**Salem Witch Trials**

1. **In the paragraph below, underline and number 4 Puritan beliefs.**

In January 1692, the Salem witch trials began and changed life dramatically for the small farming community of Salem Village, part of the Massachusetts Bay colony. Believing themselves God's chosen people, the Puritan inhabitants of the village followed a strict Puritan code of hard work and religious devotion. They were also superstitious and believed that witches and demons could do evil works through human beings. They believed that human beings were inherently sinful and corrupt and had to live according to strict interpretation of the Bible.

**2. In the paragraph below, number and underline three causes of the Salem Witch Trials.**

However, the restrained and solemn appearance of the Puritan village belied fundamental economic, political, and interpersonal difficulties, which wrought fear, mistrust, and uncertainty throughout the community. This climate gave rise to the witch-hunt that followed.

After being regaled with magical tales of the West Indies by a Barbados-born slave named Tituba, two young Puritan girls began exhibiting peculiar symptoms, ranging from catatonic states to bodily contortions. Unable to find a medical explanation for their unusual behavior, the local religious authorities deemed it witchcraft. The magistrates, determined to locate and eradicate the source of the bewitchment, commenced a series of trials lasting for almost one year. In an effort to save themselves from the fate of witches, death by hanging, neighbor turned on neighbor, ultimately resulting in the execution of approximately twenty Salem citizens. Finally in 1710, some, but not all, of the accused were exonerated. In 1957 the state of Massachusetts officially cleared the names of all accused witches.

**3. What must life have been like for children living under these strict religious principles? (not in the reading)**

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(Answers will probably include fear of hell, restrictive atmosphere, lack of freedom, boredom, feelings of guilt, etc.)

**First Video Clip**

**4. From the clip identify what forbidden activities were the girls engaging in?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

START the video clip when you see a black screen with Salem, Massachusetts Winter 1691-1692 and hear ominous music. STOP the clip when you hear the narrator say, "...such activities were strictly forbidden by Puritan code," and see a black screen with January 1692.

CHECK for comprehension. (The girls were listening to Tituba's tales of magic and participating in fortune telling).

**5. What might the consequences be for the girls if officials found out what they were doing?** (not in clip)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Answers may include beatings, threat of damnation, loss of any privileges.)

**8. What consequences could Tituba face for entertaining the girls in this way? (not in clip)**

(She could be beaten, killed, sold, accused of being a witch.)

**6. What is “idleness”?** \_\_\_\_(a state of inactivity or non-productivity).\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **(not in clip)**

**7. Why did Puritans want to avoid idleness?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(not in clip)**

(If they were not constantly working and keeping busy physically and mentally, they could get themselves into trouble.)

**Clip 2**

PLAY the clip when you see a black screen with January 1692. STOP the clip when you hear the narrator say, "The townspeople begged the girls to identify their wicked tormentors," and see a picture of one girls holding another, who is pointing.

**9. From the clip identify the strange symptoms the girls were exhibiting**. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

CHECK for comprehension. (The girls screamed, twitched, rolled on the floor, threw fits, barked like dogs, flapped arms like birds, and made choking sounds.)

**10. How did the girls go against the rules of their religion?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (not in clip)

(All should agree that the girls' listening to the tales of Tituba was a form of rebellion against the strict religious code of the community.)

**11. Why did the girls exhibit such strange behavior?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(not in clip)\_

(Students might suggest that they did so to gain attention or to avoid the severe consequences they would have suffered for breaking the rules. More astute students might suggest that their fits, contortions, and acting out were a result of the repression they suffered.)

**12. From the clip identify what the three accused women had in common.**  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLAY** the tape when you see a black screen with March 1692. **STOP** the tape when you hear the narrator say, "...sparked a wave of paranoia and accusations," and see March-April-May 1692.

**CHECK** for comprehension. (The women Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osburne, were all social outcasts.)

**13. Why do you think  the girls chose to accuse these three women?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(not in clip)**

(Answers may vary. Guide your students to understand that the townspeople would easily believe that these despised women were witches and, therefore, the girls didn't have to worry about being punished for lying. Accusing respected townspeople would have been too risky for the girls.)

**14. From the clip explain how the accusations began to change. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**PLAY** the clip when you see a black screen with March-April-May 1692. **STOP** the clip when you hear the narrator say, "...including the most prominent villagers," and see a black screen with June 1692.

CHECK for comprehension. (Even respected townspeople were being accused, including Rebecca Nurse and John Proctor. Guide your students to realize the fervor the witch-hunt took on as even small children were imprisoned.)

**15. What do you think finally put an end to the Salem witch trials. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

(It seems that only after very prominent citizens were accused, including the governor's wife, the trials ceased. Guide your students to understand that the end of the trials and executions had more to do with politics than religion.)

The Puritans believed that evil spirits sent out by witches could take the shape of different animals and pay unwelcome visits to people. Many of the villagers who claimed they were being tormented by witches had no evidence to support their claims except spectral evidence (a claim that they had been visited by an evil spirit), which the accused had no way of refuting.

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**reading)**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**5. What consequences could Tituba face for entertaining the girls in this way? (not in clip)** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**6. What might the consequences be for the girls if officials found out what they were doing?(not in clip)**

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(not in clip)**

**Second Video Clip -** Answer 9, 12, and 14 as you watch.

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