

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Partners: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Received: \_\_\_\_\_

# What Caused the Salem Witch Trial Hysteria of 1692?

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**Overview:** Between June 10 and September 22, 1692, 20 people were put to death in Salem, Massachusetts for witchcraft. It has long remained one of the more troubling events in American history. What caused neighbor to turn on neighbor? What was at the bottom of the hysteria that so frightened this colonial town? This Mini-Q will present some possible answers.

Situation: A witch hysteria swept the small Puritan community of Salem, Massachusetts in 1692. It began when a group of girls gathered in the evenings in the home of Reverent Parris to listen to stories told by one of his slaves, Tituba. Soon after, the girls began acting strangely. They began throwing fits and accusing Tituba of witchcraft.

Tituba confessed to having signed a "Devil's book," and claimed that there was a total of 9 witches in the Salem area. Two other women were accused by the girls, Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne. Although the other women said they were innocent, the court did not believe them, and they were hanged. By the end of the summer 24 people were either hanged for witchcraft, pressed by stones or died in jail. Many others confessed to being witches; their lives were saved, but they lost all of their property and possessions.

We all know witches don't exist...so what would cause the girls to accuse people of witchcraft?

### **Vocabulary and Main Idea**

1. Define "Puritans". Who were these people?
2. Define "hysteria."
3. Where is the town of Salem?
4. What is the question being asked by this DBQ.
5. Rewrite the question in your own words.

## **Background Video-- Salem Witch Trials**

*Source: The History Channel. Salem Witch Trials. 2005. A&E Television Networks.*

1. How did the people of the 1600s determine if someone was a witch?
2. Why did the Puritans come to North America?
3. How were Puritan women expected to behave?
4. What did the nine girls claim happen to them after listening to Tituba's stories?
5. What was a specter?
6. What was so bad about using "specter evidence" in a court of law?
7. How did the nine girls act when the suspects denied that they were witches?
8. What did Tituba say in her trial that made the people in Salem look for more witches?
9. Why did people stop believing the nine girls?
10. What are some possible causes of the Witch Trials mentioned in the video?

Document A: Chart of the Deaths of the Accused

SALEM WITCHCRAFT HANGINGS 1692	
June 10	Bridget Bishop
July 19	Sarah Good
July 19	Elizabeth Howe
July 19	Susannah Martin
July 19	Rebecca Nurse
July 19	Sarah Wildes
August 19	George Burroughs
August 19	Martha Carrier
August 19	George Jacobs
August 19	John Proctor
August 19	John Willard
September 19	Giles Cory (pressed to death)
September 22	Martha Cory
September 22	Mary Easty
September 22	Alice Parker
September 22	Mary Parker
September 22	Ann Pudeater
September 22	Margaret Scott
September 22	Wilmot Redd
September 22	Samuel Wardwell
ACCUSED WHO DIED IN JAIL	
Sarah Good's child died prior to July 19, 1692.	
May 10, 1692	Sarah Osborne
June 16, 1692	Roger Toothaker
December 3, 1692	Ann Foster
March 10, 1693	Lydia Dustin

1. How many people were hanged or killed in Salem in 1692?
2. How many were men?
3. How many were women?
4. Why do you think most deaths happened on the same days?
5. Based on this document, what may have caused the Salem Witch Trial hysteria?

## Document B

Source: John Demos, "Underlying Themes in the Witchcraft of 17th Century New England."  
*American Historical Review*, June, 1970.

### The Accused (Salem, 1692)

#### Marital Status

	<i>Single</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Widowed</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	8	15	1	24
Female	29	61	20	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>134</b>

#### Age

	<i>Under 20</i>	<i>21-40</i>	<i>41-60</i>	<i>Over 60</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	6	6	11	7	30
Female	18	15	41	14	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>118</b>

### The Accusers (Salem, 1692)

#### Marital Status

	<i>Single</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Widowed</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	5	0	0	5
Female	23	6	0	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>

#### Age

	<i>Under 11</i>	<i>11-15</i>	<i>16-20</i>	<i>Over 21</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	0	1	1	0	2
Female	1	7	13	6	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>

## **Document B: Charts of the Accused and Accusers**

### **The Accused:**

1. Who was accused more? Men or Women?
2. What was the marital status of most of the accused women?
3. What was the marital status of most of the accused men?
4. What was the age group of most of the accused?
5. Why do you think most of the accused were middle aged, married women?

### **The Accusers:**

1. Were most of the accusers male or female?
2. What was the age of most of the accusers?
3. Why do you think most of the accused were teenage young women?

## Document C

**Source:** The examination of Bridget Bishop at Salem Village, 19 April, 1692, as recorded by Samuel Parris.

*As soon as she came near, all (the afflicted girls) fell into fits....*

(Examiner) (Speaking to afflicted girls) Hath this woman hurt you?

(Bridget Bishop) I never saw these persons before....

(Examiner) They say you bewitched your first husband to death.

(Bishop) If it please your worship, I know nothing of it.

*She shook her head, and the afflicted were tortured.*

(Examiner) Why you seem to act witchcraft before us by the motion of your body, which seems to have influence upon the afflicted?

(Bishop) I know nothing of it. I am innocent to a witch.  
I know not what a witch is.

*Then she turned up her eyes, and the eyes of the afflicted were turned up.*

**Note:** Samuel Parris was the minister of Salem Village. Parris's nine-year-old daughter Betty had earlier made charges of witchcraft against the family's Carib slave, Tituba.

## Document Analysis

1. In the transcript above, who is being accused of witchcraft?
2. What is meant by the term "afflicted girls"?
3. Who recorded this examination testimony? Is that significant?
4. What eventually happened to Bridget Bishop? See Document A.

**Document D**

**Source:** Charles W. Upham, *Salem Witchcraft*, Boston, 1867.

**Note:** Charles Upham was a 19th century historian who lived in Salem and studied the witch trials much of his adult life. He served in the House of Representatives and as the mayor of Salem.

What are we to think of those persons who...continued the accusations – the “afflicted children” and their associates?... They soon...became intoxicated...by the terrible success of their imposture (acting), and were swept along by the frenzy they had occasioned.... Once or twice they were caught in their own snare; and nothing but the blindness of the bewildered community saved them from...well-deserved punishment.... It is dreadful to reflect upon the enormity of their wickedness.... [T]here can be no doubt that they were great actors.

\*notoriety: fame for doing something bad

**Document Analysis**

1. Who was Charles Upham and when did he write this passage?
2. According to Upham, what was the cause of the Salem witch trial hysteria?
3. What does Upham mean when he says the girls “became intoxicated ... by the terrible success” of their acting?
4. Does Upham offer any explanation in this passage why the adults in the Salem community took the girls seriously? Explain.
5. Does the testimony in Document C support Upham? Explain your thinking.
6. Do the statistics in Document B support Upham? Explain your thinking.

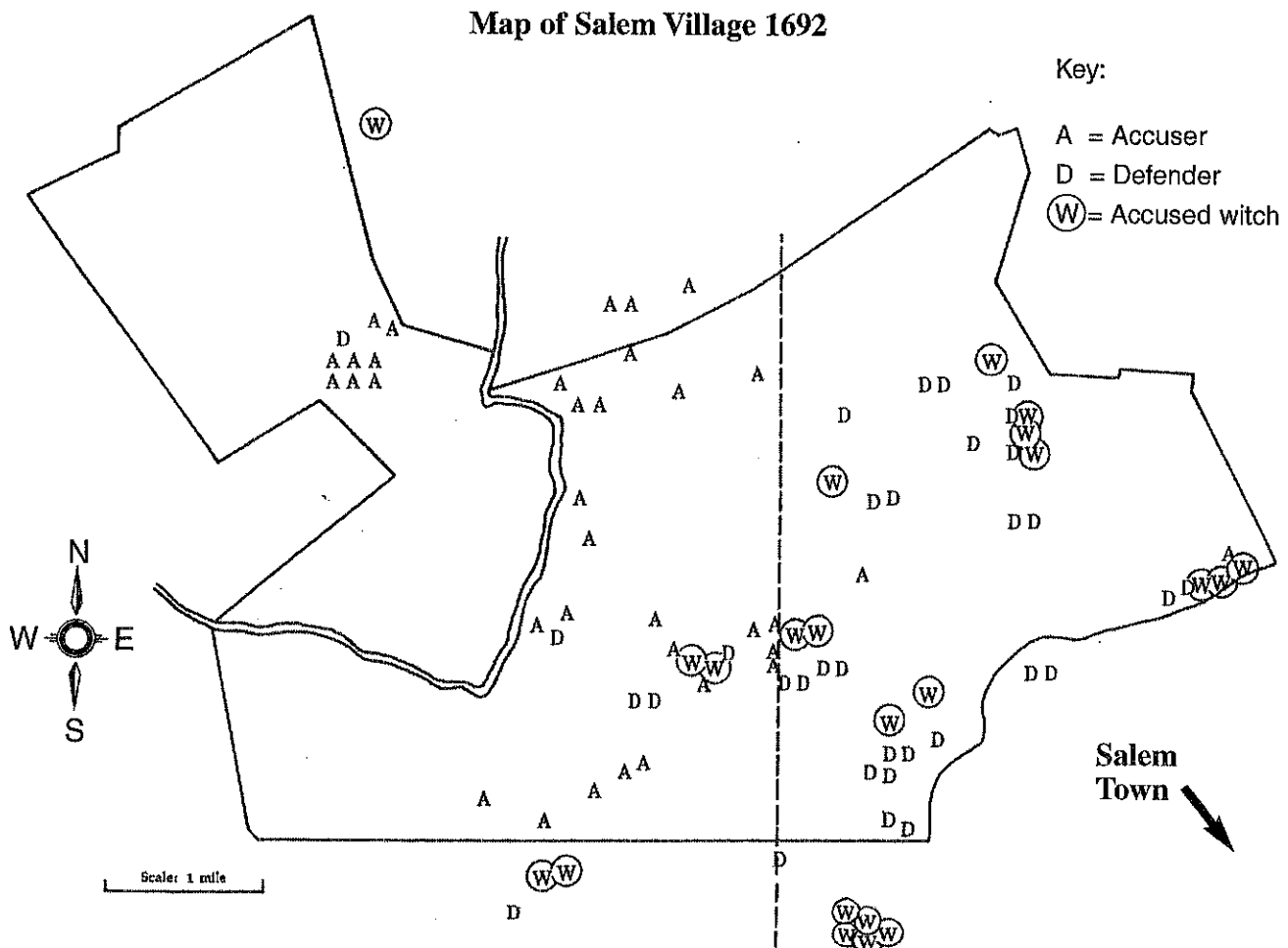


## Document E

**Source:** Reprinted by permission of Harvard University Press from *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*, by Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Copyright (c) 1974 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

**Note:** According to Paul Boyer, in *The Enduring Vision* (1992), between 1661 and 1681 the people in the eastern half of Salem Village gained in wealth and political influence. The people in the western half of Salem Village farmed poorer land and lost political power.

CV



1. What do the A's mean?
2. Where are most of the A's located? East or West?
3. What do the W's mean?
4. Where are most of the W's located? East or West?
5. Look at the Note at the top of Doc. E. Which part of Salem farmed poorer land and lost political power before the witch trials began?
6. Based on the map, what do you believe was a cause of the Salem Witch Trial hysteria?

Causes of the  
Salem  
Hysteria

Writing Situation:

A witch hysteria swept the small Puritan community of Salem, Massachusetts in 1692. It began when a group of girls gathered in the evenings in the home of Reverent Parris to listen to stories told by one of his slaves, Tituba. Soon after, the girls began acting strangely. They began throwing fits and accusing Tituba of witchcraft.

Tituba confessed to having signed a "Devil's book," and claimed that there was a total of 9 witches in the Salem area. Two other women were accused by the girls, Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne. Although the other women said they were innocent, the court did not believe them, and they were hanged. By the end of the summer 24 people were either hanged for witchcraft, pressed by stones or died in jail. Many others confessed to being witches; their lives were saved, but they lost all of their property and possessions.

We all know witches don't exist...so what would cause the girls to accuse people of witchcraft?

Writing Task:

Using information from the background video and documents, write a five-paragraph essay that answers the question, "What Caused the Salem Witch Trial Hysteria of 1692?" Include a clear thesis statement. Back up your opinions with evidence from the documents. Make sure you identify the documents you used for your information. Your essay should have an intro paragraph, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

Your writing will be evaluated using the following rubric:

	Advanced- 4 Exceeds Standard <b>15</b>	Proficient - 3 Standard Met <b>10</b>	Basic - 2 Limited Standard Met <b>5</b>	Below Basic - 1 Standard NOT met <b>0</b>
<b>Topic Sentence/Claim</b>	- Paragraphs contain a well-developed, focused topic sentence (claim)	- Paragraphs contain topic sentences (claim), but are not focused or comprehensive	- Presents limited, confused, and/or poorly developed topic sentences (claim)	- Contains no topic sentences (claim)
<b>Use of documents as evidence</b>	- Clearly and perceptively explains how the evidence supports the topic (claim) in all paragraphs.  - Cites at least ONE piece of evidence from 3 or more documents and provides in-depth analysis.	- Clearly explains how the evidence supports the topic sentence (claim) in all paragraphs.  - Cites at least ONE piece of evidence from 2 or more documents and provides analysis.	- Quotes or briefly cites documents.  - Provides limited analysis of 2 or more documents	- Contains little or no understanding of the documents or ignores them completely.  - Does not cite evidence from the documents.
<b>Use of content knowledge</b>	- Demonstrates substantial use of relevant content knowledge	- Demonstrates some use of relevant content knowledge	- Demonstrates limited use of content knowledge	- Demonstrates little or no use of content knowledge.
<b>Organization</b>	- Clearly organized and well-written.  - Has a seamless, logical flow that guides the reader through the paper	- Shows evidence of acceptable organization and writing.  - Focus (claim) maintained through the paper	- Demonstrates weak organization and/or writing skills that interfere with comprehension.  - May occasionally steer off-topic	- Disorganized and poorly written.  - Paragraphing is absent or randomly applied.
<b>Mechanics, Grammar and Spelling</b>	- Practically free of errors in mechanics, grammar, and spelling	- Few errors in mechanics, grammar, and spelling.	- Several errors in mechanics, grammar, and spelling.	- Many errors in mechanics, grammar, and spelling.
<b>Conclusion &amp; Intro</b>	- Restates a solid, clear and analytical position (claim) that answers the question and is derived from the evidence	- Restates a clear and analytical position (claim) that answers the question and is derived from the evidence	- Claim is somewhat referred to, is somewhat clear and/or attempts to answer the question.  - Evidence from the documents attempts to support claim.	- Claim is not restated, is unclear and/or does not answer the question.  - Evidence from the documents is not used to support claim.

4 – Exceeds Standard

3 – Standard met

2 – Standard nearly met

1- Standard not met

Essay Format - 10 pts ☐ yes ☐ no

100 pts total

# Template for Writing the Salem Witch Trials DBQ Essay

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paragraph 1: Introduction

Hook: \_\_\_\_\_

Background Information: (Give basic Witch Trials info. Look at the overview p1 for help) \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis: I (think/believe/feel) that the main causes of the Salem Witch Trial Hysteria of 1692 were

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(cause #1) (cause #2) (cause #3)

## Paragraph 2: Body/Cause One

Topic Sentence:

Evidence:

Paraphrase:

Analysis:

Conclusion:

## Paragraph 3: Body/Cause Two

Topic Sentence:

Evidence:

<b>Paraphrase:</b>
<b>Analysis:</b>
<b>Conclusion:</b>

**Paragraph 4: Body/Cause Three**

<b>Topic Sentence:</b>
<b>Evidence:</b>
<b>Paraphrase:</b>
<b>Analysis:</b>
<b>Conclusion:</b>

**Paragraph 5: Conclusion**

Restate Thesis (rewrite the last sentence of your intro): _____
Remind reader of any important information: _____
Lesson You learned about the Salem Witch Trials: _____