

A broken man



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In *The Crucible*, a drama by Arthur Miller set in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692, Reverend John Hale evolves from a self-confident witchcraft expert to a broken man who attempts to save lives. When Reverend Hale first arrives in Salem, he walks into the Parris' home with an air of intelligence and great knowledge. As he situates himself in the house, he says to Mr. Parris, "... they [the books] are weighted with authority", indicating that the books will decide whether a person is a witch or not (1. 712-13).

In Act I, Hale is the main person that begins the witch trials, because of the fact that he is a witchcraft expert and he gets Tituba to confess. His self-confidence, and lies from Tituba, Abigail, and Betty, leads him to think that there are more witches in Salem. As the play goes on, Mr. Hale recognizes that the girls' behavior has nothing to do with witchcraft, so he tries to stop the trials from proceeding any further. While Mary Warren is accusing John Proctor, Hale says, " Excellency, this child's gone wild! ", and then when Proctor and Giles Corey are arrested, he yells, " I denounce these proceedings, I quit this court! " (3. 1130, 3. 1164-65). Hale is no longer confident in his witchcraft expertise, and tries to help the others be proven innocent, but that is difficult when the head of court is so stubborn. He feels guilty for signing all the others to their deaths. By Act IV, Hale is completely broken up and trying to make up for all his bad deeds in Salem.

As he is trying to convince Elizabeth to tell her husband to confess, Hale says, "...for if he is taken [killed] I count myself his murderer. " (4. 334-35). Hale is at such a great point of guilt that he feels the need to persuade everyone that is in jail to confess to witchcraft. He wants the executions to stop, so he can repent for his mistakes. A man, who was once a powerful,

self-confident person, ended up a broken man because of society's greed and hate.