The Crucible – Character Descriptions

Here is a list of characters for *The Crucible* in order of appearance. Playing ages (which are deliberately broad to provide flexibility when casting) and genders are given.

Reverend Samuel Parris – 35-55, Male – Minister of Salem's church, disliked by many residents because of his power-hungry, greedy, and domineering personality. He is more concerned about his reputation than the well-being of his sick daughter Betty. He is paranoid of being thrown out of Salem for having a witch as a daughter.

Betty Parris – 16-25 (playing the younger end), Female, requires physicality – Reverend Parris's daughter. Betty falls into a strange stupor after Parris catches her and the girls dancing in the forest with Tituba.

Tituba – 25-50, Female, preferably black – Reverend Parris's slave from Barbados. Tituba agrees to perform voodoo at Abigail's request and tries to raise the spirits of Ann Putnam's dead children. In the first scene she is turned in as a witch by Abigail and under duress accuses four other Salem women. By the end she is troubled to mental instability, haunted by hallucinations and hysteria.

Abigail Williams – 16-35, Female – Reverend Parris's niece and the antagonist. Abigail was once the servant for the Proctor household, but Elizabeth Proctor fired her after discovering that Abigail had an affair with her husband, John. Smart, wily, a good liar, and vindictive when crossed, she uses her charismatic influence over the girls to gain power to supplant Elizabeth so she and John can marry.

Susanna Walcott – 16-35, Female – Susanna is a nervous and hasty girl, younger than Abigail. She works for Dr. Griggs. She participates in the ritual in the woods with Tituba.

Ann Putnam – 35-60, Female – Thomas Putnam's wife, 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.

Thomas Putnam – 35-60, Male – 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.

Mercy Lewis – 16-30, Female – Servant to the Putnam's, Mercy is a "sly, merciless girl" She proves to be Abigail's closest friend, sticking by her to the end.

Mary Warren – 17-35, Female – A timid servant in the Proctor household and a member of Abigail's group of girls. Easily influenced by those around her, she tries unsuccessfully to expose the hoax but is thwarted by Abigail and the other girls. To save herself from their

accusations of witchcraft, Mary ultimately recants her confession and turns on John Proctor.

John Proctor – 30-45, Male – A local farmer who lives just outside town and the protagonist; Elizabeth Proctor's husband. A stern, harsh-tongued man, John hates hypocrisy. His hidden sin—his affair with Abigail Williams—proves his downfall. When the hysteria begins, he hesitates to expose Abigail as a fraud because he worries that his own secret will be revealed and his good name ruined.

Rebecca Nurse – 40-65, Female – Francis Nurse's wife. Rebecca is a wise, sensible, and upright woman, pillar of the community, held in highest regard by most of the Salem community. Jealous of Nurse's many children, the Putnams accuse her of witchcraft and, not only does she refuse to confess, but she also voices her opposition to the idea of witchcraft.

Giles Corey – 35-60, Male – Elderly but feisty farmer in Salem, famous for his tendency to file lawsuits and friend of John Proctor. After Giles's wife, Martha, is accused of witchcraft, he is held in contempt of court and pressed to death with large stones. Despite this torture, he refuses to plea (allowing his children to retain ownership of their property) and he refuses to accuse anyone else.

Reverend John Hale – 25-50, Male – A young minister, a committed Christian nearing forty, reputed to be an expert on witchcraft called in to Salem to examine Parris's daughter. 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, even begging some—like John Proctor—to lie and confess so he can live.

Elizabeth Proctor – 25-40, Female – John Proctor's wife. Elizabeth fired Abigail with whom her husband was having an affair. Elizabeth is supremely virtuous, but often cold, especially to John whom she can't forgive.

Francis Nurse – 50-80, Male – 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.

Ezekiel Cheever – 25-40, Male – An astute but morally weak man from Salem who acts as the witch trials' court clerk. This upright friend to most residents of Salem quickly turns on former friends and those accused of witchcraft, handling their arrests.

Marshal Herrick – 25-60, Male – The marshal of Salem responsible for bringing defendants before the court. Sympathetic, he comes to disbelieve the witchcraft allegations.

Judge Hathorne – 45-70, Male – A judge who presides, along with Danforth, over the witch trials. Cold, ignorant and antagonistic, he denies any possible explanation other than witchcraft. Considered the "hanging judge" of the era.

Judge Danforth – 40-60, Male – Deputy Governor of Massachusetts and presiding judge at the witch trials. Honest, scrupulous and the ultimate authority, at least in his own mind, Danforth is convinced that he is doing right in rooting out witchcraft.

Martha Corey – voice only, to be cast during rehearsals – Giles Corey's third wife. Martha's tendency to hide the books she reads lead to her arrest and conviction for witchcraft. Only her voice is heard from offstage as she testifies before the court.

Sarah Good – small part, to be cast during rehearsals – one of the first to be accused of witchcraft, she is poor and often rejected from society. Pregnant at her trial, she gives birth in jail but the baby dies. The ordeal has affected her to the point of mental instability. She appears only briefly in the last scene.