

# Week 3 Standard Edition Workbook

Week 3 Standard Edition Workbook January 12-17, 2026: Legal Limbo and the Road to Trial

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_

## This Week's Materials

Daily Videos (Salem Witch Trials Daily YouTube Playlist) January 12: The Old Charter Saga  
January 13: New Charter January 14: The Mathers January 15: The Afflictions of the Goodwin  
Children January 16: Causes of Affliction January 17: Testimony as Evidence

Weekly Podcast (Supplemental) The Thing About Salem: "Meanwhile in the rest of the world in  
1692"

This podcast episode provides deeper context and is recommended but optional for completing  
the course.

## How to Use This Workbook

Watch each daily video (January 12-17) Use the transcript as a study resource (optional but  
helpful) Complete the activities below as you go Read the Weekly Blog for deeper synthesis  
Engage with the weekly challenges

## DAILY TRANSCRIPT ACTIVITIES

### January 12 - The Old Charter Saga

Fill-in-the-Blank Summary:

Massachusetts received its original charter from King \_\_\_\_\_ in 1629. In 1684,  
King \_\_\_\_\_ revoked it because Massachusetts had broken trade laws and  
persecuted \_\_\_\_\_. In 1686, King \_\_\_\_\_ established the Dominion of  
New England with \_\_\_\_\_ as governor. When William and Mary took the English  
throne in 1688, Bostonians imprisoned \_\_\_\_\_ and sent him back to England.  
Massachusetts was now in legal \_\_\_\_\_.

Why this matters:

### January 13 - New Charter

Pause and Reflect:

After learning that the new charter didn't arrive until May 14, 1692, pause and answer:

By May 1692, the jails were already full of witchcraft suspects, but no trials could be held because there were no courts. What does this backlog of accused people waiting in jail tell you about the pressure on Governor Phips to act quickly?

Critical Timeline:

Governor Phips created the Court of Oyer and Terminer on \_\_\_\_\_.

Bridget Bishop was tried on \_\_\_\_\_ and hanged on \_\_\_\_\_.

The Court of Oyer and Terminer heard \_\_\_\_\_ cases and produced \_\_\_\_\_ convictions.

What was the conviction rate? \_\_\_\_\_%

January 14 - The Mathers

Pause and Reflect:

After learning about Cotton Mather's book *Memorable Providences*, pause and answer:

Cotton Mather published a detailed account of the Goodwin children's afflictions in 1689. By 1692, everyone in Salem knew this account. How does publishing a "playbook" of affliction symptoms essentially teach people how to behave when claiming to be bewitched?

Three Generations:

Richard Mather's contribution to the church:

Increase Mather's contribution to the trials (positive or negative):

Cotton Mather's contribution to the trials (positive or negative):

January 15 - The Afflictions of the Goodwin Children

Annotation Activity:

In your notes or transcript, mark each symptom described in the Goodwin case. Circle the ones that also appeared in Salem.

List 5 symptoms the Goodwin children exhibited:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

The Script:

How did the Goodwin case create expectations for what being afflicted "should" look like?

January 16 - Causes of Affliction

Pause and Reflect:

After the discussion of ergot poisoning theory being debunked, pause and answer:

Why do you think people want simple explanations (like ergot) for complex events like the Salem Witch Trials? What's appealing about a "silver bullet" theory?

Theory Tracker:

List the explanations for the afflictions mentioned this week and mark whether each is medical (M), psychological (P), or fraud (F):

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

The Real Question:

According to the transcript, what's more important than understanding what caused the afflictions?

January 17 - Testimony as Evidence

Fill-in-the-Blank Summary:

The first three people arrested were \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ . They were arrested on \_\_\_\_\_. The four men who filed the complaint provided \_\_\_\_\_ testimony. After arrest, suspects were inspected for \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_. At least \_\_\_\_\_ people confessed to witchcraft during the trials.

Why this matters:

Evidence Categories:

List the types of evidence admitted in Salem courts:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## QUOTE SCAVENGER HUNT (All Six Days)

Your Task: Find 3 examples of LEGAL CHAOS or INSTITUTIONAL FAILURE mentioned across this week's transcripts.

Example 1: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Quote or description:

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Example 2: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Quote or description:

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Example 3: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Quote or description:

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## PODCAST EPISODE ACTIVITIES (Supplemental)

Listening Notes: "Meanwhile in the rest of the world in 1692"

Global Context Questions:

1. What was the "Early Modern Period" and what characterized it?
2. What war were the English fighting in New England in 1692?
3. What happened in York, Maine on January 24, 1692?
4. How many people died in the Jamaica earthquake of June 1692?
5. What was happening in New Spain (Mexico) in 1692?
6. What major scientific work did Isaac Newton publish in 1687?

Timeline Connections:

Henry Purcell's opera The Fairy Queen premiered on \_\_\_\_\_, the same day that \_\_\_\_\_ was arrested for witchcraft.

Podcast Vocabulary

Define these terms from the episode:

Golden Age of Piracy:

Glencoe Massacre:

Scientific Revolution:

Kangxi Emperor's Edict of Toleration:

Mexico City Corn Riots:

Connection & Reflection

How does understanding the global context of 1692 (warfare, scientific revolution, economic upheaval, colonial violence) help you understand why witch trials were happening?

Think about: Times of transition, siege mentality, breakdown of authority.

Quote from Podcast

Find one detail from the podcast that surprised you or gave you new perspective:

Why did this stand out to you?

VOCABULARY CHECK

Define these key terms in your own words after encountering them this week:

Charter:

Court of Oyer and Terminer:

Superior Court of Judicature:

Dominion of New England:

Legal limbo:

Spectral evidence:

Witch's mark/teat:

Confession:

Toleration:

Mass psychogenic illness:

Sleep paralysis:

Ergotism:

WEEKLY CHALLENGES

Challenge 1: Predict What Happens Next

Based on what you've learned about legal chaos, the Mather family's influence, the Goodwin children setting a script, and the low bar for evidence, predict what happens once arrests begin.

Consider: Who has power to stop this? What checks and balances exist? How do the afflicted know how to behave?

Your prediction:

### Challenge 2: Citation Exercise

Claim: "The Salem Witch Trials were enabled by a broken legal system, low evidence standards, and a proven script for how to act afflicted."

Your Task: Find supporting evidence in this week's transcripts. Cite the specific day (January 12-17) and quote or paraphrase the evidence.

Evidence 1: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence: \_\_\_\_\_

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Evidence 2: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence: \_\_\_\_\_

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Evidence 3: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Challenge 3: Character Journal

You are a magistrate in Massachusetts in February 1692.

The jails are overflowing with accused witches, but you had no legal authority to try them until May. You know the Court of Oyer and Terminer is an emergency measure. You've read Cotton Mather's books about witchcraft. You know what spectral evidence is. You believe in witchcraft. You're under tremendous pressure to act.

Write 5-7 sentences from your perspective: How do you feel about the legal situation? What evidence will you accept? Are you confident in your ability to identify witches? What are your doubts?

### Challenge 4: Share Your Learning

Take what you've learned this week about the charter crisis, the Mathers, or the causes of affliction and share it with your circle.

Check the method(s) you used:  Explained the legal limbo to a friend or family member  Posted about the Mather family's influence on social media  Discussed ergot theory being debunked with a group  Created content about what evidence was used in trials  Connected institutional failure in 1692 to modern parallels

What did you share? How did people respond?

## DISCUSSION REFLECTION

After reading this week's blog, respond to the discussion question:

How do institutional failures (broken courts, emergency measures, low evidence standards) enable injustice? What modern parallels can you identify?

Think about: Times when normal legal protections are suspended, when fear drives quick action, when the accused have no way to prove innocence.

Your thoughts:

## PROGRESS TRACKER

Week 3 of ~75 weeks | ~4% Complete | January 2026 - May 2027

Timeline Milestone: January 12-17, 1692. The legal system is in chaos, the afflictions follow a proven script, and evidence standards are dangerously low. The machinery of death is assembled.

Coming Next Week: The afflictions intensify and spread beyond Betty Parris and Abigail Williams.

## BADGE TRACKER

Mark the badges you've earned this week:  #SalemDailyStudent (started the course)  #SalemWeek3 (completed Week 3)  #SalemDescendantPathStudent (if you have ancestral connections - use alongside other badges)

Did you post using your badges? Where?

Great work this week! You're doing the work of a researcher. See you next week!

Remember to use: #SalemDailyStudent #SalemWeek3 #ThingAboutSalem #SalemDailyYoutube #SalemDescendantPath

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Week 3 Youth Edition Workbook January 12-17, 2026: Legal Limbo and the Road to Trial

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This Week's Videos & Podcast

Daily Videos (Salem Witch Trials Daily YouTube Playlist) January 12: The Old Charter Saga  
January 13: New Charter January 14: The Mathers January 15: The Afflictions of the Goodwin  
Children January 16: Causes of Affliction January 17: Testimony as Evidence

Weekly Podcast (Extra Credit!) The Thing About Salem: "Meanwhile in the rest of the world in  
1692"

This podcast shows you what else was happening around the world while Salem was falling  
apart. It's optional but super interesting!

How to Use This Workbook

Watch each daily video (they're short!) Check out the transcript if you want to review something  
Complete the activities below Read the weekly blog to see the big picture Do the weekly  
challenges

### DAILY VIDEO ACTIVITIES

January 12: The Old Charter Saga

Quick Recap:

Massachusetts got its original charter (permission to govern itself) from King  
\_\_\_\_\_ in 1629. In 1684, King \_\_\_\_\_ took it away because they'd  
been breaking laws and killing \_\_\_\_\_. Then in 1686, King \_\_\_\_\_  
created a super-colony with \_\_\_\_\_ as the boss everyone hated. When the king  
changed in England, Bostonians arrested \_\_\_\_\_ and sent him home. Now  
Massachusetts had no legal \_\_\_\_\_.

Why does this matter?

January 13: New Charter

Stop and Think:

After learning the new charter didn't arrive until May 14, 1692:

By May, the jails were already packed with accused witches, but they couldn't have trials  
because there were no courts. If you're the new governor, what kind of pressure are you under  
to DO something fast?

Timeline Detective:

When did Governor Phips create the emergency court? \_\_\_\_\_

When was Bridget Bishop tried? \_\_\_\_\_

When was she hanged? \_\_\_\_\_

How many cases did the Court of Oyer and Terminer hear? \_\_\_\_\_

How many convictions? \_\_\_\_\_

That's a \_\_\_\_\_% conviction rate. (Hint: do the math!)

January 14: The Mathers

Stop and Think:

After learning about Cotton Mather's book about the Goodwin kids:

Cotton published a detailed description of how the Goodwin children acted when they were "afflicted" in 1689. By 1692, everyone in Salem had heard about it. If you know exactly how you're "supposed to" act when bewitched, does that make it easier to fake it or copy it?

Three Generations, Three Roles:

What did Richard Mather do for the church?

What did Increase Mather do about the trials (good or bad)?

What did Cotton Mather do about the trials (good or bad)?

January 15: The Goodwin Afflictions

Symptom Tracker:

Check off the weird symptoms the Goodwin children had:  Tongues pulled out super long   
Jaws forced out of place  Bent backwards neck to heels  Went deaf, blind, or mute   
Screamed about invisible knives and clubs  Marks appeared on their bodies  Could rub  
clean tables but not dirty ones  Ate and slept fine at night

The Big Question:

How did the Goodwin case basically give Salem kids a script to follow?

January 16: Causes of Affliction

Stop and Think:

After learning ergot theory got debunked:

Why do people want simple explanations (like "moldy bread made them hallucinate") for complicated things like the Salem Witch Trials? What's easier about blaming one thing?

Theory List:

Put an M (medical), P (psychological), or F (fraud) next to each explanation:

Ergot poisoning ( ) Lyme disease ( ) Epilepsy ( ) Mass psychogenic illness ( ) Sleep paralysis ( )  
Lying and faking it ( )

The Real Question:

According to the video, what's MORE important than figuring out why the afflicted acted weird?

January 17: Testimony as Evidence

Fill It In:

The first three people arrested were \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. After being arrested, they were checked for \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_. At least \_\_\_\_\_ people confessed during the trials.

Why does this matter?

Evidence Menu (What Counts as Proof):

List 5 types of "evidence" they used:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Which one seems most ridiculous to you? Why?

DETECTIVE WORK: Find the Chaos

Your Mission: Find 3 examples of the legal system being broken or institutions failing across this week's videos.

Example 1: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ What you found:

\_\_\_\_\_

Example 2: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ What you found:

\_\_\_\_\_

Example 3: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ What you found:

\_\_\_\_\_

## VOCAB CHECK

Define these in your own words (no copying!):

Charter:

Court of Oyer and Terminer:

Legal limbo:

Spectral evidence:

Witch's mark/teat:

Confession:

Toleration:

Mass psychogenic illness:

Sleep paralysis:

Ergotism:

## WEEKLY CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1: What Happens Next?

You know the legal system is broken. Emergency courts are running things. Evidence standards are super low (ghost stories count as proof!). Everyone knows how to act afflicted because of the Goodwin case.

When arrests start happening, what do you think goes down?

Your prediction:

### Challenge 2: Find the Proof

Claim: "Salem's trials were possible because the legal system was broken, evidence standards were trash, and everyone knew how to fake being afflicted."

Your job: Find 3 pieces of evidence from this week. Write the date and what proves it.

Evidence 1: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Proof:

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Evidence 2: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Proof:

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Evidence 3: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Proof:

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### Challenge 3: Time Travel Journal

You're a judge in Massachusetts in February 1692.

The jails are packed with accused witches, but you had no power to try them until May. You know this Court of Oyer and Terminer is just a quick fix. You've read Cotton Mather's books about witchcraft. You know about spectral evidence. You believe witches are real. Everyone's pressuring you to DO SOMETHING.

Write 5-7 sentences from your perspective: How do you feel? What evidence will you accept? Are you sure you can tell who's a witch? What worries you?

### Challenge 4: Share What You Learned

Take something crazy you learned this week (charter mess, the Mathers, ergot being debunked, types of evidence) and share it.

Check what you did:  Told someone about the legal chaos  Posted about it on TikTok/Instagram/etc.  Talked about the Mather family in class  Made content about what counted as "evidence"  Connected broken systems in 1692 to today

What did you share? What happened?

### DISCUSSION QUESTION

After reading this week's blog:

When institutions fail (broken courts, emergency measures, accepting bad evidence), injustice happens. What modern examples can you think of?

Think about: Times when normal protections are suspended because of fear, when people rush to judgment, when the accused can't prove they're innocent.

Your thoughts:

### PODCAST ACTIVITIES (Optional but Cool!)

Listening Notes: "The Thing About 1692"

Questions:

1. What was the "Early Modern Period"?

2. What war was happening in New England?
3. What happened in York, Maine on January 24, 1692?
4. How many people died in the Jamaica earthquake?
5. What was happening in Mexico City?
6. What did Isaac Newton publish?

Mind-Blowing Connection:

Henry Purcell's opera premiered on the same day that \_\_\_\_\_ got arrested for witchcraft.

Podcast Vocab:

Golden Age of Piracy:

Scientific Revolution:

Mexico City Corn Riots:

Think About It

How does knowing what else was happening in the world (wars, science discoveries, economic disasters, colonial violence) help you understand why witch trials were happening?

What's one thing from the podcast that surprised you?

Why?

YOUR PROGRESS

Week 3 of ~75 weeks | About 4% Complete | January 2026 - May 2027

Where we are: January 12-17, 1692. The legal system is a disaster. Everyone knows how to act afflicted. Evidence standards are a joke. The machine is ready to kill people.

Coming next week: The afflictions spread beyond Betty and Abigail. Things are about to explode.

BADGE COLLECTION

Check off the badges you've earned:  #SalemDailyStudent (you started!)  #SalemWeek3 (you finished Week 3!)  #SalemDescendantPathStudent (if your ancestors were involved - use with other badges)

Did you post your badges? Where?

You crushed Week 3! You're not just watching videos - you're doing real research. See you next week!

Post your progress: #SalemDailyStudent #SalemWeek3 #ThingAboutSalem  
#SalemDailyYoutube #SalemDescendantPath