Act I – *The Crucible* Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Study Guide Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Block \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* As you read, think about the meaning of the title of this play, *The Crucible*. A **crucible** has at least 2 definitions:
* a container in which metals, ores, and so forth can be subjected to intense heat and melted
* a severe test or trial
* Arthur Miller wrote *The Crucible* in the 1950’s in order to criticize the activities of Senator Joseph McCarthy, who was leading a movement to find and prosecute suspected communists as if he were carrying out a witch trial.
* Arthur Miller used the names of real 17th century people, but he took many liberties in creating their personalities and motivations.
* *The Crucible* centers around a triangle of people who are enveloped in guilt related to personal sins. The Puritan society – with all of its religious beliefs and values – is the backdrop for the action of the play. In addition, there are MANY extra characters that add to the action, conflict, and hysteria of the plot. Take notes on a character chart to keep them all straight.

Factual & Interpretative Questions – Detailed responses to these questions will help prepare you for any quizzes or tests on *The Crucible*. Feel free to include any direct quotations from the play which help answer the questions.

1. Who are Reverend Parris, Betty, and Abigail? How are they related? How do they speak to each other?
2. Who is Tituba? What is her relationship to the family? Where is she from? How does she speak?
3. Who is Betty? What is wrong with her in the opening scene? Why does Parris suggest calling in Reverend Hale?
4. Why is Reverend Parris upset with Abigail? Why doesn’t Parris want to speak to the crowd downstairs? What does he fear?
5. Who are Ann and Thomas Putnam? Who is Ruth? What is wrong with her? Why does Mrs. Putnam believe there are witches in Salem? Why is Mr. Putnam bitter? How do the Putnams tie Ruth’s problem to Betty’s?
6. Who is Mercy Lewis? What is her relationship to the Putnams? How does she act?
7. What does the conversation between Abigail (Abby), Mercy Lewis, Mary Warren, and Betty reveal about their recent activities? What really happened in the forest? Who disagrees with whom? Who is the leader of this group?
8. Who is John Proctor? What is his relationship to Mary Warren? What is his relationship to Abigail (Abby)Williams? How does he feel about his relationship with her?
9. Who is Elizabeth Proctor? What does Abigail think of her? How might this affect the outcome of the play?
10. Who are Francis and Rebecca Nurse? What effect does Rebecca have on Betty? What is Rebecca’s explanation of the girl’s behavior?
11. What is John Proctor’s reason for his not regularly attending church?
12. What do Thomas Putnam and John Proctor argue about? What significance might this have in the play?
13. Who is Reverend John Hale? Why does he come to Salem? How is he treated?
14. How does Hale confuse Tituba? To what does she confess? What is the significance of their conversation?
15. What do the girls do at the end of Act One? Why do they do this?
16. Based on what you know about the characters and your knowledge of the Salem Witch Trials, what will happen next?