Foxford Learning

YEAR 12 History
Paper 3, Option 33: The Witch Craze in Britain, Europe and North America, c1580–c1750

Over the course of the topic, I will be able to: -

Depth Topic 5: Cotton Mather and the Salem witch hunt, 1692–93

Key Vocabulary

Cotton Mather	Puritan minister whose writings on witchcraft helped intensify the Salem crisis.
Samuel Parris	Salem Village minister; his household was at the centre of the first accusations.
Tituba	A Caribbean slave in the Parris household; one of the first accused persons.
Governor Phips	Governor of Massachusetts who established the Court of Oyer and Terminer.
Spectral evidence	Evidence based on dream visions of accused persons; increasingly contested.
Court of Oyer and Terminer	The special court established to try the Salem witch accused.
General pardon	The pardon issued in 1693 ending prosecution of all remaining accused.
Puritan	A strict Protestant sect dominating the Massachusetts Bay Colony.
1688 Revolution	The Glorious Revolution, which weakened Massachusetts's royal charter.
Indian threats	Ongoing frontier conflict adding to colonial anxiety and social tension.
Increase Mather	Cotton Mather's father; criticised spectral evidence and aided the hunt's end.
Social tension	Conflict between prosperous Salem Town and the poorer Salem Village community.

Key Skills

- Analyse and explain the social, economic, religious and political factors behind witch persecution.
- Evaluate the roles of key individuals and institutions in prosecuting or challenging witch belief.
- Analyse and evaluate contemporary source material related to the witch craze.
- Retrieve knowledge to construct verbal and written arguments related to the key topics.
- Compose effective responses to essay questions.

I will understand

Topic 1. Social, economic and political context of Salem, 1692 - Weakened colonial authority following the 1688 Revolution; Indian frontier threats and economic crisis; social tensions between Salem Town and Salem Village; the role of Puritan religious culture.

Topic 2. Key instigators and the nature of the trials - The influence of Cotton Mather including Memorable Providences; the roles of Samuel Parris, the child accusers, and Tituba; the social profile of victims; the trials, executions, and their course.

Topic 3. Reasons for the ending of the Salem witch hunt, 1693 - The roles of Increase Mather and Governor Phips in questioning spectral evidence; the general pardon of 1693; why Salem marked a decisive turning point in American attitudes to witch prosecution.