

# The crucible theme of pride essay sample



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Pride can be defined positively and negatively, it can mean a sense of one's own proper dignity or value or self-respect, or an excessively high opinion of oneself or conceit, respectively. In the play which portrays both sides of pride we are transported to the late sixteen hundreds and introduced to the town of Salem in the province of Massachusetts Bay during the time of witch trials, and it's excessively superstitious habitants. Some of the fictitious but notable habitants of the town are John Proctor, his wife Elizabeth Proctor and Reverend Hale, all of whom show various facets of pride, its benefits and its consequences. Initially in the play pride is portrayed by Reverend Hale, who fervently believed in witches and other demonic arts and that their extinction in the name of god was necessary. He was also the minister in charge of finding the marks of the devil for the witch trials because he had previously "found" a witch in his hometown. An example of the pride he held on his gift of recognizing the devils mark is when he said " Man, remember, until an hour before the Devil fell, God thought him beautiful in Heaven."(Act 2, Page 59)

The result from his pride in what he believed in led him to be the force behind the witch trials and he later regretted it when he realized how morally incorrect they were, a quote that shows his lament for participating in such trials is when he quits them and says " I denounce these proceedings. I quit this court!" (Act 3, Page 96) This proves that his pride was unjustified to an extent because his belief in witches did not have substantial proof and many suffered because of his mistake. On the other hand we have Elizabeth Proctor, a person just as religious as Hale but less devoted. She also portrays the good and bad side of pride and this is not completely her fault because

the pride she initially showed was that of a scorned woman who had just suffered a kind of infidelity from her husband, this can be shown when she tells her husband after his explanation of what happened with Abigail “ I do not judge you.

The magistrate sits in your heart that judges you. I never thought you but a good man, John, only somewhat bewildered” (Act 2, Page 52) later on just as she suspected, Abigail was out to get her and her husband and her pride did not let her tell the court the truth that Abigail had seduced her husband that John had previously confessed to “ I came to think he fancied her. And so one night I lost my wits, I think, and put her out on the highroad.” (Act 3, Page 103) This then resulted in her husband being imprisoned and later hanged. Her pride was justified because of the time period she lived in, to suffer infidelity was looked down upon and them living in such conservative community it would have resulted in the defamation of her and her husband and the reverends niece.

However we have John Proctor, the main representant of pride who is the tragic hero of the play. He is a good religious man like his wife but his fatal flaw is his pride and lusting after Abigail Williams that later leads the witch trials because of Proctor’s rejection and then legitimately causes his eventual death sentence. His pride is shown when he does not want to live with the consequences of his affair with Abigail “ Spare me! You forget nothin’ and forgive nothin’. Learn charity, woman. I have gone tiptoe in this house all seven months since she is gone. I have not moved from there to there without I think to please you, and still an everlasting funeral marches round your heart. I cannot speak but I am doubted, every moment judged for <https://assignbuster.com/the-crucible-theme-of-pride-essay-sample/>

lies, as though I come into a court when I come into this house!" (Act 2, Page 52) The results and his change of heart regarding his sense of dignity is shown when he reluctantly admits his infidelity " A man may think God sleeps, but God sees everything, I know it now.

I beg you, sir, I beg you—see her for what she is . . . She thinks to dance with me on my wife's grave! And well she might, for I thought of her softly. God help me, I lusted, and there is a promise in such sweat. But it is a whore's vengeance." (Act 3, Page 100) His pride just like his wife was justified because of the time period he lived in, his actions were frowned upon and he felt bad about them so admitting them was an act to be proud of instead of not admitting it because of his own pride. In conclusion, John Proctor is the sternest of all three characters when it comes to pride and most definitely the one that had to pay the most because of his fatal flaw. His last act which was accepting the death sentence instead of lying and getting to live was what turned his character around and the complete opposite of excessive pride. The decision between life and death was his crucible, his place or occasion of severe test or trial and the decision of dying is what redeemed his character, what separated him from living a miserable life filled with faults against dying as a martyr that wanted justice.