*The Crucible* Essay

**Due Date: Thursday, Dec. 1st**

There is no exception to the due date. Late assignments will NOT be accepted. Excused absences will not buy you an extra day. If you are absent, have someone drop your paper off to the front office. No e-mailed papers will be accepted. Papers must also be submitted to SafeAssign on Blackboard by 6:00 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 1st.

Formatting Requirements

* Must be typed in MLA format (Refer to <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/> for proper formatting)
* Minimum of two typed, double-spaced pages, maximum of three (23 lines of text per page). 1 ¾ pages is NOT 2 pages!
* 12 point font, Times New Roman
* 1 inch margins
* You must include three textual references from the play
* Include a Works Cited page (Refer to <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/> for proper formatting)—This does not count toward the two page minimum.

Please choose ONE of the following prompts:

1. A crucible is a pot which, because it can withstand great heat, is used to melt iron and other metals. The word “crucible” is also used to describe a severe test or a hard trial. Finally, “crucible” is also used as an adjective to describe a very high grade steel. With these possibilities in mind, which character best illustrates the meaning of the play’s title? Why? Support your argument with specific evidence from the play.
2. Preserving one’s reputation is a prevalent theme in *The Crucible*. Examine three characters in detail who are concerned with their reputations. How does this affect how they act? How are their situations similar or different? Is their good name more important than the truth?
3. What roles do women play in the drama? What is Arthur Miller’s treatment of women and what message is he trying to convey? What images or female archetypes are expressed through characters of Mary Warren, Elizabeth Proctor, and Abigail Williams?
4. A tragic hero is the main character in a tragedy. In order to fit the definition, the individual must be a person of great or noble character who has a tragic flaw which causes his or her downfall. The tragic flaw is a weakness or error in judgement which causes the character to suffer. This suffering produces pity from the audience. Consider whether or not John Proctor fits the definition of a tragic hero.
5. Consider some of the authority figures in the play—Danforth, Parris, and Proctor. What traits, events, or other characters motivate their attitudes and responses toward the witch trials? How do their views in regards to law and order differ from one another?

All essays must demonstrate 11th grade writing skills

* Utilize spell and grammar check and always be sure to proofread before turning in
* Do NOT refer to yourself in the essay. (Ex: no using the pronoun “I”)
* Do NOT use any contractions
* Write in present tense
* Italicize *The Crucible* when referring to the title

**You will earn a grade of “0” if you are found to have plagiarized any part of your paper.**

Plagiarism is defined, by Black’s Law Dictionary, as “the act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s word or ideas and attributing them as one’s own. Plagiarism is also (Plagiarism.com):

1. When the writer takes the time to paraphrase most of the paper from other sources and make it all fit together, instead of spending the same effort on original work.
2. Although the writer has retained the essential content of the source, he or she has altered the paper’s appearance slightly by changing key words and phrases.
3. The writer tries to disguise plagiarism by copying from several different sources, tweaking the sentences to make them fit together while retaining most of the original phrasing.

**How to write your paper…**

Introduction

* Hook: This grabs your reader’s attention. Some options include: a strong statement, a quotation, a question, an exaggeration or outrageous statement, a shocking statistic, figurative language, or strong, vivid description.
* Connect hook to literature/topic
* Plot Summary
* Thesis statement (this sentence(s) states exactly what your essay is about and introduces the three main supporting topics that you’ll cover in three body paragraphs.)

Sample Introduction

Many people spend their entire lives searching for the key to a meaningful life. In *A Christmas Carol*, written by Charles Dickens, a greedy old miser named Scrooge endures such a search for meaning and ultimately finds the treasure of life. He needs the help of three spirits, who appear during the night on Christmas Eve, to help him see how his inconsiderate and greedy actions affect others and leave him alone. As a result of this experience, he changes from his selfish ways and allows himself to branch out, becoming more friendly, generous, and content in the process. *A Christmas Carol* illustrates that people can be happy without money or success, and pure happiness originates from thoughtfulness and generosity.

Body Paragraph

* Topic Sentence: what your entire paragraph is going to focus on. Taken from the thesis statement.
* Evidence: quotes have to have a lead in and may not stand alone. Follow the quote with proper MLA citation.
* Explanation: this should be the longest part of the paragraph and should explain HOW the evidence proves the topic.
* Link (Transition): This smooth lead in moves from the previous topic to the next. Do not use one words (First, Next, Last)—see handout for transitional words to smoothly integrate into the sentence.

Sample Body Paragraph Using the PEEL Method

**(Topic Sentence)** Shakespeare presents Macbeth as regretful by portraying his quest to be king as destructive from the start. **(Evidence)** As soon as Macbeth has murdered Duncan, his language shows that regret: “Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood Clean from my hand? No. This my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red” (Mac 2.2.61-63). **(Explanation)** Macbeth’s question, asked only to himself, clearly exhibits shame in his actions. These actions are so abhorrent that even the ocean belonging to the god of the sea is not enough to wash his shame away. There is enough blood, representative of Macbeth’s guilt, to turn that entire ocean red.

**(Link/Transition into next topic sentence)** Duncan’s blood will eternally haunt not only Macbeth but also Lady Macbeth, who may appear to be strong in the beginning, yet as time progresses, her guilt surfaces.

Conclusion

* Restate in different words the main idea given in the thesis statement (do not simply repeat what you have said before)
* Sum up the body paragraphs by touching on their major points in 1-3 sentences.
* Do not include any new evidence/topics.
* Avoid any attempts at humor, cuteness, or sarcasm.
* Include the title and author once more.
* The last sentence needs to bring the paper full circle. You do this be referring back to the hook you started the paper with in order to tie it all together.