**Character Descriptions:**

**John Proctor** -  A local farmer who lives just outside town; Elizabeth Proctor’s husband. A stern, harsh-tongued man, John hates hypocrisy. Nevertheless, he has a hidden sin—his affair with Abigail Williams—that proves his downfall. When the hysteria begins, he hesitates to expose Abigail as a fraud because he worries that his secret will be revealed and his good name ruined.

**Abigail Williams** -  Reverend Parris’s niece. Abigail was once the servant for the Proctor household, but Elizabeth Proctor fired her after she discovered that Abigail was having an affair with her husband, John Proctor. Abigail is smart, wily, a good liar, and vindictive when crossed.

**Reverend John Hale** -  A young minister reputed to be an expert on witchcraft. Reverend Hale is called in to Salem to examine Parris’s daughter Betty. Hale is a committed Christian and hater of witchcraft. His critical mind and intelligence save him from falling into blind fervor. His arrival sets the hysteria in motion, although he later regrets his actions and attempts to save the lives of those accused.

**Elizabeth Proctor** -  John Proctor’s wife. Elizabeth fired Abigail when she discovered that her husband was having an affair with Abigail. Elizabeth is supremely virtuous, but often cold.

**Reverend Parris** -  The minister of Salem’s church. Reverend Parris is a paranoid, power-hungry, yet oddly self-pitying figure. Many of the townsfolk, especially John Proctor, dislike him, and Parris is very concerned with building his position in the community.

**Rebecca Nurse** -  Francis Nurse’s wife. Rebecca is a wise, sensible, and upright woman, held in tremendous regard by most of the Salem community. However, she falls victim to the hysteria when the Putnams accuse her of witchcraft and she refuses to confess.

**Francis Nurse** -  A wealthy, influential man in Salem. Nurse is well respected by most people in Salem, but is an enemy of Thomas Putnam and his wife.

**Judge Danforth** -  The deputy governor of Massachusetts and the presiding judge at the witch trials. Honest and scrupulous, at least in his own mind, Danforth is convinced that he is doing right in rooting out witchcraft.

**Giles Corey** -  An elderly but feisty farmer in Salem, famous for his tendency to file lawsuits. Giles’s wife, Martha, is accused of witchcraft, and he himself is eventually held in contempt of court and pressed to death with large stones.

**Thomas Putnam** -  A wealthy, influential citizen of Salem, Putnam holds a grudge against Francis Nurse for preventing Putnam’s brother-in-law from being elected to the office of minister. He uses the witch trials to increase his own wealth by accusing people of witchcraft and then buying up their land.

**Ann Putnam** -  Thomas Putnam’s wife. Ann Putnam has given birth to eight children, but only Ruth Putnam survived. The other seven died before they were a day old, and Ann is convinced that they were murdered by supernatural means.

**Ruth Putnam** -  The Putnams’ lone surviving child out of eight. Like Betty Parris, Ruth falls into a strange stupor after Reverend Parris catches her and the other girls dancing in the woods at night.

**Tituba** -  Reverend Parris’s black slave from Barbados. Tituba agrees to perform voodoo at Abigail’s request.

**Mary Warren** -  The servant in the Proctor household and a member of Abigail’s group of girls. She is a timid girl, easily influenced by those around her, who tried unsuccessfully to expose the hoax and ultimately recanted her confession.

**Betty Parris** -  Reverend Parris’s ten-year-old daughter. Betty falls into a strange stupor after Parris catches her and the other girls dancing in the forest with Tituba. Her illness and that of Ruth Putnam fuel the first rumors of witchcraft.

**Martha Corey** -  Giles Corey’s third wife. Martha’s reading habits lead to her arrest and conviction for witchcraft.

**Ezekiel Cheever** -  A man from Salem who acts as clerk of the court during the witch trials. He is upright and determined to do his duty for justice.

**Judge Hathorne** -  A judge who presides, along with Danforth, over the witch trials.

**Herrick** -  The marshal of Salem.

**Mercy Lewis** -  One of the girls in Abigail’s group.

**Townspeople**

**Monologues:**

**Mary Warren relates to her employer and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Proctor, the recent incident that...**

“I never knew it before. I never knew anything before. When she come into the court I say to myself, I must not accuse this woman, for she sleeps in ditches, and so very old and poor. But then- then she sit there, denying and denying, and I feel a misty coldness climbin' up my back, and the skin on my skull begin to creep, and I feel a clamp around my neck and I cannot breathe air; and then (entranced) I hear a voice, a screamin' voice, and it were my voice- and all at once I remembered everything she done to me. So many time, Mr. Proctor, she come to this very door, beggin’ bread and a cup of cider—and mark this: whenever I turned her away empty, she *mumbled.* But *what* does she mumble? You must remember Goody Proctor. Last month – a Monday, I think—she walked away and I thought my guts would burst for two days after Do you remember it? And so I told that to Judge Hathorne, and he asks her so. “Goody Osburn” says he, “what curse do you mumble that this girl must fall sick after turning your away?” And then she replies *–(mimicking an old crone* )– “Why, your excellence. No curse at all. I only say my commandments; I hope I may say my commandments” says she! Aye but then Judge Hathorne say “Recite for us your commandments – and af all the ten she could not say a single one. She never knew no commandments, and they had her in a flat lie!

**Abigail:**

Shut up! All of you. We danced. That is all, and mark this, if anyone breathe a word or the edge of a word about the other things, I will come to you in the black of some terrible night, and I will bring with me a pointy reckoning that will shudder you! And you know I can do it. I saw Indians smash my dear parents’ heads on the pillow next to mine. And I have seen some reddish work done at night. And I can make you wish you had never seen the sun go down!

**ABIGAIL:**

I cannot bear lewd looks no more, John. My spirit's changed entirely. I ought to be given Godly looks when I suffer for them as I do. Look at my leg. I'm holes all over from their damned needles and pins. The jab your wife gave me's not healed yet, y'know. And George Jacobs comes again and again and raps me with his stick - the same spot every night all this week. Looks at the lump I have.   
Oh John, the world's so full of hypocrites! They pray in jail, I'm told they pray in jail! And torture me in my bed while sacred words are coming from their mouths! It will need God Himself to cleanse this town properly. If I live, if I am not murdured, I will surely cry out others until the last hypocrite is dead!   
But John, you taught me goodness, therefore you are good. It were a fire you walked me through and all my ignorance was burned away. It were a fire, John, we lay in fire. And from that night no woman called me wicked any more but I knew my answer. I used to weep for my sins when the wind lifted up my skirts; and blushed for shame because some old Rebecca called me loose. And then you burned my ignorance away. As bare as some December tree I saw them all – walking like saints to church, running to feed the sick, and hypocrites in their hearts! And God gave me strength to call them liars and God made men listen to me, and by God I will scrub the world clean for the love of Him! John, I will make you such a wife when the world is white again! You will be amazed to see me every day, a light of heaven in your house!

**Elizabeth Proctor**

(to John Proctor) “Giles is dead. He were not hanged. He would not answer aye or nay to his indictment; for if he denied the charge they’d hand him surely, and auction out his property. So he stand mute, and died Christian under the law. And so his sons will have his farm. It is the law, for he could not be condemned a wizard without he answer the indictment, aye or nay. (pause) They press him John. Great stones they upon his chest until he plead aye or nay. (with a tender smile for the old man) They say he give them but two words. “More weight,” he says. And died. Aye. It were a fearsome man, Giles Corey.

**John Proctor**

PROCTOR: (*breathless and in agony):* It [ *meaning* *Abigail]* is a whore!  
Mark her! Now she'll suck a scream to stab me with but-  
(*trembling, his life collapsing about him*) I have known her, sir. I have known he…  
 Oh, Francis, I wish you had some evil in you that you might know me. (*To Danforth):* A man will not cast away his good name. You surely know that( *his voice about to break, and his shame great)*: In the proper place-where my beasts are bedded. On the last night of my joy, some eight months past. She used to serve me in my house, sir. (*He has to clamp his jaw to keep from weeping.)* A man may think God sleeps, but God sees everything, I know it now. I beg you, sir, I beg you-see her what she is. My wife, my dear good wife, took this girl soon after, sir, and put her out on the highroad. And being what she is, a lump of vanity, sir-( *He is being overcome*.) Excellency, forgive me, forgive me. (*Angrily against himself, he turns away from the Governor for a moment. Then, as though to cry out is his only means of speech left):* She thinks to dance with me on my wife's grave! And well she might, for I thought of her softly. God help me, I lusted, and there *is* a promise in such sweat. But it is a whore's vengeance, and you must see it now.

**PROCTOR,**

(*with solemn warning) “*You will not judge me more, Elizabeth. I have good reason to think before I charge fraud on Abigail, and I will think on it. Let you look to your own improvement before you go to judge your husband any more. I have forgot Abigail, and- Spare me! You forget nothin' and forgive nothin'. Learn charity, woman. I have gone tiptoe in this house all seven month since she is gone. I have not moved from there to there without I think to please you, and still an everlasting funeral marches round your heart. I cannot speak but I am doubted, every moment judged for lies, as though I come into a court when I come into this house. I'll plead my honesty no more, Elizabeth.  
 No more! I should have roared you down when first you told me your suspicion. But I wilted, and, like a Christian, I confessed. Confessed! Some dream I had must have mistaken you for God that day. But you're not, you're not, and let you remember it! Let you look sometimes for the goodness in me, and judge me not.

**Hale:**

“Charity, Proctor, charity. What I have heard in her favor, I will not fear to testify in court. God help me, I cannot judge her guilty or innocent—I know not. Only this consider: the world goes mad, and it profit nothing you should lay the cause to the vengeance of a little girl. Proctor, I cannot think God be provoked so grandly by sucha petty cause. The jails are packed—our greatest judges sit in Salem now – and hangin’s promised. Man, we must look to cause proportionate. Were there murder done, perhaps, and never brought to light? Abomination? Some secret blasphemy that stinks to Heaven? Think on cause, man, and let you help me to discover it. For there’s your way, believe it, there is your only way, when such confusion strikes upon the world. Let you counsel among yourselves; think on your village and what may have drawn from heaven such thundering wrath upon you all. I shall pray God open up our eyes.”

**Danforth:**

“Mr. Hale, believe me; for a man of such terrible learning you are most bewildered-I hope you will forgive me. I have been thirty-two year at the bar, sir, and I should be confounded were I called upon to defend these people. Let you consider, now- (*to Proctor and the others*) And I bid you all do likewise. In an ordinary crime, how does one defend the accused? One calls up witnesses to prove his innocence. But witchcraft is *ipso facto*, on its face and by its nature, an invisible crime, is it not? Therefore, who may possibly be witness to it? The witch and the victim. None other. Now we cannot hope the witch will accuse herself; granted? Therefore, we must rely upon her victims-and they do testify, the children certainly do testify. As for the witches, none will deny that we are most eager for all their confessions. Therefore, what is left for a lawyer to bring out? I think I have made my point. Have I not?