


Module 4: Drama in American Literature

Topic 6 Content: Signs of Troubled Times

Introduction

Signs of Troubled Times

Introduction



Use the **NEXT** button or the numbered tabs at the bottom to explore the signs that indicate things are going terribly wrong in Salem.

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Wandering Cows

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Missing Girls

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Missing Girls

The Reverend Parris reveals Abigail has stolen thirty-one pounds (the currency of the time period) and has fled Salem with Mercy. Parris and Danforth worry about this new revelation because their lead witness has just disappeared. Why would the star witness run away? Flight usually can be an indication of guilt and fear of discovery.



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Dagger on the Door

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Dagger on the Door

In addition to Abigail and Mercy's disappearance, Parris finds a dagger on the door of his home, a symbolic threat suggesting dissent specifically directed against him. He has long been plagued with worry and paranoia about a faction sworn to remove him from his pulpit. Now it seems the townspeople are beginning to act upon their ill feelings not only toward Parris but also toward the executions and trials.



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Hale Returns

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Hale Returns



The Reverend Hale returns to Salem after quitting the court. He has been the only judge to objectively see through the girls' lies and deceit; however, his fellow judges do not believe him. He returns to encourage John, Rebecca, and Martha to confess to witchcraft to save their lives. He believes that lying is not as much of a sin as sacrificing their lives due to pride.

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Riots in Andover

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Riots in Andover



Andover is a neighboring town that has had a witch hunt of its own. The townspeople have revolted against the trials. The judges are fearful these feelings will catch on in Salem where they will continue to lose their credibility.

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