**Essay Explanation for *The Crucible***

In his play *The Crucible*, Arthur Miller exposes the root cause for the Salem Witch Trials and the hysteria that gripped a seventeenth-century American colonial village. Miller shapes the characters, the plot, and the environment of the play on the very foundation of this root cause. Which of humanities flaws does Arthur Miller highlight as the root cause of the Salem witch trials: ego, jealousy, or conformity?

1. **Introductory Paragraph**
	1. **Opener/Attention Getter** = goal is to create a broader context
		1. Example 1 = **Global Statement—**which is a broad, generalized statement about the topic…something that is universally true.

Conformity is a type of social pressure involving a change in belief or behavior in order to fit in with a group of people.

* + 1. Example 2 = **Facts/details**—could include scientific or academic information.

In 1971, psychologist Phillip G. Zimbardo organized a social experiment where college-student volunteers role played guards and prisoners in a mock prison simulation. The experiment abruptly ended when the pseudo guards began tormenting the pseudo prisoners. In the field of behavior science, experiments like these have shown that the average person can easily be persuaded by social pressure to commit unthinkable acts.

* + 1. Example 3 = **An analogy or comparison**—which is more abstract and more creative.

The popular children’s book *Elmer*, features a colorful elephant teased for his patchwork skin. The other elephants laugh at him and make Elmer feel bad. Elmer tries to blend in with the herd because he is not the ordinary elephant color.

* 1. **Extend/Explain the Opener** = too many writers shift too quickly from the broad or abstract opener directly into the assigned topic---DON’T!!! Let your idea develop. This could go on for 2-3 (or more sentences) if it’s interesting.
		1. Example 1 = **Global Statement**

Conformity is a type of social pressure involving a change in belief or behavior in order to fit in with a group of people. The outcome of this change is usually negative since the person is no longer celebrating their individuality or exercising their personal freedoms.

* + 1. Example 2 = **Facts/details**
			1. In 1971, psychologist Phillip G. Zimbardo organized a social experiment where college-student volunteers role played guards and prisoners in a mock prison simulation. The experiment abruptly ended when the pseudo guards began tormenting the pseudo prisoners. In the field of behavior science, experiments like these have shown that the average person can easily be persuaded by social pressure to commit unthinkable acts. Under the right conditions, even moral people can be evil since it is humanity’s natural tendency to follow.
		2. Example 3 = **An analogy or comparison**

The popular children’s book *Elmer*, features a colorful elephant teased for his patchwork skin. The other elephants laugh at him and make Elmer feel bad. Elmer tries to blend in with the herd because he is not the ordinary elephant color. David McKee’s story of Elmer emphasizes society’s predilection for conforming to the majority and the harmful effects it can have on the individual and the society.

* 1. **Connect to the Thesis**
		1. Example 3 = **An analogy or comparison**

The popular children’s book *Elmer*, features a colorful elephant teased for his patchwork skin. The other elephants laugh at him and make Elmer feel bad. Elmer tries to blend in with the herd even though he is not the ordinary elephant color. David McKee’s story of *Elmer* emphasizes society’s predilection for conforming to the majority and the harmful effects it can have on the individual and society. Arthur Miller explores a similarly harsh and restrictive social environment in his play *The Crucible*. The characters who exercise individuality and refuse to follow social norms are treated as immoral dissenters or worse yet as witches to be burned at the stake.

* 1. **ESTABLISH YOUR THESIS**
		1. For this essay, it’s **argumentative**, so you need to take a stand: In Arthur Miller’s play *The Crucible*, what is the root cause for the Salem Witch Trials and the hysteria: jealousy, ego, or conformity? Pick one and form a one sentence thesis/claim establishing your opinion. This is the fourth and final step in forming an introduction.

The popular children’s book *Elmer*, features a colorful elephant teased for his patchwork skin. The other elephants laugh at him and make Elmer feel bad. Elmer tries to blend in with the herd even though he is not the ordinary elephant color. David McKee’s story of *Elmer* emphasizes society’s predilection for conforming to the majority and the harmful effects it can have on the individual and society. Arthur Miller explores a similarly harsh and restrictive social environment in his play *The Crucible*. The characters who exercise individuality and refuse to follow social norms are treated as immoral dissenters or worse yet as witches to be burned at the stake. Arthur Miller’s purpose is to show that the root cause for the Salem Witch Trails and the hysteria that gripped a seventeenth-century American colonial village was humanity’s natural tendency to conform and follow the leader.

1. **Body Paragraph 1**
	1. Topic sentence that examines the root cause of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the beginning of the play (Act 1)
	2. Develop/Support your topic with 2-3 passages/quotes from the text.
	3. Wrap-up sentence that revisits thesis and creates transition into the next paragraph.

1. **Body Paragraph 2**
	1. Topic sentence that examines the root cause of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ through the middle of the play (Act 2 and 3)
	2. Develop/Support your topic with 2-3 passages/quotes from the text.
	3. Wrap-up sentence that revisits thesis and creates transition into the next paragraph.
2. **Body Paragraph 3**
	1. Topic sentence that examines the root cause of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the conclusion of the play (Act 4)
	2. Develop/Support your topic with 2-3 passages/quotes from the text.
	3. Wrap-up sentence that revisits thesis and creates transition into the next paragraph.
3. **Conclusion**
	1. Reworded Thesis
	2. Evaluate Miller’s position with regards to humanity’s flaw of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and man’s inability to change this flaw.
	3. How does Miller’s position help explain the plot of the play or his reasons for writing it in 1952?