

## The Crucible Argumentative Essay

Goody Bondi  
ELA 5-6



### Task:

Write a **four paragraph essay** including an introduction paragraph, two argumentation paragraphs, and a conclusion.

### Argumentative Topics for *The Crucible* (choose **ONE** of the following):

**Prompt 1: Power Dynamics:** One of the important motifs worth examining in *The Crucible* is that of power: who has it, how he/she got it, how he/she uses it, and for what ends. Select two characters and examine the ways in which they exercise their authority. Defend your position (1 character per body paragraph).

**Prompt 2: John Proctor:** sinner or Christ-like? Make an argument for or against John Proctor's character. Is he a man of integrity or is he beyond redemption? Defend your position (1 reason per body paragraph).

**Prompt 3: Courageous:** Select two characters from *The Crucible* and develop an argument for how they displayed courage in the face of adversity. Defend your position (1 character per body paragraph).

**Prompt 4: Egocentrism and justice:** What issues in contemporary society reveal how self-seeking individuals may become blind to justice? Select two characters from *The Crucible* and develop an argument for how their egocentrism blinded their sense of justice (1 character per body paragraph).

### Structure:

- **Introduction paragraph** (follow triangle diagram – hook, narrow, thesis). Remember, your thesis statement is your LAST sentence in your introductory paragraph and includes **author, title**, and your **opinion/claim (what you are arguing)**.
- **Two body paragraphs** – begin each body paragraph with a topic sentence regarding your claim (what you are arguing), support your claim by providing specific textual evidence/quotations – remember to use parenthetical documentation, and end with a concluding sentence regarding the claim (give the paragraph a “finished feeling.”)
- **Conclusion paragraph** (follow triangle diagram – reiterate thesis and end on a powerful note).

### Format:

- MLA format (header, heading, title, and correct parenthetical documentation for quotations).
- Typed, double-spaced, 12-point easy to read font (i.e. Times New Roman), and 1” margins.
- Use italics when referring to *The Crucible*.

### Point of View:

- Please remember to **use third person point of view** (NO first person: I, me, my, mine, us, our, we OR second person: you, your). Remember how we fix sentences like: “~~I think~~ John Proctor is a tragic hero.”

### Grading/Rubric:

- Essay is worth **75 points** (writing category); see posted Argumentative Essay Writing Rubric (note: for this essay, you are not including an opposing claim).

Due to turnitin.com \_\_\_\_\_ by 7:40 AM (see posted codes to access assignment).

*The Crucible* Argumentative Template

Circle the topic/prompt you chose:    1       2       3       4

**Introduction (follow triangle diagram – hook, narrow, and thesis)**

**Last sentence/thesis:** (author, title, and claim/what you are arguing for):

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**Body Paragraph #1:**

- Topic sentence (What is the paragraph trying to prove?):

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Include the following after your topic sentence/claim (these do not need to be in order):

- Specific textual evidence/Quotes (remember to set up your quote by telling the where, what, when, and who was involved at the time of the quote, and include correct parenthetical documentation at the end).

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Commentary/Opinion/Reasoning/Analysis (How does this evidence/quote support your claim? So what?):

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- Concluding Sentence (restatement of claim – NOT word-for-word):

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### Example

**Thesis (last sentence in introduction paragraph):** In Arthur Miller’s play *The Crucible*, both Reverend Parris and his niece Abigail abuse their position of power within the Salem community and bring destruction upon innocent victims.

#### **Body Paragraph #2:**

- Topic Sentence: **Throughout the play, Abigail exercises her power through deception and threats.**
- Specific textual evidence/Quote: **In fact, as soon as she is alone with Betty and Mary Warren she fiercely warns them, “Let either of you breathe a word, or the edge of a word [...] and I will come to you in the black of some terrible night and I will bring a pointy reckoning that will shudder you” (Miller 837).**
- Commentary/Opinion/Reasoning/Analysis (How does the evidence/quote support your claim?) **This powerful intimidation strikes fear in the hearts of these Puritan girls by threatening them with bodily violence.**
- Opinion (So what?) **Abigail uses these bullying tactics in order to manipulate the girls into keeping her secret about drinking blood to kill Goody Proctor.**
- Textual evidence and analysis: **Although Abigail deceives the court by calling out innocent members of Salem village, she continues to gain power. As Elizabeth Proctor urges her husband to enlighten the court as to Abigail’s fraud, she reveals that Abby “brings the other girls into the court, and where she walks the crowd will part like the sea for Israel” (Miller 840).**
- Concluding sentence: **Thus, her power over the girls and the community continues to escalate and lead innocent men and women to the noose.**

#### **Body Paragraph #2:**

- Topic sentence (What is the paragraph trying to prove?):

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Include the following after your topic sentence/claim (these do not need to be in order):

- Specific textual evidence/Quotes (remember to set up your quote by telling the where, what, when, and who was involved at the time of the quote, and include correct parenthetical documentation at the end).

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- Commentary/Opinion/Reasoning/Analysis (How does this evidence/quote support your claim? So what?):

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- Concluding Sentence (restatement of claim – NOT word-for-word):
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**Conclusion (follow triangle diagram)**

📅 Template due date: \_\_\_\_\_

Points possible:  
**18 (writing category)**

📅 Rough draft/Peer Editing due date: \_\_\_\_\_

Points possible:  
**Rough Draft - 20 (writing category)**

**NOTE: Rough draft must include ALL 4 PARAGRAPHS (introduction, 2 body paragraphs, and conclusion).**

**Peer Editing - 20 (writing category)**  
In your assigned peer editing group, you will edit two peers' essays.



***Write on, amazing students!***