Sample Body Paragraph

During the final outcome of the play, the true cause behind the witch hunt and trials is most strongly emphasized by Miller. By Act 4, twelve citizens “are already, executed; [seven more people] the village expects to see die” (127). John Proctor is one of those seven people, and it is Abigail’s jealous hand that indirectly writes the death warrant for him and his wife Elizabeth. In jail, Elizabeth breaks the news to John that Giles Corey stood “mute, and died Christian under the law so his sons will have his farm” and Mr. Putnam will not (137). The Putnam family’s true motivations for naming people like Martha Corey and Rebecca Nurse as witches is to ruin these prominent families and steal their land and wealth. The circumstances surrounding Giles Corey’s death emphasizes that the root cause of the witch hunt and the death of many innocent lives is due to jealousy. If Giles Corey, dead or alive, admitted he was a witch, his land would be forfeit and sold. Corey is aware that jealousy landed him in his predicament. Like John Proctor, he refuses to let the greedy bastards win. Even when the behavior of the accusers becomes suspect—Abigail steals her uncle’s money and flees town—and the ulterior motives and the revenge plots are revealed, Judge Danforth cannot undo what has been done and continues with the executions of seven more innocent people. Thus, it is apparent in the final moments of the play that Miller is showing the audience that the jealous actions of key characters were the first dominos to fall that caused the horrific events that occurred in Salem during the summer of 1692.