

## EXAMPLES OF CONCLUSIONS

*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller clearly is a title chosen well because it symbolically relates to the characters and their experiences during the Salem Witch Trials. Characters, like John Proctor, Abigail Williams, and Reverend Hale, all display the qualities similar to the material affected by a crucible. As a crucible causes its contents to break down under high heat, Proctor and Hale break down under the intensity of the trials themselves and change what they are. As for Abigail, she forces the changes in others. These changes, and consequently the pressure of the Salem Witch Trials, clearly are difficult for the residents of the village. How else to explain any situation where one's life or the lives of loved ones is on the line? The residents of Salem can either change to deal with the times, and the hysteria, or end up being hanged. What type of choice is that? Clearly, it is not an easy one.

**Which Definition?**

*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller is a well-chosen title because it accurately describes the circumstances surrounding the characters portrayed in this play. Characters like John Proctor, Elizabeth Proctor, and Reverend Hale all experience extreme tests often surrounding the miracle of life. The most important element of these tests is not the fact that they held control over someone's life; rather, it is what they do or do not do with them. Like a crucible is the interaction of rigorous forces, the characters in *The Crucible* constantly clash over the most commanding of forces, life or death. It is difficult for one to place oneself in their positions because the decisions they make are so important. They have their lives taken for doing the most difficult thing of all: the right thing. The characters confronted with these intense challenges always have a way out, by lying, and yet they do not choose this path. It is interesting to wonder just how the people closest to us would react if faced with the same situation, with the choice of right and wrong, good or evil, truth or death.

**Which Definitions?**

The characters in *The Crucible* that undergo dramatic changes and severe tests prove the validity of the title. John Proctor changes from being a sinner, a man convinced of his own moral flaws into a man with a deeply held belief in his moral superiority. Reverend Hale's change is also dramatic. He morphs from a lead investigator of the Salem courts into one who openly opposes the judges' decisions, and in the end, a man convinced that lying to save a life is better than telling the truth in order to die. Elizabeth Proctor changes from being a cold, uncaring wife to a loving heart sick woman who misses her husband. These changes all show how the title is a symbolic representation of the experiences of the characters. What would you have done if you were John Proctor?

**Which Definitions?**

The severe tests that characters such as Mary Warren, Giles Corey, and John Proctor experience throughout the play of *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller help to prove the title is appropriate. John Proctor and Giles Corey both face severe tests when they have to decide between saving their lives or doing what is morally right. Both men choose to die for what they believe in to help the prosperity of others. Mary Warren experiences tests when she makes decisions between telling the truth and protecting herself. Ultimately, she chooses to harm others in order to save her life. Although not all of the crucibles that these characters face end the same way, the title of the play symbolizes the severe tests that take place throughout the trials. The witch trials bring out the true qualities, good and bad, in the citizens of Salem when they are faced with troubling decisions. Would you have been able to look past the terrifying realities and stand up for what you believed in or would you have lied to save yourself?

WHICH DEFINITION(S)?