

Why I Wrote *The Crucible*

Arthur Miller

Read the essay and answer these questions in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper. Poorly detailed or incomplete answers will not receive credit.

1. What is ironic about Hollywood making a movie about *The Crucible*?
2. What problem does Miller allude to when he talks about the cast of a movie giggling as they watch Hitler on film or those of us today watching McCarthy on film?
3. How did the hunt for artists in Hollywood who were associated with communism begin?
4. Why do you think that Mr. Cohn want Miller to change the gangsters in his screenplay to Communists?
5. What first conflict did Miller see in the Salem trials that made him consider the play? What personal situation made him empathize with John Proctor?
6. How does Miller answer the charge that "there never were any witches but there certainly are Communists"?
7. What is a crypto-Luciferian?
8. In the Salem witch hunts, if you denied any reason for why you were accused of witchcraft, you were ultimately claiming that the investigation was mistaken or a fraud. Explain this logic.
9. What more modern comparisons does Miller make to a Salem citizen being accused of or arrested for witchcraft?
10. Why does Miller say that people are likely to believe that someone arrested or accused probably deserves it?
11. After making a number of comparisons of the witch hunts to more modern day situations, Miller says "I am not sure what *The Crucible* is telling people now." What do you think *The Crucible* is telling people now? Now that McCarthyism is over, what warnings or lessons can it hold for you and possibly future generations?