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology will be first introduced into this lesson when the hook is presented, a video clip recapping the events of The Salem Witch trials on YouTube. In this lesson, technology will also be used to present the necessary material over the age of McCarthyism, the historical background on The Salem Witch Trial, and the proper way to read a text that was written to be performed on a stage via a PowerPoint presentation created on the computer and
projected onto the SmartBoard with a projector. Using the SmartBoard will enable the teacher to add information to clarify meaning or highlight necessary information so that the students are able to see what information is essential to the presentation. Technology will also be used to upload the presentation, once presented to the class, to the online website specific for our classroom. This will enable the students to access the PowerPoint should they need it at home or misplace their notes.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS/STRATEGIES
The teacher will interact with the students through direct instruction. For this lesson, the teacher will be presenting the background information via the presentation. This method is chosen because that material that is being covered is essential to student understanding for the rest of this learning segment as well as the rest of the unit (the entire reading of The Crucible).

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES
Include Examples and Learning Opportunities for Academic Languages

1. As a pre-test for knowledge, students will respond to the following prompt written by the teacher on the dry erase board. Prompt: What do you know about the Salem witch trials? (The prompt is also attached to the lesson plan on a separate sheet of paper). (5 minute duration). The teacher will then ask students to briefly share what they wrote down and what they already know about the topic. (5 min duration).
2. Teacher will need to turn on the overhead projector and the computer. Students will watch a short video clip from YouTube that displays a 1 minute overview of the Salem witch trials in Massachusetts during the 1600s. (3 minutes)
3. Link to the video (hook):
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ROHtzTbaNY&list=FLquWGKBHW6uvOkEHVn1Q4ow&index=2&feature=plpp_video
   This video should be played from the teacher’s computer. Make sure that the speakers are turned all the way up so that students can hear in the back of the classroom.
4. Explain to students that this event really did occur in American history and that shortly after the Puritans settled in the colonies, pandemonium spread and a select group of young girls were thought to be possessed by the devil. Lead this idea into McCarthyism and the Second Red Scare that happened in the United States in the 1950s (5 minutes).
5. Present the PowerPoint Presentation on McCarthyism and the Second Red Scare, background information on The Crucible, and the proper way to read a drama. (copy of slides for the presentation are attached in outline format, bold text indicates title of slide) Students, at this time, should be writing the information that is being presented to them in their notebooks. This information will be helpful with it comes time to take the Act 1 quiz as well as reference for discussion on Day 3. (35 minutes).
6. When the presentation of the information is complete, the teacher will provide a short recap of the information that was presented today. The teacher should ask the following questions to the entire large group of students. Answers will vary, but should be similar to the ones provided.
   - When were the Salem witch trials? 1600s in the American colonies
   - What is McCarthyism? - need answer
   - What is a drama?

7. Remind students that they will need their textbooks tomorrow. As a class, we will begin to read Act 1 of The Crucible.

PRE-ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES/TOOLS
Students will complete a quickwrite at the beginning of the period of what they already know about the Salem Witch Trials, if any information at all. This should be completed in their
notebooks so they are able to refer back to it at any given time. Students will revisit this at the end of the entire unit, not the learning segment provided.

**Monitoring Student Learning**

The teacher will stop frequently and review that material that is being covered, connecting it to previous slides and prior information presented. The teacher will also ask questions to the students concerning the material that is in the presentation.

**POST-ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES/TOOLS**

The teacher should conduct a short “thumbs up or thumbs down” activity with the students at the end of the lesson. This will be a formative assessment to check for understanding of the material presented in class today. If a student knows the answer to the questions presented, he or she will put their thumbs up. If he or she does not know, they will put their thumbs down. Questions for the teacher to ask: Who is the author of *The Crucible*? (Arthur Miller). Why was the US paranoid in the 1940s & 1950s? (fear of communism spreading throughout the world). Who was a major actor whose career was affected by The Red Scare in the US? (Charlie Chaplin) When were the Salem Witch Trials? (Salem, Mass. 1692 & 1693).

**Assessment Criteria / Rubric**

The teacher should make sure that each student is participating in the “thumbs up, thumbs down” assessment at the end of the lesson. This will ensure that all students understood the material from the day’s lesson. If a student has a “thumbs down”, the teacher should ask the student what he or she is confused about and clear up any questions. This is not a graded assessment.

**EXTENSION OPPORTUNITIES**

As an extension activity to this lesson, students could perform a basic internet search on “The Salem Witch Trials”. There is a great deal more of historical information to be learned. A useful website for such search is: http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/salem.htm

This website has images, maps, documents, essays, and games (mock trials) to play that all pertain to this significant time period in early American history. The link to this website is also included at the bottom of the student’s guided notes page.

**ACCOMMODATION, ACCELERATION, AND DIFFERENTIATION FOR STUDENTS**

504 for Student #3- For this lesson, the student should be given a copy of the presentation. This will allow for the student to copy the notes at his own pace rather than trying to stay on the same slide as the rest of the class.

**POST-INSTRUCTION REFLECTION**

After teaching this lesson, I realize that while students were interested and needed to know the background of McCarthyism in order to understand Miller’s purpose in writing *The Crucible*, they were very interested in learning about the Salem Witch Trials. They found the information that I presented interesting and had several questions about what happened.

When re-teaching this lesson, the next time, I would add more information about the Salem Witch Trials and possibly even include the extension activity as part of my lesson. There are several pictures in the presentation (not included in notes due to space constraints), but the next time, I would add more pictures of the trials and the Puritan lifestyle so that the students will have a better visual understanding of their lifestyle and the difficulties that had to be faced during that time period.

**COLLABORATION**

For this lesson, I worked with the two other English 11 teachers in the building. I also was able to use/merge some of the material (adapted for this year) that my cooperating teacher had available for use from prior years of teacher the unit over *The Crucible*. 
## SOURCES

Source for video clip:

Quick Write for Pre-Assessment (Lesson 1)

This prompt is to be written on the board at the beginning of the period for students to respond to. (5 min activity)

What do you know about the Salem witch trials?
Power Point presentation, outline form, titles of slides are in bold font

• **McCarthyism, How to Read a Drama, Arthur Miller**
  
  • English 11
  
  **Author- Arthur Miller**
  (1915-2005)
  • New Yorker-lived through tough times. What were they?
  • Family business-what happened to it?
  • He graduated from high school in 1932.
  • Began to write drama when he was in college

**College Life**
• Had to raise money to attend college, 2 years
• Some of his jobs-singing at a local radio station, driving a truck, stock clerk @ an auto store
• Finally was able to attend University of Michigan
• Began to write drama when he was in college
• 1947-His play *All My Sons* opened on Broadway.
• 1949-*Death of a Salesman* won the Pulitzer Prize.
• Next play-*The Crucible* (1953)- why this caused such a fuss.

**The Pulitzer Prize**

**McCarthyism**
• When?-During the Cold War Era
  Second Red Scare
  1940s and 1950s
• Definition-is the practice of making accusations of disloyalty, subversion, or treason without proper regard for evidence

• Why was the U.S. scared??
  • Communists took over Czechoslovakia & China
  • The Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb
  • Soviet Union equipped the North Korea communist forces that invaded South Korea

**What Happened During McCarthyism?**
• In 1947 the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) investigated claims that Hollywood was full of people who wanted to overthrow the US.
• Many refused to testify, some were blacklisted
• Fear of being labeled a communist caused some people to name others as suspects simply to prove their loyalty

• **Arthur Miller’s Connection**
  • HUAC-House Committee on Un-American Activities
  • In 1956 Arthur Miller was called in by the HUAC and refused to name anyone as a communist
  • He was convicted of contempt and blacklisted from his career in Hollywood
  • Conviction was later overturned

• **Other Persons Accused**
  • Leonard Bernstein, Dashielle Hammett
  • 320 artists were blacklisted, end of their promising careers

• **McCarthyism & The Crucible**
• Miller wrote the play to show the parallelism of events that took place during McCarthyism and the Salem Witch Trials
• Unproven charges, guilt by association, and sensational accusations

**Background on Salem Witch Trials**
• Where? Salem, Massachusetts
• When? 1692 & 1693
• What? A series of hearings and prosecutions of people accused of witchcraft.
• Mostly females—could file a complaint against these women if a loss, death, or illness had been caused by witchcraft.
• Executed

**Notes on Dramas**
• Drama— a story written to be performed by actors
• Dialogue— conversation and speeches of the characters

**Key Elements of a Play**
• Plot—ordered sequence of events
• Acts—how plays are divided up
• Scenes—acts are divided up into smaller sections
• Stage directions—notes included in the play to describe the sets, costumes, lighting, scenery, sound effects, props. Tells how it should look and sound

**Types of Plays**
• Comedy— a play that has a happy ending.
  Example? *Hairspray*
• Tragedy— a play that shows the downfall or death of the main character, tragic hero, has a tragic flaw. Example: *Macbeth*, Shakespeare
• History play—based on events from the past.
• Political drama—reflects the author’s opinion on a political theme/issue.
• More on Drama
• Soliloquy— a speech in which a character is alone onstage. Reveals private thoughts/feelings to the audience.
• Aside— a brief remark delivered by a character to express private thought while other characters are onstage.
McCarthyism, How to Read a Play, and Arthur Miller Guided Notes

Arthur Miller (_________ - __________)
- Born in ______________________
- What times did he live in? ________________________________
- Family business- What happened to it? ________________________________
- Graduated from high school in 1932.

College Life
- How did he pay to get there? ________________________________
- Where did he attend school? ________________________________
- 1947 play _______________________
- 1949 play _______________________
- 1953 play _______________________
- Pulitzer Prize? ________________________________

McCarthyism
- When? ________________________________
- Who is it named after? ________________________________
- Why is it named after him? ________________________________

Why was the US scared?
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

What happened during McCarthyism? (In your own words!!)
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

Arthur Miller’s Connection
- HUAC ________________________________
- What happened to Arthur Miller?
  ________________________________
  ________________________________
  ________________________________

Other Persons Accused
- Famous man ________________________________
- What was he known for? ________________________________

McCarthyism & The Crucible
- Why was it written?
  ________________________________
Background on The Salem Witch Trials
- Where? _____________________________
- When? _______________________________
- What? ________________________________

Notes on Drama
- Drama-______________________________________________________
- Dialogue-____________________________________________________

Key Elements of a Play
- Plot-________________________________________________________
- Act-________________________________________________________
- Scenes-______________________________________________________
- Stage Directions-____________________________________________

Types of Plays
- Comedy-______________________________________________________
- Tragedy-_____________________________________________________
- History-______________________________________________________
- Political-______________________________________________________
- What type of play is The Crucible?

More on Drama
- Soliloquy-____________________________________________________
- Aside-________________________________________________________

Extension- Link to a cool Salem Witch website. Check it out if you have extra time!

http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/salem.htm