

Week 5 Standard Edition Workbook

January 26 - February 1, 2026: The Framework of Death

Your Name: _____ Date Started: _____

This Week's Materials

Daily Videos (Salem Witch Trials Daily YouTube Playlist)

- January 26: William Stoughton
- January 27: George Burroughs
- January 28: Salem Village Independence
- January 29: The Body of Liberties
- January 30: The Curses and The Cursed
- January 31: Who Were the Afflicted Girls? (and Other Afflicted Persons)
- February 1: Animals in the Salem Witch Trials

Weekly Podcast (Supplemental): *The Thing About Salem: "The Judges of the Salem Witch Trials Courts"*

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 26 - February 1)
 - 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 26 - William Stoughton

Fill-in-the-Blank Summary:

On January 26, 1692, Massachusetts received news of a devastating attack on _____, Maine, where 50 English were killed and 70 to 100 taken prisoner. The minister _____ was killed and his body was mutilated. That same day, we examined William Stoughton, who would become Chief Justice of the _____. Stoughton was born in England in _____ and migrated as an infant to Dorchester, Massachusetts. He graduated from _____ in 1650 and earned a master's in divinity from _____. He served as a judge during the Dominion of New England under Governor _____. When the Dominion was dissolved, Stoughton was tainted by his association and not elected to office until he was appointed _____ in 1692 by the new charter. Stoughton already had witch trial experience, having served during the trials of _____ of Boston in 1681, _____ of Hadley in 1683, and _____ of Springfield in 1683. He never married and never had children. He served as acting governor from the death of Governor Phips in _____ until his own death in _____.

Why this matters:

January 27 - George Burroughs

Pause and Reflect:

After learning that George Burroughs survived multiple frontier attacks, served as Salem Village minister from 1680 to 1683, experienced conflicts with the Putnam family over unpaid salary, and wrote to Massachusetts pleading for help after the York attack, pause and answer:

What does Burroughs' history of survival in Maine, his contentious departure from Salem Village, and his knowledge of afflicted girl Mercy Lewis from Falmouth tell you about why he might be vulnerable to accusations? What made him a perfect scapegoat for the "ringleader" of the witches?

Critical Timeline:

George Burroughs was born in Virginia around _____.

He became minister in Falmouth, Maine, surviving the August 11, _____ attack.

He served as Salem Village minister from _____ to _____.

His wife Hannah Fisher Burroughs died in _____.

He married Sarah Ruck Hathorne, making him the brother-in-law of witch judge _____.

He was arrested for unpaid debt by _____ in Salem Village in April 1683.

He was arrested on witchcraft charges on _____ in Wells, Maine.

He was executed on _____, after perfectly reciting the _____.

January 28 - Salem Village Independence

Pause and Reflect:

After learning that Salem Village fought for independence from Salem Town for decades, finally gaining the right to ordain a minister in 1689 just as Samuel Parris took the pulpit, and that the factional lines of this struggle mirrored the lines of accusation, pause and answer:

How does understanding the Putnam family as strong supporters of independence and Parris, versus the Porter family and Salem Town interests as opponents, help you predict who will be accused and who will do the accusing? What does it mean that this witch panic erupted in a community defined by factional struggle?

Key Dates in Salem Village's Struggle:

Salem was established in _____.

In _____, the farmers petitioned to hire their own minister (rejected).

In _____, 28 farmers refused to pay taxes for Salem Town's meeting house.

In _____, Salem Village was organized as a distinct parish but could not ordain a minister.

In _____, Samuel Parris was ordained as minister of Salem Village Church.

Salem Village was finally incorporated as the independent town of Danvers in _____.

January 29 - The Body of Liberties

Fill-in-the-Blank Summary:

On January 29, 1692, _____ dictated his will. That same day, we examined the legal code that made witchcraft a capital crime. Compiled in _____ by _____, the Massachusetts Body of Liberties stands as New England's first legal code. It established rights like freedom of speech, the right to bail, the right to _____, and protection against cruel and unusual punishment. However, it also listed _____ capital laws, crimes punishable by death. The very first three prohibited false gods, _____, and blasphemy. Citing Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, the Body of Liberties stated: "If any man or woman be a witch, that is hath or consulteth with a _____, They shall be put to death." Nathaniel Ward was born in England around _____. He studied law to become a _____ and later entered the ministry. The timeline for these laws stretches back to May _____, when the first committee was formed. On December 10, _____, the General Court established the Body of Liberties. By _____, this document was used to create the first printed laws, known as _____.

Why this matters:

January 30 - The Curses and The Cursed

Annotation Activity:

In your notes or transcript, mark each accused person and the curse or dispute that became evidence against them.

List 5 accused people, the dispute, and the alleged curse or consequence:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

The Pattern:

What pattern do you notice about the types of disputes that led to accusations? What does it mean that ordinary neighborhood conflicts over borrowed tools, begging requests, land grants, and livestock became evidence of witchcraft?

January 31 - Who Were the Afflicted Girls? (and Other Afflicted Persons)

Pause and Reflect:

After learning that historian Marilynne K. Roach identifies 73 people who claimed affliction, including adults like Ann Putnam Senior and John Indian, and that adult testimony carried more legal weight than children's testimony, pause and answer:

What does it mean that the crisis began with children but was validated by adults? How does understanding John Indian's strategic affliction as survival help you understand the power dynamics at play?

Key Afflicted Persons:

Betty Parris: Age: _____ Role: _____ What happened to her:

Abigail Williams: Age: _____ Role: _____ What happened to her:

Ann Putnam Jr.: Age: _____ Role: _____ What makes her unique:

Ann Putnam Sr.: Age: _____ Role: _____ Why her testimony mattered: _____

John Indian: Status: _____ How he became afflicted:

_____ Why this matters: _____

February 1 - Animals in the Salem Witch Trials

Fill-in-the-Blank Summary:

Animals in the Salem Witch Trials can be categorized as victims of _____, shapes taken by the Devil and demons, and _____ or specters that tormented the afflicted. Livestock like cows, oxen, and horses were frequently believed to be targets of a witch's malice following a _____. Elizabeth Howe was accused of bewitching a _____. The Devil was believed to shapeshift into animal forms. Tituba testified to seeing a _____. Four-year-old Dorothy Good was said to have a _____ as a familiar that would suck between her fingers. A _____ was frequently mentioned in the courtroom, said to fly around accused witches. According to Robert Calef, at least _____ dogs were put to death, one declared bewitched by John Bradstreet.

Why this matters:

QUOTE SCAVENGER HUNT (All Seven Days)

Your Task: Find 3 examples of LAWS, DISPUTES, or AFFLICTIONS that created the framework for the trials to proceed.

Example 1: Date: _____ Quote or description:

Example 2: Date: _____ Quote or description:

Example 3: Date: _____ Quote or description:

PODCAST EPISODE ACTIVITIES (Supplemental)

Listening Notes: "The Judges of the Salem Witch Trials Courts"

Key Questions:

Who were the judges appointed to the Court of Oyer and Terminer?

What were the backgrounds of these judges? Were they trained lawyers?

Which judge resigned early and why?

What evidence did the judges accept in the courtroom?

Which judges later apologized for their role?

What does it mean that William Stoughton never apologized?

Podcast Vocabulary

Define these terms from the episode:

Court of Oyer and Terminer:

Touch Test:

Spectral Evidence:

Magistrate:

Connection & Reflection

How does understanding the legal framework (Body of Liberties making witchcraft a capital crime), the judges (Stoughton with prior witch trial experience), the accusers (adults whose testimony carried weight), the patterns of accusation (neighborly disputes), and the evidence accepted (animals, curses, spectral evidence) help you understand why the trials happened the way they did?

Think about: Legal codes already in place, judges who believed in witchcraft, adult accusers validating children's claims, ordinary disputes reinterpreted as evidence.

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:

Body of Liberties:

Familiar Spirits:

Nathaniel Ward:

Maleficium:

Spectral Evidence:

Touch Test:

Court of Oyer and Terminer:

The Afflicted:

Yellow Bird:

Witch's Mark/Teat:

The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes:

Capital Crime:

WEEKLY CHALLENGES

Challenge 1: Predict What Happens Next

Based on what you have learned about the legal code making witchcraft a capital crime, the judges with prior witch trial experience, the adult and child accusers ready to testify, the patterns of neighborly disputes, and the types of evidence accepted (spectral evidence, touch test, animals, curses), predict what happens when the first formal examinations begin on March 1.

Consider: Who has the power? What evidence will be presented? How will the accused defend themselves?

Your prediction:

Challenge 2: Citation Exercise

Claim: "The Salem Witch Trials were enabled by a legal code that made witchcraft a capital crime, judges who already believed in and had experience with witch trials, adult accusers who validated the children's claims, and a pattern of reinterpreting ordinary neighborly disputes as evidence of diabolical pacts."

Your Task: Find supporting evidence in this week's transcripts. Cite the specific day (January 26 - February 1) and quote or paraphrase the evidence.

Evidence 1: Date: _____ Evidence:

Evidence 2: Date: _____ Evidence:

Evidence 3: Date: _____ Evidence:

Challenge 3: Character Journal

You are William Stoughton on February 1, 1692.

You are Lieutenant Governor and you will soon be appointed Chief Justice. You have already served as a judge in witch trials in the 1680s. You believe witchcraft is real and is a capital crime under the Body of Liberties. You have heard about afflictions in Salem Village. You know about the York attack and the war with French and Wabanaki forces. You believe Massachusetts is under spiritual and physical attack.

Write 5-7 sentences from your perspective: What is your understanding of witchcraft? What methods will you use to determine guilt? How confident are you that you can identify witches? What is at stake if you fail?

Challenge 4: Share Your Learning

Take what you have learned this week about the Body of Liberties, the judges, the afflicted persons, neighborly disputes as evidence, or animals in the trials and share it with your circle.

Check the method(s) you used:

- Explained the Body of Liberties and capital crimes to someone
- Posted about William Stoughton or the judges on social media
- Discussed Ann Putnam Senior's role as an adult accuser with a group
- Created content about neighborly curses becoming evidence
- Connected the legal framework to modern evidentiary standards

What did you share? How did people respond?

DISCUSSION REFLECTION

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

How do legal codes, experienced judges who believe in the crime, adult accusers who validate children's claims, and the reinterpretation of ordinary disputes as evidence create a system where conviction becomes nearly inevitable? What modern parallels can you identify where legal frameworks, authority figures, and patterns of suspicion combine to create injustice?

Think about: Capital crimes defined by religious texts, judges with prior convictions, testimony weighted by age and status, evidence standards based on belief rather than proof.

Your thoughts:

PROGRESS TRACKER

```
<div style="margin: 20px 0;"> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; border-radius: 10px; height: 30px; width: 100%; position: relative; overflow: hidden;"> <div style="background:
```

linear-gradient(90deg, #8b4513 0%, #d2691e 100%); height: 100%; width: 6.7%; transition: width 0.3s ease;"></div> </div> <p style="margin-top: 8px; font-size: 14px; color: #666;">Week 5 of ~75 weeks | ~6.7% Complete | January 2026 - May 2027</p> </div>

Timeline Milestone: January 26 - February 1, 1692. The framework of death is complete: the law making witchcraft a capital crime, the judges with prior experience, the accusers both children and adults, the patterns of suspicion, and the evidence that will be accepted. The first formal examinations begin on March 1, 1692.

Coming Next Week: The first examinations of Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne on March 1, 1692.

BADGE TRACKER

Mark the badges you have earned this week:

- #SalemDailyStudent (started the course)
- #SalemWeek5 (completed Week 5)
- #SalemDescendantPathStudent (if you have ancestral connections - use alongside other badges)

Did you post using your badges? Where?

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

Remember to use: #SalemDailyStudent #SalemWeek5 #ThingAboutSalem
#SalemDailyYoutube #SalemDescendantPath

This completes the Week 5 Standard Edition Workbook. The format follows Week 4's structure exactly, with varied activity types for each day, fill-in-the-blank summaries, pause-and-reflect questions, timeline trackers, vocabulary checks, four weekly challenges, discussion reflection, progress tracker, and badge tracker. All content is synthesized from the daily transcripts and topic documents provided, maintaining the intelligent but enjoyable tone with no em dashes and no short choppy remarks.