

## **The Salem Witchcraft Trials in Literature**

*Millie A. Wallace*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This is a literary unit designed for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade advanced ESL (English as a Second Language) students. The two pieces of literature that will be addressed are *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth George Speare and *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. There is also an extensive part of the unit that deals with the influence of religion and witchcraft throughout history. Some of the literary concepts that are addressed are characterization, mood, setting and foreshadowing. Several webbing methods and writing assignments are used as well. The unit cumulates with a group research project and class presentation.

### **DESCRIPTION OF MY CLASS AND MY UNIT**

The students on which this curriculum unit will focus on will be the Advanced ESL students (sixth, seventh and eighth graders) that I teach. Most of these students are first generation Americans who have been in a bilingual program through the sixth or seventh grade. They have quite a good command of the English language; we are now concentrating on bringing their reading comprehension and writing skills up to grade level. Most of these students will have to take the Reading and Math portion of the TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills). It is important that they begin to work on their critical thinking skills that will help these students pass this test. The TAAS is the state-mandated test that students must pass by the tenth grade to graduate from high school with a diploma.

My students have expressed an avid interest in the occult. They enjoy scary stories and seem to watch a lot of horror films. Since it seems to be a difficult task for an educator to get this very visual generation to read, I have tried to tap into what interests them the most—evil. Of course, this type of material can cause some concern among the parents and the administration, but I have been very careful in how the material is presented and in what context it is presented.

When I decided to create a teaching unit, I found it very difficult to think of some appropriate reading material for my classes. I thought that the best place to start looking for something would be to ask my students what the definition of evil was to them. I got some very interesting responses; a lot of them included words like “witchcraft,” “devil,” and “magic.” I asked them what they thought witches were and all the answers were that they were women who worshipped the devil and did horrible magic to good people.

Most of them had an “occult” experience to share with me. Almost all of them had occurred in Mexico while they were visiting relatives. Most of these events happened on *rancheros*, which are small farms or ranches located in rural Mexico, usually without electricity and plumbing. I have seen pictures of some of these places and they are extremely primitive. The buildings are made from mud and have thatched roofs—perfect settings for ghostly happenings. I was amazed at how calmly they told the stories and that they were not scared to go back to the place where the incident had taken place.

I have also watched my students interact with each other for the last five years, and I notice that if someone comes to the school that is the least bit different in dress, nationality, etc., they seem to be extremely suspicious of that person and do not go out of their way to make them feel welcome. One could argue that all teens do this when they meet someone new; that it seems to be a universally accepted idea in society to automatically assume that someone that does not conform is evil. We, as adults, do the exact same thing. If someone has an alternative lifestyle, a different way of dressing or speaking, or different religious beliefs, our first inclination is towards the negative.

I discussed this phenomenon with my mother (a teacher for over 30 years) in conjunction with this unit, and she suggested the Salem Witch Trials. She also suggested what literature to read. The students will read the novel *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth George Speare and the play *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. These novels are based on the Salem Witch Trials. My students tend to judge people that do not fall into their idea of “normal” very harshly, and I find that extremely disturbing in this era. I would like my students to see how unfair it is to judge someone as being “evil” just because he or she does not conform to society’s expectations.

Another important theme running through both pieces of literature is how our society, even in colonial times, condemned people who were old and unattractive. Most of the literature that I read stated that the first accused women and men were simply too old to be a useful part of society or that people did not like looking at them because they were unattractive. This is certainly a modern day theme in our society. More women than ever suffer from eating disorders trying to lose weight, the health and beauty industry has exploded, and there is a significant amount of elective or plastic surgery being done daily. What message are we sending our young people? I think it is the same message that has been sent through the centuries—physical beauty counts more than anything else that we can accomplish. I think that this topic is relevant to today’s youth and can create some very interesting discussions as well as writing pieces.

The two main female characters in these novels are very different in their personalities. Kit, in *The Witch from Blackbird Pond*, exudes the qualities of a “good” character. She befriends everyone that she meets and becomes friends with an old woman, the “witch” who is simply a Quaker and elderly and therefore cast out by the members of the society.

Kit is not well liked in her new home because she is from Barbados and has been brought up in a much freer society. Her clothes are much more lavish than what the locals wear; she does not want to go to meeting all day on Sundays; she is not interested in marrying the first young man who pays her attention; and most importantly, she has not worked like her new family has. She does not understand why there are not slaves to do the menial labor. This might not be such a good quality, but Kit is as we all are: a product of her environment. Unfortunately, the whole Salem Witch Hunt was a universal product of society. It was a perverse manifestation of the panic which is set in among all classes when the balance began to turn around toward greater individual freedom (Miller, 5).

On the other hand, Abigail in *The Crucible* has very definite negative qualities that are found in the “evil” characters in literature. First of all, Abigail is using the black maid, Tituba, to help her put a love spell on the man that she has had an affair with. However, she does not stop there. She wants this man’s wife dead and out of the way. At the beginning of the play, he has already told her that he will not leave his wife and that their affair was a mistake. She does not accept this and begins to accuse several of the older women and a midwife of coming to her and to the other girls in the night to take them to the devil. It is amazing how a set of young girls’ lies eventually causes the death of several innocent characters.

Throughout the play, Abigail plays on the fears of her society; she draws in the whole town and is seen as a heroine for her efforts to help bring these witches to justice. However, she makes a serious mistake when she finally accuses Proctor’s wife of being a witch. Goody Proctor is seen as a respected member of the community, and people are appalled that she is accused of this crime. This begins Abby’s downfall. As she sees the growing discontent among the townspeople, she goes to her ex-lover and begs him to run away with her to Barbados. Being the quintessential tragic hero (he is a well-respected member of the community, and he has a tragic flaw—the affair with Abigail), he sees the error of his ways and decides to stay in Salem, where he is eventually hanged for witchcraft, though innocent (as are all the other victims).

As one can see, these two characters are enough alike and different to do a compare-contrast in the middle school classroom, specifically for ESL students who are still struggling with higher-order thinking skills. This will give them an opportunity to practice these skills and to be successful at it.

Another important aspect of the novel is the way that women are treated. They are the targets in the witch trials and as one reads the novel and the play, there is a not-so-underlying theme that women are inherently evil and need to be “subdued” in some form or fashion. It is important for young people to realize that the rights that women and minorities enjoy today were not always possible. I think this unit is a great stepping-stone for other literary units that bring up the topics of peoples’ rights to live in a free society without fear of repercussion. I would like to have the students do a unit on the Holocaust

next. I have shown them a movie this summer (*The Devil's Arithmetic*, an HBO production and available for rental at Blockbuster Video), and it opened up a lively discussion.

## **STRATEGIES**

There are many different teaching strategies that are incorporated in this unit. I like to vary my strategies during the course of a lesson because I find that students' attention wanders if they do the same thing the whole ninety minutes. One of my most favorite methods of teaching is cooperative learning. This is so helpful for ESL students especially because I can group students of mixed ability together and still see the lower level students have a measure of success. It also gives the higher-level students a chance to explain what they know and therefore practice their critical-thinking skills. In this situation, I am simply the facilitator. I walk around and monitor the groups' progress.

I have incorporated another technique from the *Success For All* reading program in which I have been trained. It is called, "Ask Three Before Me." This technique was developed for students to try not to rely on teachers so much for the answers to questions. My students must ask three people in the class what they want to know before they ask me. I really think this is a great teaching method because most of the questions that they ask CAN be answered by another student. I do not want my students to be scared to ask me a question, but I do want them to be more self-reliant in the classroom

Another strategy that I have borrowed from the *Success For All* reading program is the use of *meaningful sentences*. Meaningful sentences are a way for students to learn what the meaning of an unfamiliar word is within the context it is used. I NEVER ask my students to look up words in the dictionary. Their vocabulary is so limited that they cannot understand what the definition is, so the whole exercise was a waste of time. I have also notice that teachers pick out too many words at one time, and then students just memorize a definition that they don't understand for a test and then forget about it after the test. In my class, I pick about five words that the STUDENTS decide that they don't understand, and then we create a meaningful sentence on the board together. A meaningful sentence has to be at least ten words long and a reader should be able to tell what the word means simply by reading the sentence. I do one with the students as a class, and then the students do one for each word on their own. The word has to be circled and the meaningful part of the sentence must be underlined. This helps give them a visual to see if they truly defined the word or not. I will give them a meaningful word test sometimes, and this consists of simply creating a meaningful sentence for each word I give them. This method has been quite successful because students like the idea of being able to make up sentences that they feel are relevant to their environment and that helps them remember the word much better.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The students will:

- ◆ Complete notes over the history of witchcraft;
- ◆ Define and use vocabulary words in meaningful sentences;
- ◆ Read novels in pairs and as a whole class;
- ◆ Discuss the role of women during the witch hunts;
- ◆ Discuss the concept of evil in modern society;
- ◆ Compare and contrast the female characters in *The Crucible* and *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*;
- ◆ Create their own definition of evil;
- ◆ Understand and discuss the literary concepts of setting, characterization, and mood, and foreshadowing;
- ◆ Create a KWL (what I know, what I want to know, and what I learned) chart over the history of witchcraft.

## **CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

The students will:

- Keep an “evil” log through the unit; students will write down events that they read, see or experience that they think are evil;
- Use a definition that we create in class of unfamiliar words to create meaningful sentences;
- Complete a character analysis on Abigail and Kit, the main female characters in the novel and the play;
- Create a time-line of the history of witchcraft;
- Write a paper defending the actions of the accusers in *The Crucible*;
- Watch a video over witchcraft;
- Watch a video of *The Crucible*;
- Write a paragraph predicting the ending of *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*;
- Write a comparison-contrast of Kit and Hannah in *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*;
- Complete a writing assignment on a relationship that they have with an older person
- Peer revise each other’s papers;
- Complete written tests over *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* and *The Crucible*;
- Participate in various discussions over both pieces of literature;
- Write a new ending to *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*;
- Complete a character mapping exercise of *The Crucible*;
- Complete a writing assignment over the character, Mary Warren, in *The Crucible*;
- Research an aspect of witchcraft and write a written report, create a project, and give an oral presentation.

## **Unit Calendar**

### *Day One*

In groups, students will create a definition of evil and share it with the class. Students will complete the first two parts of a KWL chart on what they know about witchcraft and the Salem witchcraft trials. A KWL chart gives the students an opportunity to share what they already know (K) about a topic, what they want (W) to know, and what they have learned (L).

### *Day Two*

Students will take notes over the history of witchcraft. Since these are ESL students, I usually try to give guided notes that the children can fill in as I speak. This helps to give them a chance to learn note-taking skills that are needed in high school and college. Students will watch a documentary on witchcraft. This video is put out by the **Arts and Entertainment Channel** and was available in my local library. There is also another documentary on witches put out by the **Discovery Channel** and can be ordered via their web site.

### *Day Three*

Students will continue with activities from *Day Two*. Each student will create his or her own timeline; students may decorate these timelines, and we will put these timelines up on the board for display.

### *Day Four*

Students will begin reading *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* (chapters one and two). They will usually read in pairs, or I will read to them because all my students struggle with reading aloud, and I do not like to put them “on the spot” in front of the other students. It is also valuable for them to hear a good reader read, so they can become cognizant of correct intonations, pauses, etc. Students will also begin to write down words that they do not know for me to help them create a working definition. I find that the dictionary meaning of a word for an ESL student is almost useless because the words in the definition are hard for them to understand. I help them with a more realistic definition and then give them an example of a **meaningful sentence**. This is a sentence in which the word is defined. Students will create their own meaningful sentences during the unit.

### *Day Five*

Students will have a mini-lecture on **setting** in literature. They will continue reading (chapters three and four) and begin describing the setting of the story.

### *Day Six*

Students will begin writing in their journals describing events that they perceive as evil. We will discuss these in class and see if we can find a common thread among the events that they described. They will also work on their meaningful sentences during the class period. We will also continue reading the novel (chapters five and six).

### *Day Seven*

Students will begin the period by writing a short paragraph predicting the ending of the novel. They will also be given a test over the first half of the novel. The test will include fill-in-the-blank, character identification, and short essay questions. We will review for the test prior to taking it, and I usually let my students use any notes that they have taken up to this point.

### *Day Eight*

Students will continue reading the novel, and we will start discussing how the old lady in the novel has been stigmatized as a witch simply because of her belief system and her appearance (chapters seven and eight).

### *Day Nine*

Students will begin creating a character analysis of Kit, the main female character, with help from the teacher. We will also start to analyze the other main female character Hannah. She is the accused witch in the novel. I would like them to do a comparison-contrast on these characters towards the end of the novel. If there is time, we will read chapters nine and ten.

### *Day Ten*

Students will write in their “evil” journals and read chapters eleven and twelve. I would also like to have a class discussion about dating in modern times and dating during the colonial times. In this novel, Kit is being courted by a young man that she has no interest in, but her family wants her to marry him because he comes from an acceptable background. This could be a lively discussion for young people today.

### *Day Eleven*

Students will read chapters thirteen and fourteen. Students will discuss Kit’s relationship with Nat, the captain’s son. She and Nat have a strong friendship with Hannah, the old Puritan woman. **Writing Assignment:** Students will describe a close relationship that he or she has with an older person. If the student does not have this type of relationship with

someone, why doesn't he or she? Students can then write about how they feel about senior citizens. Are they respectful of them? Are they scared of them?

### ***Day Twelve***

Students will continue with writing assignment from *Day Eleven*. They will complete peer revision of their rough drafts. I pair students and have each read his or her paper to the other student. The listener suggests any changes in the prose of the paper. There are just a few basic grammatical corrections that I have them look for each time. I usually have them focus on whatever we are studying in their English class. Some of examples of these are: subject-verb agreement, sentence fragments, and capitalization. If I had them look for all the grammatical errors at one time, it would be too overwhelming for them, and I don't think we should get too bogged down in the revision process. Students will then re-write corrected rough draft into a published copy.

### ***Day Thirteen***

Students will be reviewed for a test over second half of the book. This test will consist mostly of questions on the characters in the novel. The plot in this novel is really easy for them to follow, so I want to concentrate on character development. After the review, we will read chapters fifteen and sixteen.

### ***Day Fourteen***

We will take our test. Students will write in their "evil" journals. Students will then read chapters seventeen and eighteen.

### ***Day Fifteen***

We will have a mini-lecture over **foreshadowing** and how this literary technique is used in chapters seventeen and eighteen. We will have a class discussion over what happens to Hannah. At this time, I think it is important to redirect students to the fact that this was how people reacted during the witch scare of the seventeenth century when they were faced with anything that is unusual or unexplainable, such as the illness that was being experienced in this novel.

### ***Day Sixteen***

Students will read chapters nineteen and twenty. We will get into groups of three or four and make a list of words that they do not understand. They will pick five of the words and we will create a working or usable definition. The groups will write a meaningful sentence for each word.



### ***Day Seventeen***

We will have a discussion over Kit's arrest for witchcraft. We will finish the novel.

### ***Day Eighteen***

Complete character analysis of Kit and Hannah. Students will use a **Venn diagram** to compare and contrast the likenesses and differences of the characters Hannah, the old woman, and Kit. We will also review for a test over the entire book. The test will include **character identification**, definitions for **plot** and **foreshadowing**. I will also include some short essay questions over topics that we have discussed.

### ***Day Nineteen***

Students will take a test over *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*. **Writing Assignment:** What happened after the end of the book to Kit, Nat, and Hannah? Students can pick characters out of novel that they would like to expound on what happened after the ending of the novel.

### ***Day Twenty***

We will begin *The Crucible* today. Since this play is bit more complicated than the last novel we read, we will start off with some review over the Salem Witch Trials from the beginning of the unit. I will also give them a list of characters and a short explanation of the part that they play. I realize that this play might be a challenge for ESL students, but I have high expectations for my students, and I feel that with my direction, they can understand the message of the play. We will begin to read the first half of Act One in class. We will have to stop and discuss what is going on in the play. There are several asides in this part of the play, but we will skip this part because the vocabulary is just too challenging for middle school students. There are also explanations about the characters within the text, and I will have students add to their character sheet as we read these.

### ***Day Twenty-one***

We will continue putting entries in our "evil" journal. Students will also continue reading Act One. We will also discuss the literary term, **mood**, and decide what the mood of the play is at the end of Act One. At the end of Act One, the mood is very clearly dark, and I think this is a great place for students to really understand mood.

### ***Day Twenty-two***

I would like to begin a type of webbing or mapping that shows students the connection among the characters. I think it is extremely important for the students to see that these

accusations were not random. They were based upon grudges, dislikes, or vendettas that the people of Salem had against these men and women (the so-called witches). Seeing this relationship is also important for students to understand the concepts of prejudice and hatred. Most types of people are persecuted because of jealousy, misunderstanding, or just plain ignorance. This web will also help because ESL students need a lot of visual props to help them understand concepts in their second language.

### ***Day Twenty-three***

We will read the first one-third of Act II. The Proctors will be introduced and the trouble between them. The Proctors are an up standing couple in the community of Salem. The problem between them is that Mr. Proctor had an affair with Abigail, the young woman who is leading the witch-hunt. She was working as a servant for the Proctors, and she was fired when Mrs. Proctor got wind that Abigail might be flirting with John Proctor. This is very important for the students to understand because this is basically the whole reason that the witch trials started in this novel. When the girls were dancing in the forest, Abigail had Tituba, the black servant, put a spell on Mrs. Proctor so that she would die. This is how much Abigail hated this woman and how determined she was to have John Proctor—no matter what.

### ***Day Twenty-four***

We will read next third of Act II. We will begin a character analysis of Abigail. I would like for the students to do a comparison-contrast of Kit and Abigail at the end of the unit. In this act, Abigail accuses Elizabeth Proctor of being a witch and this begins Abby's downfall in the play. Elizabeth is arrested and taken away from her family. In this part of the play, we also see Rebecca Nurse being accused of witchcraft. This is where students can start filling in their web because Rebecca Nurse did not want Putnam, the relative of one of the accusers, to be the preacher in the community. I think it is important for students to start seeing how the accusations are connected to different relationships within the community. The people that are being accused have grudges against them from other members of the community.

### ***Day Twenty-five***

We will read the last third of Act II. In this part of the play, Mary Warren, one of the accusers and maid for John Proctor, refuses to help Goody Proctor because she is frightened of Abby's retribution. We will continue to work on the relationship web and discuss the arrests.

### *Day Twenty-six*

**Writing Assignment:** Pretend that you are Mary Warren, John Proctor's servant. Would you help save Goody Proctor and risk the ire of Abigail? Write two paragraphs explaining your choice. We will start reading Act III. In this part, several of the accused women are brought before the court, and John Proctor comes forward and tells the court that all these young women are just being spiteful to others in the community. John Proctor also finds out that his wife is going to have a baby; this will save her from hanging for at least a year.

### *Day Twenty-seven*

Continue reading Act III with students. Mary Warren is brought before the court by John Proctor to confess that this has all been a charade. She is ready to confess when the other accusers walk into the court. The girls, led by Abigail, start to pretend that they are seeing the Devil. In this part, John Proctor confesses to having an affair with Abigail. Goody Proctor denies the affair between Abigail and her husband in front of the court. We will discuss these happenings. Some questions might be: Do you think Goody Proctor did a smart thing by lying about her husband? Whose story would you believe-Goody Proctor's or John Proctor? Do you think that the court wanted to believe the worst? Why or why not?

### *Day Twenty-eight*

We will continue reading the play. Abigail pretends that Mary Warren is now the Devil and accuses her of trying to put a spell on her in the middle of courtroom. This is a great scene in the movie. Mary Warren confesses that she has been sent by the Devil to save her life. Mr. Hale, the head of the court, quits the court because he clearly sees what is going on among these people in this community. He is the only person who believes John Proctor. We will continue to work on our web; we will include Mary Warren in the web and her relationship with Abby, John Proctor, and Goody Proctor.

### *Day Twenty-nine*

We will start reading Act IV of the play. This act opens with Mr. Hale visiting the accusers that are to be hanged to beg them to spare their own lives by confessing to witchcraft. Sarah Good, the village midwife, and Rebecca Nurse, old woman, refuse to confess to a crime they did not commit. We start to see that the community is angry with the preacher Parris, the judges, and the young accusers because there are too many respected people in the community getting ready to be hanged. John Proctor was excommunicated from the church and only a few people were there to see it. There is also a discussion of rebellion in the town because of the witch-hunts, and people have had enough of this type of evil. Class discussion: Who do you think is truly evil? The accused witches or the judges that can start to clearly see that they are making a mistake?

### *Day Thirty*

We will finish the play today. Goody Proctor is summoned by judges and Mr. Hale to beg her husband to sign a confession so that he will save his life. They have a discussion about how he will not forgive himself for his indiscretions and Goody Proctor begs him to forgive himself. Proctor starts to agree to the confession because his wife wants him alive; however, John Proctor will not name the other accused as consorting with the Devil, and he will not sign his confession because he has verbally confessed. He refuses to be used in their evil conspiracy, and he is hanged. Class Discussion: Was John Proctor a hero or did he make a stupid mistake?

### *Day Thirty-one*

We will review for test over *The Crucible*. We will also finish our web that we have created during the reading of the play. The test will include **character identification**, short essays, and definition over **mood**.

### *Day Thirty-two*

We will have the test over *The Crucible*. Students may use their notes. After the test, we will do a compare-contrast over Abby (*The Crucible*) and Kit (*The Witch of Blackbird Pond*) using a Venn diagram.

### *Day Thirty-three*

Students will watch the 1996 version of *The Crucible*. This movie follows the play very closely. There is a very brief nudity scene at the beginning of the movie. Since it is during the part of the movie where the girls are dancing in the forest, I might have my students take a permission slip home so that I can show this part. This movie is available at **Blockbuster Video**.

### *Day Thirty-four*

Students will continue to watch the movie. After the movie, I would like us to have a discussion on the characters in the novel versus the actors in the movie. Did they do a good job portraying the characters in play? Who would you have rather seen on the screen? I think this might get really fun because I know a lot of my students don't know a lot of older actors, and I am sure they would pick really young people to play these characters.

### *Day Thirty-five*

We will start discussing a library project that I would like them to do. I will assign groups of three or four to explain a part of the Salem Witch Trials, witchcraft (Wicca), and a couple of other topics. We will go to the library for five class days to do research. Our school library is the city's public library, so students have Internet access, and I have several web sites that I have found (the web addresses are available in the students' bibliography). Students will need to write a one-page summary of the information that they have collected, create a project (poster, mobile, etc.), and give a short presentation to the class. I think this type of report is very important because many students go into high school and college and have no experience doing projects or oral presentations, and as we all know, it is especially difficult to get up in front of our peers.

***Day Thirty-six through Day Forty***

Library research

***Day Forty-two through Forty-four***

Oral presentations

***Day Forty-five***

Wrap-up of unit. I would like to give students a questionnaire about what they liked about the unit, what they didn't like about the unit, or what could I have done to make it more interesting for them. I would also like them to finish their KWL chart from beginning of unit. They need to fill in the part about what they have learned from the unit.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR TEACHERS

Berger, Helen A. *A Community of Witches*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999.

I really got quite a bit of information out of this book. This book deals with the practice of witchcraft in the United States in modern times. The author has been a witness to actual ceremonies, and she interviewed numerous persons who practice neo-paganism in America today. There is quite a bit of information in this text for the person that is doing basic research.

Burr, George Lincoln. *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases 1648-1706*. New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc. 1959.

This book contains personal narratives from actual eyewitnesses during the Salem Witchcraft Trials. It is very wordy and complicated reading; however, it does include a narrative from Cotton Mather.

Karlsen, Carol F. *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman-Witchcraft in Colonial New England*. New York: Random House, 1989.

This piece of literature goes into the detailed private lives of the women who were accused of witchcraft. There are numerous charts and graphs that give demographic and socioeconomic information of the women and men that were charged with the crime of witchcraft.

Marshall, Richard. *Witchcraft: The History and Mythology*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1995.

This book chronicles the myth of the witch throughout world history. It also includes explanations for other occult figures in history: fairies, dwarfs, witch doctors, etc. There are quite a few pictures from ancient history to modern times. **Available at Barnes and Noble Bookstores.**

Skelton, Robin. *The Practice of Witchcraft Today: An Introduction to Rituals and Beliefs*. Secaucus: Carol Publishing Group, 1990.

I really found this book the most helpful for basic information for lecture notes for my students. The first half of the book is set-up in question and answer format for the layperson. Questions include the answers to everything from origin of witchcraft to whether or not witches ride brooms.

Starkey, Marion. *The Visionary Girls: Witchcraft in Salem Village*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1973.

This is another take on the Salem Witch Trials and this deals more with the psychological and political makeup of the times. It also goes into detail about Mary Warren and her part in the trials. Mary Warren was the servant of the Proctors, who in some historians' eyes, confessed her part in the witch trial charade.

What is Magick? [http://www.witchvox.com/basics/school\\_reports.html](http://www.witchvox.com/basics/school_reports.html)

This web site is an excellent source of information about witchcraft in America today. There are several hyperlinks within the web site. One deals specifically with students writing reports on witchcraft. There are also links to other web sites. I found several web sites on witchcraft, but most of them bordered on the ridiculous or were inappropriate for school-age children; however, this seems to be the most legitimate web site that I found in my research.

Collier, P.F. "Witches." In *Collier's Encyclopedia*. 1997 ed. New York: PF Collier, 1997. This is the basic history of witchcraft that one would find in any encyclopedia.

Zeinfert, Karen. *The Salem Witchcraft Trials*. New York: Venture Books, Inc., 1989.

This book is another explanation of the Salem Witch Trials. It has a great description of colonial life, and there is also a history of the aftermath of the trials. Some excellent pictures of paintings from the era are included.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR STUDENTS**

Carpenter, Richard P. "On 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Witch Trials, Salem Plays up Its Sad History" *Houston Chronicle* (Houston, Tex.) 25 Oct 1992: J1+.

This is a newspaper article explaining about the Salem Witch Trials (the plot of *The Crucible*), and it also has pictures of the museums in Salem, Mass. This is perfect for ESL and Special Education students because the pictures will help them visualize the era.

*The Crucible*. Dir. Nicholas Hytner. Perf. Daniel Day Lewis, Winona Ryder, and Joan Allen. Fox, 1996.

This is a movie of the play, *The Crucible*. It follows the book very closely and is appropriate for middle school or high school students. There is a very brief nude scene at the beginning of the movie. **Available at Blockbuster Video.**

Katz, Nancie L. "Casting out a Demon: Salem Clergy Seeks Atonement, Welcomes Witch into Group." *Houston Chronicle* (Houston, Tex.) 6 Aug 1993: 15A+.

This is a newspaper article about how Salem clergy have welcomed a member of **Wicca** into their religious association. **Wicca** is a nature-based religion; **Wiccans** cast spells, read tarot cards, and call themselves witches. The article asserts that **Wicca** is now a recognized religion and should be treated as such.

Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*. New York: Viking Press, 1970.

This is the original play with overture and character analysis included in the text. I thought the analysis was too complicated for middle school students, but it would probably be perfectly acceptable for high school students.

Speare, Elizabeth George. *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1980.

A Newberry Award-winning book about a young girl's introduction into a Puritan society. The book follows her through her trials and tribulations with different members of the community. It also narrates her friendship with an old woman that is known as the witch of Blackbird Pond.

*Witchcraft In America*. Dir. Marnie Villari. Hex Productions and A&E Networks, 1993.

This video gives a history of witchcraft in America through the 1990s. It includes the Salem Witch Trials, Wicca (religion of witches), Satanism, and Voodoo. I liked it because it gave an over-all picture of all types of occult religion. It is from the **Arts and Entertainment Channel**, so this video is appropriate for all ages.