

The Crucible
Act I Study Guide

1. Where and when is the opening scene of the play set?

2. What were some of the entertainments forbidden by the Puritans in Salem?
3. Why is Reverend Parris so distraught at the beginning of Act I?
4. Why has Reverend Parris sent for Reverend Hale of Beverly?
5. Why does a conflict exist between Reverend Parris and his niece Abigail?
6. What actions did Abigail, Betty, and the others perform prior to the beginning of the play?

7. Miller often foreshadows his characterization with a descriptive phrase in the stage directions just before a character's first entrance. In the stage directions, what does he suggest about these characters: Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam, and Mercy Lewis? How do dialogue and actions of each character bear out Miller's suggestions?
8. Why did Ann Putnam send Ruth to Tituba?
9. Explain the relationship between Abigail Williams and John Proctor.
10. Give several reasons why the Putnams resented the Nurses.
11. Explain the conflict between Proctor and Reverend Parris.
12. Why did Putnam oppose Proctor?
13. Describe Reverend Hale and his background.
14. Summarize your impressions of Reverend Parris in this act. What are his principal flaws or moral weaknesses?
15. How would you describe the atmosphere or mood at the end of this act? What might this atmosphere foreshadow about future events in the town of Salem?