

MODULE 1. What is real? What is reality?

Arthur Miller, THE CRUCIBLE

Questions on the movie

1. What is your impression of the relationship between Proctor and Abigail from what we see of them at the beginning of the movie?
2. How does the director show the audience the strain in the relationship between John and Elizabeth Proctor?
3. Both John Proctor and Abigail call Elizabeth “cold”. What evidence do you see in the movie of this coldness. What does Elizabeth say about it and why?
4. Towards the end Danforth tells Proctor that his wife’s life is saved for another year because she is expecting a child. What are the various courses of action open to Proctor at this point? Why does he pursue the one he does?
5. At first Proctor reveals his intentions to his wife and tries to find a reason why he should make that decision: “I cannot mount the gibbet like a saint. It is a fraud. I am not that man.” At the end of the play he goes to execution saying, “Now I do think I see some shred of goodness in John Proctor”. What has made this change come about?
6. When Mary Warren tries to help the Proctors, she is defeated by Abigail so the girl once more takes her side. How does Abigail exert her power over Mary in that scene?
7. Is John Proctor a hero in his stand against the evil in his society or do you see him as foolish when he might easily have saved his life? Why does he make his individual sacrifice?
8. Arthur Miller says that he was writing about “an imploded community that distrust and paranoia had killed”. There is a clear parallel between the events of 1692 in Salem and the political investigation of the 1950s in America. Write a short paragraph about it.

Writing task - Recognize and analyze the theme of the manipulation of reality in Arthur Miller’s play *The Crucible*

(10-15 lines)