

The Crucible—Socratic Seminar Questions

Consider these open ended questions related to *The Crucible*. These questions do not have right or wrong answers. They are intended to spark discussion and introduce participants to new ideas. Please answer each questions based on your own beliefs. **Support your beliefs with examples from the play, the world, or your own life. Aim for 4 sentences in response for each using the A.C.E. method.**

1. In any unfaithful marriage or relationship, who is to blame – the adulterous party (John), the counterpart or tempter (Abigail), or the distant spouse (Elizabeth)? Can someone be justified or pushed to cheat on their partner?
2. Would you denounce your faith or beliefs to save your life? Why or why not? To which character in the play do you relate to the most? Why or why not?
3. What is the danger of being a self-serving person? When is it appropriate to protect yourself at the expense of others?
4. People often blindly conform to organized religion, political groups, gangs, and factions. Why are so many people willing to do this?
5. Do you believe that people who commit serious crimes (murder, assault) can change? Do you think they should be forgiven by society?
6. Despite the lessons learned from the Salem Witch Trials, we have seen the damage of mass hysteria repeated. Why do societies throughout history continue to react irrationally in times of fear or panic?
7. Is the Rev. Parris simply a worried parent, or does he have other concerns? Support your opinion with examples.
8. Describe the character of John Proctor. Is he independent or a follower? Honest, or hypocritical? How does he feel about himself, and why might he feel that way? Explain with examples.
9. What is the central conflict that John Proctor faces?
10. What does Elizabeth's observation that John's real court is in his own heart reveal to us about John's character?

11. Does the Rev. Hale still believe as firmly in the truth of the accusations, or is he beginning to have some doubts? Use examples to support your answer.
12. Explain Danforth's course of logic in refusing to pardon the remaining prisoners. What might he have to lose by doing so?
13. What does Elizabeth mean when she says that John has his goodness now, and God forbid she should take it from him?