

Betty parris

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The character Betty Parris plays an important role in the story of the Crucible. As one of the girls who danced in the forest she is part of the play's central conflict. She is the cause of the townspeople blaming witchcraft in the first place and she is also part of the reason that most of the characters are killed by the end of the fourth act. Through her actions over the course of the play, Betty is shown to be fearful, easily-manipulated, and an attention-seeker. In the Crucible, one of Betty's main characteristics is her fearfulness.

When her father catches her in the woods, she immediately faints to avoid any punishment and continues to pretend to be in a coma for a while after. Abigail convinces Reverend Parris that " Betty was frightened and then she fainted" (pg. 833) but it seems like what really happened was she was clever enough to avoid being reprimanded. She is also fearful of Abigail. After Betty wakes up, Abigail tells her that Reverend Parris knows everything and this causes her to " springs off the bed, and rush across room to window" (pg. 837) because she is afraid of what might happen.

She is harassed and struck by Abigail after talking about Abigail's charm to kill Goody Proctor and this causes her to submit to Abigail's demands that no one speaks of what she did in the forest. Her fear of Abigail leads to her joining Abigail and the other girls throughout the rest of the play even though she seems to resent them. Another main characteristic of Betty is her tendency to be easily-manipulated. As one of the members of the group of girls who danced in the woods, she becomes a part of Abigail's web of lies and deceit.

At first she resists Abigail until Abigail threatens to come to her " in the black of some terrible night" (pg. 837) if she says anything about the charm. After

that, she follows Abigail and the rest of the girls as they condemn the people of the town as well as when they lie in the courthouse and pretend to see Mary's spirit attacking them. She follows Abigail's every action and mimics anything that she does. This lets her lead Betty to do horrible things to people just because Betty is unable to stand up to Abigail.

In the Crucible, Betty is also shown to be an attention-seeker. As a younger girl, she has the natural need for people to pay attention to her. This need is further amplified by her lack of mother, which leaves her fewer people to entertain her. When she is thought to be unconscious, many people come from all over town to visit her. Among these people is Mercy Lewis who claims to have wanted "to see how Betty is" (pg. 836). This may be another reason that Betty joins Abigail and the other girls in their escapades.

She just needs the attention that the townspeople give them for condemning all the witches. One thing that shows Betty's attention-seeking is when the psalm can be heard outside of the bedroom, Betty "claps her ear suddenly, and whines loudly" (pg. 839). This action convinces everyone that Betty cannot hear the Lord's name and the others mark it as a sign of witchcraft. Another example of this trait is shown when all the other girls are shouting out names in Parris' house. When Betty begins to convict people with them, she stands on top of her bed as she does it.

Even though Abigail and the other girls are all doing the same thing, Betty still wants the attention and so to stand apart from the others she puts herself on a higher pedestal to be seen. Through her fainting in the woods, to her participation in Abigail's convictions, Betty Parris is shown to be fearful, easily-manipulated, and an attention-seeker. Her role in the Crucible is an

important one that drives the plot and is the cause for anyone thinking witchcraft is involved in the first place.