

Name:

Date:

ANALYZE CRAFT AND STRUCTURE ► CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN DRAMA

The Crucible: Act III

Arthur Miller

Character is revealed in a play through the words, actions, and descriptions of the characters. When assessing characters, consider their **motivation**, what they are aiming to obtain or accomplish in both the short term and the long term. For example, to cover their own shortcomings, Abigail and the other girls in *The Crucible* seem motivated to accuse others of being guilty. On the other hand, the individuals being accused are motivated to prove their own innocence.

Direct characterization is stated directly by the playwright. For example, a character may be described as steady and reliable, or clever and cunning. Most of the time, playwrights use **indirect characterization**, the actions and words of characters themselves, as well as the comments and reactions of other characters, to reveal their traits.

DIRECTIONS: Answer the questions about characterization in *The Crucible*.

1. What is revealed about the character of Mary Warren when she testifies to the court that she and the other girls were just pretending to be bewitched?

2. What is revealed about the character of Reverend Parris when he tells the court of the spotty church attendance of John Proctor, of Proctor's habit of plowing on Sundays, and the idea that having landowners vouch for Proctor is an attack on the court itself?

3. What does Proctor reveal about himself when he first confesses his affair and subsequently calls Abigail a whore?

4. What is revealed about the character of the girls when they turn on Mary and call her the one who was bewitching others?

5. What is revealed about the character of Elizabeth when the court calls her in to testify about Proctor's affair?

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AUTHOR'S STYLE ▶ LITERARY DEVICES**The Crucible: Act III**

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Irony is a difference or contradiction between what is expected and what actually occurs in a dramatic work. Two forms of irony are verbal irony and dramatic irony.

Verbal irony: A character says one thing but means something else.

- **Example:** “Good job,” a character says, when a critical mistake is made.

Dramatic irony: The audience knows something that a character does not know.

- **Example:** A character brags about being rich, but the audience knows that all the character’s money has been stolen.

DIRECTIONS: Identify each example of irony from Act III of *The Crucible*. Explain your answers.

1. **Danforth:** A little while ago you were afflicted. Now it seems you afflict others; where did you find this power?

Mary Warren, staring at Abigail: I—have no power.

Irony: _____

2. **Proctor:** In her life, sir, she have never lied. There are them that cannot sing, and them that cannot weep—my wife cannot lie.

Irony: _____

3. **Proctor:** ...Now remember what the angel Raphael said to the boy Tobias. Remember it.

Mary Warren, hardly audible: Aye. **Proctor:** “Do that which is good, and no harm shall come to thee.”

Irony: _____

4. **Elizabeth, in agony:** My husband—is a goodly man, sir.

Danforth: Then he did not turn from you.

Elizabeth, faintly: No.

Irony: _____

5. **Danforth:** Mr. Hale, you surely do not doubt my justice.

Irony: _____