Name: Period: Date:

***The Crucible* Act 1**

1. What is the meaning of *crucible* in the title of the play? What kind of play does this lead you to suspect?
2. Miller often foreshadows his characterizations with a descriptive phrase in the stage directions just before a character’s first entrance. In the stage directions, what does he suggest about each of the characters:
   1. Abigail Williams
   2. Ann Putnam
   3. Mercy Lewis

How do the dialogue and actions of each character in this act bear out Miller’s suggestions?

1. Summarize your impression of the Reverend Samuel Parris in this act. What are his principal flaws or moral weaknesses?
2. One of Miller’s major subjects in the play is the nature of authority. Comment on how the following characters are linked with the idea of authority in Act One:
3. Samuel Parris
4. Thomas Putnam
5. John Hale
6. Rebecca Nurse

At this stage, what seems to be the playwright’s opinion about each of these character’s claims to possessing authority?

1. In two long segments of this act, Miller establishes a dominant form for many of the subsequent scenes in the play: the question and answer of interrogation. The playwright implies that both interrogations in this act are flawed in their methods and results. Who questions whom in the interrogation scenes in this act?

Why does each interrogation fail?

1. How would you describe the atmosphere or mood at the end of this act?

What might this atmosphere foreshadow about future events in the town of Salem?