English 11
The Crucible: Vocabulary

Find each of the words listed below. Read the sentence containing the word and make a prediction about the meaning as it is used in context. Then look up the word in the dictionary and write down the actual meaning for the correct part of speech.

1. dissembling (adj.) p.9
   Meaning in context: concealing under false appearance
   Definition: ____________________________

2. conjure (v.) p.10
   Meaning in context: to call to mind.
   Definition: ____________________________

3. faction (n.) p.10
   Meaning in context: a group of people inside a political party
   Definition: ____________________________

4. traffick (v.) p.10
   Meaning in context: to have dealings with
   Definition: ____________________________

5. abomination (n.) p.11
   Meaning in context: anything hateful
   Definition: ____________________________

6. gibberish (n.) p.11
   Meaning in context: rapid and incoherent talk
   Definition: ____________________________

7. intimation (n.) p.15
   Meaning in context: indirect suggestion, a hint
   Definition: ____________________________
8. **trepidation (n.) p.18**  
Meaning in context: [quaking, tremor, anxiety]  
Definition:  

9. **prodigious (adj.) p.28**  
Meaning in context: [of great power]  
Definition:  

10. **fathom (v.) p.30**  
Meaning in context: [understand thoroughly]  
Definition:  

11. **afflict (v.) p.37**  
Meaning in context: [to cause pain]  
Definition:  

12. **ameliorate (v.) p.56**  
Meaning in context: [to make better]  
Definition:  

13. **effrontery (n.) p.98**  
Meaning in context: [audacity]  
Definition:  

14. **qualm (n.) p.99**  
Meaning in context: [misgiving, a sudden feeling of uneasiness]  
Definition:  

15. **probity (n.) p.100**  
Meaning in context: [integrity, honesty]  
Definition:  

16. **transfixed (adj.) p.115**  
Meaning in context: [perceivd through, impaled]  
Definition:  
17. **beguile (v.) p.129**
   - Meaning in context: charm, deceive
   - Definition: 

18. **retaliation (n.) p.129**
   - Meaning in context: payback for injury
   - Definition: 

19. **adamant (adj.) p.130**
   - Meaning in context: unbreakable, unyielding
   - Definition: 

20. **purge (v.) p.141**
   - Meaning in context: cleanse of impurities
   - Definition: 
GLOSSARY

Understanding what the following terms mean may be helpful as you read The Crucible.

☑ afflict: torment, frighten, or harm through supernatural means

break charity: Christians should be united by bonds of love or charity, so to treat someone in an unloving way was to break charity.

circle girls: Betty Parris, Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam, and others who were members of the “secret circle” said to be dancing in the woods and who were the first to accuse people of witchcraft

compact with the Devil: to make a formal agreement with Satan. The usual terms are a person’s soul in return for wealth, power, or other earthly gain.

coven: group of witches and one leader

covenanted Christian: Puritan who was formally accepted as a member of a congregation. The Puritans considered covenanted Christians more holy than those who were merely baptized.

crucible: severe test; a vessel used for refining and purifying some material (gold, for example) under intense heat

crying out against: accusing a person of witchcraft

the Devil, the fiend, Lucifer, Satan: Christian names for the supreme spirit of evil

the Devil’s book: said to be a large book containing the signatures of those who have made a pact with Satan

the Devil’s Mark: scar or blemish said to be found on the body of a person who has made a pact with the Devil

familiar spirit: evil spirit or demon that serves a witch. Familiars were believed to take the shape of small animals such as cats, dogs, birds, toads, or mice.

Gallows Hill: place where those convicted at Salem were hanged; also called “Witches’ Hill”

Goody: term used to identify the mistress of a household; similar to the term “Mrs.”; short for “Goodwife”

☑ hysteria/mass hysteria: phenomenon that overtook the town of Salem in 1692. Through the power of suggestion, many people came to believe the town was overrun by witches. Also called “the madness.”

licentious: lustful; hiding impure thoughts, words, or deeds

☑ McCarthyism: making accusations based on little or no evidence, like the charges Senator Joseph McCarthy made against suspected Communists in the 1950s

Quakers: members of the Society of Friends, founded by George Fox in 1647. Quakers believe an “Inward Light” can lead all to a personal experience of God.

spectral evidence: testimony about what was said or done by an apparition, or specter, of an accused person

theocracy: government in which religious authorities rule the state as God’s representatives

traffick with spirits: to conjure up through spells or have communication with demons, ghosts, or other supernatural creatures

warden: court official in Puritan times

witch: from the Anglo-Saxon word “vice,” meaning sorceress; a person said to practice black magic

witch-hunt: an intensive effort to expose disloyalty, usually based on little or no evidence

witchcraft: art or practice of sorcery or magic

(22)