

# Massachusetts salem witch trials assignment

[History](#)



17th Century Massachusetts and the Salem Witch Trials In January of 1692, the daughter and niece of Reverend Samuel Paris became ill, and when the children's health did not improve, the village doctor William Gripe was called in to help. He swiftly diagnosed the girls with bewitchment and the famous witch trials of Salem took off. Salem had recently had an epidemic of Small pox and had always had a strong belief in the Devil. These two factors added with the constant fear of attack from warring tribes caused the villagers to be suspicious and constantly on edge.

More than 150 men and women were arrested as the girls kept accusing more and more people of the source of their pain and hallucinations. Bridget Bishop was the first of the arrested to be tried in court. She was found guilty, and as witchcraft was then punishable by death, she was hanged. Gallows were set up in the town square just for the hangings. During the three days after the first hanging, 13 women and 5 men were hanged until Governor William Phipps disbanded the gallows in October 1692. In all, 19 men and women were hanged, one man was crushed to death, and several others died in jail (History of Salem).

Several colonies were established in the 17th century, but not all of them succeeded. Among the successful are Jamestown, Virginia, Vineyard Bay, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Salem, Massachusetts.

Pilgrims (also known as Separatists) came from Holland to North America to establish a colony in Virginia and freely practice their religion. However, their route was miscalculated and their ship, The Mayflower, landed in Massachusetts. Instead of traveling more to get to their original destination, they set up a colony in Plymouth.

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Although over 50% of the original colonists who traveled over died in the first year, the colony managed to survive through making peace with the Indians based on the tolerance they had experienced with the Dutch (Heinous, Robert J) In 1628 a colony in Salem, Massachusetts was established. The colony was comprised of Puritans. The Puritan lifestyle was strict, and members were required to attend and finance the church. Literacy rates in the colony soared as Puritan families wanted their children to be able to read the bible. Life expectancy and birth rates reached an all-time high, creating the concept of grandparents.

Parents were finally living long enough to see their children's children. Along with strict religious concepts, misogyny was also prevalent in the colony. Women were not allowed to participate in town meetings and could not be involved in decisions made in the church. Puritans believed in the methods of the Old Testament and believed that they were doing God's work. People were severely punished and sometimes even hanged if they were to stray from God's work. Despite the severity of their beliefs, they still found time to have fun. They had celebrations and would sing and tell stories.