



Empowerment

How does Miller present the theme of empowerment in *The Crucible*?

"I am amazed you do not see what weighty work we do."

Tasks

Preparation Tasks

- A) Language
Read through Extract A.
Annotate three examples of language that present the theme of empowerment.
- B) Structure
Find one quotation from the beginning of the extract that presents the theme of empowerment. Annotate the use of language.
Find a second quotation at the end of the extract that presents the theme of empowerment. Annotate the use of language to explain the change.
- C) Character Study
Choose a character within the scene. How does the power they hold change within the scene?
Write a PEA paragraph to explain your thinking, finding a quotation to support your answer.

Focussed Writing Task

How does Miller present the theme of empowerment in *The Crucible*?

Answer the question above, developing your own, original interpretation.

You should develop one of the areas already explored above. You should, however, comment on how language is used within your chosen quotations for effect.

Empowerment:

The increasing political, social or spiritual strength of a particular entity.

During the Salem witch trials, many of those who were previously marginalised found themselves in positions of influence.

Extract A: Act 2 - *The Crucible*

Mary Warren: He sentenced her. He must. To ameliorate it: But not Sarah Good. For Sarah Good confessed, y'see.

Proctor: Confessed! To what?

Mary Warren: That she - *in horror at the memory* - she some-times made a compact with Lucifer, and wrote her name in his black book - with her blood - and bound herself to torment Christians till God's thrown down - and we all must worship Hell forevermore,

Pause.

Proctor: But - surely you know what a jabberer she is. Did you tell them that?

Mary Warren: Mr. Proctor, in open court she near to choked us all to death.

Proctor: How, choked you?

Mary Warren: She sent her spirit out.

Elizabeth: Oh, Mary, Mary, surely you -

Mary Warren, with an indignant edge: She tried to kill me many times, Goody Proctor!

Elizabeth: Why, I never heard you mention that before.

Mary Warren: 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 sleep 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!

Proctor: Why? What did she do to you?

Mary Warren, like one awakened to a marvelous secret in-sight: 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.

Elizabeth: Mumbled! She may mumble if she's hungry.

Mary Warren: But what does she mumble? You must re-member, 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?

Elizabeth: Why - I do, I think, but -

Mary Warren: And so I told that to Judge Hathorne, and he asks her so. "Sarah Good," says he, "what curse do you mumble that this girl must fall sick after turning you 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!

Elizabeth: And that's an upright answer.

Mary Warren: Aye, but then Judge Hathorne say, "Recite for us your commandments!" - leaning avidly toward them - and of all the ten she could not say a single one. She never knew no commandments, and they had her in a flat lie!

Proctor: And so condemned her?

Mary Warren, now a little strained, seeing his stubborn doubt: Why, they must when she condemned herself.

Proctor: But the proof, the proof!

Mary Warren, with greater impatience with him: I told you the proof. It's hard proof, hard as rock, the judges said.

Proctor, pauses an instant, then: You will not go to court again, Mary Warren.

Mary Warren: I must tell you, sir, I will be gone every day now. I am amazed you do not see what weighty work we do.

Proctor: What work you do! It's strange work for a Christian girl to hang old women!

Mary Warren: But, Mr. Proctor, they will not hang them if they confess. Sarah Good will only sit in jail some time - recall-ing - and here's a wonder for you; think on this. Goody Good is pregnant!

Elizabeth: Pregnant! Are they mad? The woman's near to sixty!

Mary Warren: They had Doctor Griggs examine her, and she's full to the brim. And smokin' a pipe all these years, and no husband either! But she's safe, thank God, for they'll not hurt the innocent child, But be that not a marvel? You must see it, sir, it's God's work we do. So I'll be gone every day for some time. I'm - I am an official of the court, they say, and I - She has been edging toward onstage.

Proctor: I'll official you! He strides to the mantel, takes down the whip hanging there.

Mary Warren, terrified, but coming erect, striving for her authority: I'll not stand whipping any more!

Elizabeth, hurriedly, as Proctor approaches: Mary, promise now you'll stay at home -

Mary Warren, backing from him, but keeping her erect posture, striving for her way: The Devil's loose in Salem, Mr. Proctor; we must discover where he's hiding!

Proctor: I'll whip the Devil out of you!

With whip raised he reaches out for her, and she streaks away and yells.

Mary Warren, pointing at Elizabeth: I saved her life today!

Silence. His whip comes down.

Elizabeth, softly: I am accused?

Mary Warren, quaking: Somewhat mentioned. But I said I never see no sign you ever sent your spirit out to hurt no one, and seeing I do live so closely with you, they dismissed it.

Elizabeth: Who accused me?

Mary Warren: I am bound by law, I cannot tell it. *To Proctor:* I only hope you'll not be so sarcastical no more. Four judges and the King's deputy sat to dinner with us but an hour ago. I - I would have you speak civilly to me, from this out.

Proctor, in horror, muttering in disgust at her: Go to bed.

Mary Warren, with a stamp of her foot: I'll not be ordered to bed no more, Mr. Proctor! I am eighteen and a woman, how-ever single!

Proctor: Do you wish to sit up? Then sit up.

Mary Warren: I wish to go to bed!

Proctor, in anger: Good night, then!

Mary Warren: Good night.

Dissatisfied, uncertain of herself, she goes out. Wide-eyed, both, Proctor and Elizabeth stand staring.