

I ESCAPED THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS  
By Juliet Fry and Scott Peters



Chapter-by-Chapter Reading Comprehension

Chapter 1

According to the girls, how did the witches attack them?

Chapter 2

Why is Hannah afraid?

Chapter 3

What skills has Hannah learned from her mother? Why does Mercy tease her about them?

Chapter 4

In Abigail's opinion, where does bad luck come from?

Chapter 5

Why is everyone at The Putnam house afraid of the beggar, Sarah Good?

Chapter 6

Why are the girls nervous about the fortune telling game?

Chapter 7

Hannah feels guilty that Betty is sick. Why?

Chapter 8

The spirits of several witches seem to attack both Ann and Mercy. How are they affected?

Chapter 9

Why does Hannah wish for a moment that she were an afflicted girl too?

Chapter 10

When Tituba claims that the devil took on a wolf's form and followed Lizzie Hubbard, why does Hannah appear to believe her?

Chapter 11

Hannah is conflicted about whether or not Ann is telling the truth. What makes her believe Ann? What makes her doubt Ann?

Chapter 12

Why do the girls confront Hannah in the field? What do they want her to do?

Chapter 13

Who do you think pricked Hannah? What do the girls accuse her of doing?

Chapter 14

How are conditions in jail different for wealthy prisoners?

Chapter 15

Why is Hannah disappointed when Mr Arnold won't let her stay in a jail cell and takes her back to the dungeon?

Chapter 16

Why does Hannah think Elizabeth Proctor will be saved from hanging for witchcraft?

Chapter 17

Why does Hannah pretend to be sick?

Chapter 18

How does Hannah find the wharf?

## I ESCAPED THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS STUDY GUIDE



### CAUSE AND EFFECT

1. Cause: The girls decided to play a fortune-telling game

Effect: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Cause: Sarah Good begged for food and shelter at the Putnam house.

Effect: \_\_\_\_\_

### EFFECT AND CAUSE

1. Cause: \_\_\_\_\_

Effect. Doctor Griggs decided that the Parris house was cursed by witches.

2. Cause: \_\_\_\_\_

Effect: Ann accused Rebecca Nurse of witchcraft.

### VISUALIZATION

Choose one of the following pictures to draw:

- A Puritan girl.
- A witch.
- A wolf in the wintry woods.
- The dungeon in Boston jail.

Have a better idea? Run it by me.

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WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Past: Every time your neighbor visits your house, bad luck happens—for example, your family member becomes sick. Next time she comes to your door, what do you do?

Present: A ladder is blocking your path. You've heard that if you walk under it, you'll have bad luck. What do you do?

Past: Your friends are accusing people of witchcraft, and you fear the people will be hanged. Do you confront your friends, or go along with them?

Present: You overhear your friend tell a lie about someone at school. Do you confront them or go along with them?

Past: Would you name other people as witches if it meant you could escape being hanged? What would you do to save your life?

Present: If you were going to be kicked out of school for pulling a fire alarm when you didn't do it, would you accuse someone else to avoid getting in trouble?

I ESCAPED THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS  
MAKING INFERENCES



“If there are no witches in Salem,” Abigail said carefully, “Then why did your parents die?”

Hannah flinched as if she’d been struck.

But Abigail went on. “And why did your mistress’s baby die? And how did Constable Herrick’s prize cow just vanish?”

*What do Abigail’s words reveal about how Puritans viewed bad luck?*

Sarah’s eyes flashed a warning, and her gaze went again to the baby in Mistress Putnam’s arms. “I hope for your sakes you people never find yourselves in need of charity.” Lowering her voice, she again muttered under her breath. This time it sounded nothing like a prayer.

Mercy slammed the door.

“She cursed my baby!” Mistress Putnam whispered.

*Why did the Putnam family feel so suspicious of Sarah Good, in your opinion?*

Tituba wrapped her arms around Betty’s small form. “What have you done to scare her?”

“She’s always scared,” Abigail said. “We were just playing a game. But you better not snitch or we’ll tell Reverend Parris about your *poppet*.”

Hannah’s mouth fell open—she’d never heard her friend talk this way.

Tituba frowned. “I don’t have a poppet.”

“Yes, you do,” Abigail said. “We saw it. We all saw it.”

“I don’t know what you mean. And your talk is disturbing the child.”

“Then let’s talk no more,” Abigail said.

*Why does Abigail threaten Tituba?*

“Does the devil tell you he hurts them?” the judge asked.

“No, he tells me nothing,” Tituba said.

“What does he look like when he hurts them?”

At this question, Tituba looked even more confused. Her eyes darted around the room. She paused as though scrambling for something to say.

“Well . . . he looks like a man, I think.”

“A man from this village?”

The whole room grew hushed. Even the girls did not murmur.

“Yesterday, I was in my room,” Tituba said, “And I saw a thing like a man, and he told me to serve him. And I told him, no, I would do no such thing.”

Hannah stared. Could this be true?

“Have you seen anyone else with this devil?”

“Yes, at least nine people, I think.”

*Most of the accused denied any involvement in witchcraft. Why does Tituba tell the judge this story?*

Isaac shoved his hands into the pockets of his canvas trousers.

“Yesterday, Goodwife Nurse came to Mistress Putnam with some silly story that you girls were telling fortunes.”

Fear whiplashed down Hannah’s spine. How did Goodwife Nurse know?

Isaac shrugged. “Maybe that’s why Ann’s so eager to accuse her. For revenge. Anyway, I’m pretty sure everything Ann and Mercy say is a lie.”

*Why kind of friends are Isaac and Hannah? Do you think she agrees with him?*

## I ESCAPED THE SALEM WITCH TRIALS ESSAY/DISCUSSION TOPICS



- Imagine you lived in a Puritan village like Salem in 1692. Write about your daily life. What do you do all day? What do you enjoy? What are you afraid of?
- How was peer pressure in Salem different than peer pressure today?
- Describe the Puritan girls as bullies. How do their acts differ from bullies today? Are they similar, and if so, what are the similarities? What are the dangers and consequences?
- Imagine if the Puritans had social media. How would their accusations play out? Use modern technology to portray an imaginary situation. Would people believe their claims? Why or why not?
- If you were Hannah, what choices would you have made differently, and what price do you think you'd have paid for doing so?

## FUN COLONIAL CRAFTS

Dyeing your own fabric:

<https://www.librarypoint.org/blogs/post/hands-on-colonial-crafts/>

Make a Corn Husk Doll:

<https://colonialquills.blogspot.com/2017/09/colonial-crafts-corn-husk-dolls.html>

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**ANSWER KEY**

Chapter 1

According to the girls, how did the witches attack them?

*The witches sent their spirits to the girls' houses to hurt them.*

Chapter 2

Why is Hannah afraid?

*Hannah thinks she sees witches at her window.*

Chapter 3

What skills has Hannah learned from her mother? Why does Mercy tease her about them?

*Hannah learned to be a healer. Mercy teased her about using her good apron to make a bandage. (Perhaps Mercy is jealous)*

Chapter 4

In Abigail's opinion, where does bad luck come from?

*Abigail believes that bad luck comes from witches putting curses on people.*

Chapter 5

Why is everyone at The Putnam house afraid of the beggar, Sarah Good?

*Sarah Good is dirty and poor and they think she put a curse on the Putnam baby.*

Chapter 6

Why are the girls nervous about the fortune telling game?

*The girls believe that fortune telling is a sin.*

Chapter 7

Hannah feels guilty that Betty is sick. Why?

*Hannah feels guilty because she knows the fortune telling game scared Betty.*

Chapter 8

The spirits of several witches seem to attack both Ann and Mercy. How are they affected?

*Both girls throw fits. Ann is in a trance. She screams and shouts that she won't sign her name in a book. Mercy wails and shakes and runs to throw herself in the fire. (There are many correct answers.)*

#### Chapter 9

Why does Hannah wish for a moment that she were an afflicted girl too?

*Hannah feels left out because she is the only one not afflicted.*

#### Chapter 10

When Tituba claims that the devil took on a wolf's form and followed Lizzie Hubbard, why does Hannah appear to believe her?

*Tituba's story gets Hannah's attention because Hannah was followed by a wolf also.*

#### Chapter 11

Hannah is conflicted about whether or not Ann is telling the truth. What makes her believe Ann? What makes her doubt Ann?

*She believes Ann because Ann shows her the bruise on her neck. She has trouble believing that Rebecca Nurse, a religious woman, could be a witch.*

#### Chapter 12

Why do the girls confront Hannah in the field? What do they want her to do?

*The girls want Hannah to show her support for them.*

#### Chapter 13

Who do you think pricked Hannah? What do the girls accuse her of doing?

*Ann pricked Hannah. When Hannah refused to accuse Mistress English of hurting her, Ann and the other girls accuse Hannah of being a witch.*

#### Chapter 14

How are conditions in jail different for wealthy prisoners?

*Mistress English is taken to the good cells rather than being imprisoned with the others in the dungeon.*

#### Chapter 15

Why is Hannah disappointed when Mr Arnold won't let her stay in a jail cell and takes her back to the dungeon?

*Hannah was hoping to be moved to a jail cell where she would use her file to saw through the bars on the window and escape.*

#### Chapter 16

Why does Hannah think Elizabeth Proctor will be saved from hanging for witchcraft?

*Elizabeth Proctor is pregnant.*

#### Chapter 17

Why does Hannah pretend to be sick?

*Hannah knows that if she's contagious she will be moved from the dungeon with the other prisoners to a solitary cell.*

#### Chapter 18

How does Hannah find the wharf?

*A drunk gives her directions.*

#### CAUSE AND EFFECT

1. Cause: The girls decided to play a fortune-telling game

Effect: *Betty is terrified, and the girls feel guilty.*

2. Cause: Sarah Good begged for food and shelter at the Putnam house.

Effect: *When the Putnam's tell her to leave and Sarah good grumbles, they think she put a curse on their baby.*

#### EFFECT AND CAUSE

1. Cause: *Abigail and Betty become ill.*

Effect. Doctor Griggs decided that the Parris house was cursed by witches.

2. Cause: *Rebecca Nurse tells Mistress Putnam that the girls were telling fortunes.*

Effect: Ann accused Rebecca Nurse of witchcraft.

#### MAKING INFERENCES

"If there are no witches in Salem," Abigail said carefully, "Then why did your parents die?"

Hannah flinched as if she'd been struck.

But Abigail went on. "And why did your mistress's baby die? And how did Constable Herrick's prize cow just vanish?"

*What do Abigail's words reveal about how Puritans viewed bad luck?*

*The Puritans thought that bad luck came from witches cursing people.*

Sarah's eyes flashed a warning, and her gaze went again to the baby in Mistress Putnam's arms. "I hope for your sakes you people never find yourselves in need of charity." Lowering her voice, she again muttered under her breath. This time it sounded nothing like a prayer.

Mercy slammed the door.

"She cursed my baby!" Mistress Putnam whispered.

*Why did the Putnam family feel so suspicious of Sarah Good, in your opinion?*

*Sarah Good is different- she is loud, eccentric and not afraid of saying what she thinks.*

Tituba wrapped her arms around Betty's small form. "What have you done to scare her?"

"She's always scared," Abigail said. "We were just playing a game. But you better not snitch or we'll tell Reverend Parris about your *poppet*."

Hannah's mouth fell open—she'd never heard her friend talk this way. Tituba frowned. "I don't have a poppet."

"Yes, you do," Abigail said. "We saw it. We all saw it."

"I don't know what you mean. And your talk is disturbing the child." "Then let's talk no more," Abigail said.

*Why does Abigail threaten Tituba?*

*Abigail threatens Tituba in order to silence her. She is worried Tituba will tell her family about the fortune telling game and she will get into trouble.*

"Does the devil tell you he hurts them?" the judge asked.

"No, he tells me nothing," Tituba said.

"What does he look like when he hurts them?"

At this question, Tituba looked even more confused. Her eyes darted

around the room. She paused as though scrambling for something to say.

“Well . . . he looks like a man, I think.”

“A man from this village?”

The whole room grew hushed. Even the girls did not murmur. “Yesterday, I was in my room,” Tituba said, “And I saw a thing like a man,

and he told me to serve him. And I told him, no, I would do no such thing.”

Hannah stared. Could this be true?

“Have you seen anyone else with this devil?”

“Yes, at least nine people, I think.”

*Most of the accused denied any involvement in witchcraft. Why does Tituba tell the judge this story?*

*Tituba was scared and told the judge what she thought he wanted to hear.*

Isaac shoved his hands into the pockets of his canvas trousers. “Yesterday, Goodwife Nurse came to Mistress Putnam with some silly story that you girls were telling fortunes.”

Fear whiplashed down Hannah’s spine. How did Goodwife Nurse know?

Isaac shrugged. “Maybe that’s why Ann’s so eager to accuse her. For revenge. Anyway, I’m pretty sure everything Ann and Mercy say is a lie.”

*Why kind of friends are Isaac and Hannah? Do you think she agrees with him?*

*Isaac is Hannah’s only real friend. He is levelheaded and tells the truth. He appreciates her talents and thinks she’s a good healer. He never makes fun of her. Most of the time she agrees with him, but she is still influenced by her desire to be friends with the girls.*

