Name: Date: Period:

*The Crucible* Reading Guide

**Act I, Scene 1**

1. What do we learn in the opening narrative that is important to the events that follow?

2. What happened in the woods the night before Act One −begins?

3. How did the events come to light, and what was the effect on Betty and Ruth?

4. Why is the town so stirred up by these events?

5. What is Reverend Parris’ first reaction to the crisis?

6. What reason does Ann Putnam have to be resentful?

7. What reason does Thomas Putnam have to be resentful?

8. Why do the girls argue about whether or not to tell the truth?

9. How does Abigail eventually get her way?

10. What is a crucible (at least two different definitions)?

**Act I, Scene 2**

1. Why was Abigail dismissed from her job at the Proctor’s house?

2. What does Abby tell Proctor about the events in the woods?

**Act I, Scene 3**

1. Why is Hale invited to Salem from Boston?

2. Has Hale ever found a witch?

3. What is significant about the timing of Hale’s entrance?

4. What do we learn about Rebecca Nurse from Hale?

5. What does Giles mention to Hale about Proctor?

6. What does Giles mention about his wife?

7. What are Rebecca and John’s roles in the proceedings?

8. What does Abigail do when questioned?

9. How is Tituba treated when she finally concocts a conversation with the devil and names a Salem woman as

a witch?

10. What does Abby do when she sees this reaction?

**Act II, Scene 1**

1. What is the significance of John’s re−seasoning the soup?

2. What is the relationship between John and Elizabeth like?

3. What new position does Mary Warren now hold?

4. Who is in charge of this court?

5. What action has the court taken?

6. What will happen if the accused do not confess?

7. How has Mary’s personality changed since her involvement in the court?

8. What issue does Elizabeth continue to hound her husband about?

9. What does Elizabeth’s lack of mercy and understanding foreshadow?

10. Why does John hesitate to go to the court and reveal Abigail’s fraud?

**Act II, Scene 2**

1. What does Mary Warren give Elizabeth?

2. What is Elizabeth’s reaction to the gift?

3. How many people have now been arrested?

4. What will happen to those who do not confess?

5. Who has confessed?

6. What does this mean for the others?

7. What would spare Sarah Good from hanging?

8. What shocking news does Mary offer regarding Elizabeth?

9. What cause does Elizabeth immediately suspect?

10. Now that Elizabeth is accused, does John go quickly to the court to clear her name?

**Act II, Scene 3**

1. Why does Hale appear at the Proctor house?

2. Why would John’s Christian character be in question?

3. What reason does John first give for not going to church regularly?

4. What reason does John finally admit to for his behavior?

5. Why is John’s not going to church significant to the play?

6. What does Hale request the Proctors do to show their faith?

7. Are the Proctors successful in fulfilling this request?

8. Why is this particular commandment significant?

9. What news briefly shakes Hale’s belief in the court system?

10. What is his ultimate conclusion about the system at the end of this scene?

**Act II, Scene 4**

1. What orders do Cheever and Herrick have at the Proctor house?

2. What has happened to Abigail?

3. Why is this related to the poppet?

4. Did Elizabeth keep poppets in her house?

5. What is found in the poppet?

6. How did the needle get there?

7. Do the authorities believe Mary’s admission?

8. What does John do with the warrant for Elizabeth’s arrest?

9. What does Proctor believe is motivating the court at this point?

10. What does Mary warn will happen if Proctor attempts to interfere with the court?

**Act III, Scene 1**

1. What is the significance of lighting described in the stage directions?

2. Who is being charged as Act Three begins?

3. What possible motive does Giles Corey offer for the accusations against his wife and others?

4. How are these charges received?

5. Why does Giles feel guilty?

6. What do Proctor and Mary Warren bring with them as −evidence?

7. How does Judge Danforth measure his worth?

8. What does Parris do when Proctor attempts to make his case?

9. What is happening to Hale at this point?

10. How is Mary’s statement that the accusations are mere pretense received?

**Act III, Scene 2**

1. What news does Danforth give John Proctor about his wife?

2. Why did the court not believe this assertion at first?

3. What does Proctor tell Danforth about his doubts?

4. What offer is made to Proctor by Danforth?

5. What happens to the people who signed the deposition upholding the three women?

6. What does Giles Corey charge in his deposition againstThomas Putnam?

7. How does Putnam answer, and who is believed?

8. What does Mary Warren’s deposition claim?

9. What does Hale suggest after the deposition is read?

10. Why does Danforth not allow Proctor to obtain a lawyer?

**Act III, Scene 3**

1. What does Abigail do when confronted with Mary’s accusation of pretense?

2. What behavior of Abby’s does Proctor bring to the judges’ attention?

3. Why does he choose to reveal these things?

4. What is Reverend Parris’ reaction to these charges against his niece?

5. How is Mary asked to prove that the girls were lying?

6. How does Abigail respond to Mary’s assertions that the girls were all lying?

7. What does Proctor finally call Abigail?

8. Who is brought in to back up this accusation, and what does she do?

9. How does Mary finally respond to Abby’s behavior?

10. What happens to Proctor at the end of the act?

**Act IV, Scene 1**

1. What are Tituba and Sarah Good discussing as the act opens?

2. How does Tituba describe the devil in Barbados?

3. What has happened that has made Parris so anxious?

4. What happened in Andover?

5. Why is Parris afraid to hang John Proctor and Rebecca Nurse the next morning?

6. Why is Parris more frightened to hang Proctor and Nurse than anyone else?

7. Why does Parris request a postponement of the hangings?

8. What does Hale request instead of postponement?

9. Why does Danforth refuse Hale’s request?

10. What has Hale been advising those condemned to do?

**Act IV, Scene 2**

1. What does Hale plead with Elizabeth to do?

2. Why does Hale believe a lie would not be a sin in this case?

3. Why is Hale so adamant in his attempts to convince Elizabeth?

4. Have any of the other prisoners confessed?

5. What reason does John give for not confessing?

6. What further reason keeps John from confessing?

7. What has John decided to do before he sees Elizabeth?

8. What does Elizabeth advise him to do?

9. How has Elizabeth changed?

10. What reason does John have for not telling the truth and going to his death?

**Act IV, Scene 3**

1. Why is Rebecca Nurse brought in to witness Proctor’s confession?

2. Why does Proctor refuse to name the names of other witches?

3. Why does Proctor refuse to give Danforth the paper with his signature on it?

4. What is the climax of the play?

5. What does Proctor do with the signed confession?

6. How has Proctor earned his death?

7. How does Elizabeth react to his choice of death?

8. When does Proctor claim his good name?

9. What reaction does Rebecca Nurse have to John Proctor’s confession?

10. Does Rebecca Nurse confess?