

Week 8 Standard Edition Workbook

February 16-22, 2026: The Salem Witch Trials Doctors, Families, Frontier, and the Fight to Survive

Your Name: _____ Date Started: _____

This Week's Materials

Daily Videos (Salem Witch Trials Daily YouTube Playlist)

- [February 16: Colonial Doctors and the "Evil Hand": William Griggs and Medicine Before the Salem Witch Trials](#)
- [February 17: The Putnams of Salem: A Complicated Legacy in 1692](#)
- [February 18: Will the Real John Proctor Please Stand Up?](#)
- [February 19: How the Northern Frontier Fueled the Salem Witch Trials](#)
- [February 20: The Falmouth Connection](#)
- [February 21: The Fall of Fort Loyal \(Falmouth, ME\)](#)
- [February 22: Eight Survival Strategies in the Salem Witch Trials](#)

Weekly Podcast (Supplemental): The Thing About Salem: Nothing But Putnam's This episode provides deeper context on the Putnam dynasty and is recommended, but optional for completing the course.

How to Use This Workbook

1. Watch each daily video (February 16-22)
 2. Use the transcript as a study resource (optional but helpful)
 3. Complete the activities below as you go
 4. Read the Weekly Blog for deeper synthesis
 5. Engage with the weekly challenges
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DAILY TRANSCRIPT ACTIVITIES

February 16: Colonial Physicians and the "Evil Hand"

Fill-in-the-Blank Summary:

On February 16, 1692, physician _____ purchased a home and land in Salem Village for _____ pounds. He had been living in the village for at least _____ years before that purchase, having previously lived in Boston, Roxbury, and _____. Also in that household was his niece, _____, who would become one of the central afflicted figures just _____ days later.

Griggs is most remembered for a professional judgment he made shortly after moving. It is widely believed he was the physician who declared the afflicted girls _____ and _____ to be "under an _____." That diagnosis shifted the crisis from a _____ problem to a _____ and _____ one.

Important historical note: the source behind this famous diagnosis does not actually name the physician, leaving open the possibility that another _____ doctor made the determination.

Colonial medicine in Massachusetts was often concentrated among the educated and elite. Governor _____ was himself a physician. His son _____ was a noted physician, alchemist, and governor of Connecticut, and his grandson _____ was also a physician. In the Salem area, several practitioners died in the years just before 1692: George Emery died in _____, Daniel Weld in _____, and physician John Swinnerton also in _____.

One of the witch trial judges, _____, left behind 60 pounds worth of drugs and medicinal instruments. He was mentioned during the trial of _____, who said certain ointments came from his recipe.

In Boston, Dr. Thomas Oakes had set an important precedent in _____ when he diagnosed the Goodwin children. Cotton Mather recorded that Oakes concluded nothing but "_____" could explain their symptoms. That case led to the trial and execution of _____ and established a diagnostic pattern that would echo through 1692.

Salem physician _____, who died in 1684, left behind a notable remedy collection. For bloody flux, he prescribed _____, baked in a bread oven and powdered into milk. For difficult childbirth, the prescription called for a lock of a virgin's hair, specifically from a virgin _____ the age of the laboring woman, ground into powder and combined with _____ ant's eggs and a quarter pint of _____.

Why this matters:

February 17: The Putnam Family of Salem Village

Pause and Reflect:

After learning that the Putnam family included Sergeant Thomas Putnam, who swore out complaints against 35 people, testified against 17, and recorded 120 depositions, AND Joseph Putnam, who kept his horse saddled during the crisis in case he needed to flee because he was opposing the trials, and that eight Putnams signed the petition in support of Rebecca Nurse, pause and answer:

What does the range of Putnam behavior, from the most aggressive accuser in the crisis to an opponent ready to flee rather than participate, suggest about how historians should think about collective family responsibility in events like this? What does it mean that the same family name appears on both the list of accusers and the list of defenders?

Key Putnam Persons:

Person	Branch	Role in the Trials
Captain John Putnam Sr.	John Sr. branch	
Rebecca Prince Putnam	John Sr. branch	
Jonathan Putnam	John Sr. branch	
Lt. Nathaniel Putnam	Nathaniel branch	
Benjamin Putnam	Nathaniel branch	
Sergeant Thomas Putnam	Thomas branch	
Ann Carr Putnam	Thomas branch	
Ann Putnam Jr.	Thomas branch	
Mercy Lewis	Thomas household	
Deliverance Putnam Walcott	Thomas branch	
Joseph Putnam	Thomas branch (half)	

February 18: John Proctor

Critical Timeline:

John Proctor was born in England around _____. He immigrated to Massachusetts and settled in _____. He married his first wife _____ around 1652. After her death, he married _____ in 1662. In 1666, he rented a large property called the _____ in Salem Farms. He married his third wife, _____, in 1674. On April 11, 1692, Elizabeth was examined; her specter was accused of _____. John attended to defend her and was _____ on the spot, becoming the first _____ arrested in the trials. On July 23, 1692, he wrote to Boston ministers, comparing the magistrates to _____ and describing the torture of _____. John was convicted and hanged on _____, alongside George Jacobs Sr., John Willard, Martha Carrier, and _____. Elizabeth survived because she was _____; she gave birth to a son named _____ on January 27, 1693. Governor Phips issued Elizabeth a _____. The family attainder was reversed in _____, and restitution was paid in _____. Elizabeth remarried a man named _____ in 1699.

Why this matters:

February 19: The Northern Frontier

Pause and Reflect:

After learning that historian Mary Beth Norton and others have argued the frontier war directly fed into the Salem crisis, that refugees from Maine brought severe trauma into Essex County, and that people like Mercy Lewis and Abigail Hobbs carried specific Maine experiences directly into the 1692 courtrooms, pause and answer:

The episode argues that the physical landscape of the frontier shaped the spiritual landscape of the colonists. The wilderness was seen as enemy territory inhabited by military adversaries and the devil himself. How does that overlap between real military fear and supernatural fear help explain why the Puritan interpretation of the crisis took the form it did? What was the devil in the woods, really?

Key Dates and Facts:

In _____ and _____, New Hampshire officially separated from Massachusetts to become a royal colony. The first woman accused of witchcraft in New Hampshire was _____ of Portsmouth, accused in _____. She fought back by _____ and won. Eunice Cole, known as _____, of Hampton was accused at least _____ times between the 1650s and 1680s. In 1938, the people of Hampton held a ceremony attended by approximately _____ people to rehabilitate her image. They burned copies of her _____, mixed the ashes with soil, and buried them in an urn. In 1682, George and Alice _____ ran a tavern in Great Island that was assaulted by flying stones for _____ straight months. This case is known as the _____. Their elderly neighbor _____ was accused of causing it after a dispute over a single acre of land.

February 20: The Falmouth Connection

Annotation Activity:

In the space below, record the Falmouth connection for each person: what brought them to Falmouth, what they experienced there, and how that history intersected with 1692.

George Burroughs: Connection to Falmouth:

What he experienced:

How it intersected with 1692:

Mercy Lewis: Connection to Falmouth:

What she experienced:

How it intersected with 1692:

Family connection to the Cloyce/Towne network:

Abigail Hobbs: Connection to Falmouth:

What she claimed happened there:

How it intersected with 1692:

The Pattern: What do these three people's Falmouth histories have in common? What does it mean that so many of the most dramatic figures in the 1692 crisis had direct experience of frontier violence and displacement?

February 21: The Fall of Fort Loyal

Critical Timeline:

On April 21, 1690, _____ and _____ traveled to New York. On May 1, they promised that Massachusetts would send soldiers for a combined colonial attack on _____. On April 24, the council sent _____ and _____ north to Maine to inspect frontier defenses. When they arrived, they found some garrisons with _____. At Falmouth, Captain _____ commanded _____ men at Fort Loyal. After the inspection, the council concluded those soldiers were _____. On May 15, Willard followed orders and _____. At daybreak on May 16, a force of _____ to _____ Wabanaki and French soldiers attacked. The French promised the English _____ and liberty to march to the nearest English town. After surrender, that agreement was _____. Approximately _____ people were lost. The settlements east of _____ were effectively abandoned. Meanwhile in Boston, the grief was offset by news that _____ had succeeded, providing plunder to be shared.

Why this matters:

February 22: Survival Strategies

Matching Activity:

Match each person or group to the survival strategy they used. Some strategies appear more than once.

Strategies: Confession / Pleading the belly / Spiritual reprieve / Accusing others / Becoming afflicted / Petitions and character witnesses / Running away

Person or Group	Strategy Used	Did It Work?
Elizabeth Proctor		
Abigail Faulkner Sr.		
Dorcas Hoar		
Allen Toothaker		
John Indian		
Mary Warren (first attempt)		
Mary Warren (second attempt)		
55 confessors (broadly)		
21 individuals identified by Marilynne K. Roach		
Rebecca Nurse and John Proctor		

The Hard Question:

The episode notes that every person tried before the Court of Oyer and Terminer was convicted: 27 out of 27. Given that record, what does it mean to call any of these strategies "survival strategies"? What were the accused actually surviving, if not the legal system itself?

QUOTE SCAVENGER HUNT (All Seven Days)

Your Task: Find 3 examples of TURNING POINTS, moments where one person's action or decision changed what happened to many others.

Example 1: Date: _____ Person: _____ Decision or action:

Consequence for others:

Example 2: Date: _____ Person: _____ Decision or action:

Consequence for others:

Example 3: Date: _____ Person: _____ Decision or action:

Consequence for others:

PODCAST EPISODE ACTIVITIES (Supplemental)

Listening Notes: "Putnam Family" (The Thing About Salem)

Key Questions:

1. How many branches of the Putnam family does the episode cover, and who was the founding couple?

2. What specific actions did Sergeant Thomas Putnam take during the crisis beyond what is described in the daily video?

3. The podcast notes that eight Putnams signed the Rebecca Nurse petition. Who are some of them, and what else were they doing at the same time?

4. What happened to Dorothy Good, and which Putnams were involved in her life after the trials?

5. What is the legend about Joseph Putnam's horse, and what does it say about his position during the crisis?

6. Who is Israel Putnam, and what is the significance of his connection to the Salem Putnams?

Podcast Vocabulary:

Define these terms as they are used in the episode:

Petition:

Deposition:

Complaint (legal):

Afflicted:

Connection and Reflection:

How does the podcast's treatment of the full Putnam family tree change the picture of the trials compared to focusing only on Sergeant Thomas Putnam and Ann Putnam Jr.? What is gained by zooming out to the whole family?

Quote from the Podcast:

Find one detail from the podcast that the daily video did not include or that surprised you:

Why did this stand out to you?

VOCABULARY CHECK

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

Maleficium:

Evil hand:

Spectral evidence:

Familiar spirit:

Attainder:

Dower rights:

Plead the belly:

King William's War:

Lithobolia:

The Eastward:

Court of Oyer and Terminer:

Ringleader (in the 1692 context):

WEEKLY CHALLENGES

Challenge 1: Predict What Happens Next

Based on what this week's content reveals about how the crisis was developing in mid-February 1692, predict what happens in March when the first formal examinations begin. Consider: What medical framework is already in place? What family networks are already positioned to accuse?

What legal tools are available? What happens when someone like Mercy Lewis, who has experienced genuine frontier trauma, testifies against someone in a courtroom?

Your prediction:

Challenge 2: Citation Exercise

Claim: "The Salem witch crisis cannot be understood without the frontier. The war with the Wabanaki Confederacy and French forces created the refugees, the trauma, the fear, and the specific individuals whose testimony drove the accusations."

Your Task: Find supporting evidence from this week's transcripts. Cite the specific date and quote or paraphrase the evidence.

Evidence 1: Date: _____ Evidence:

Evidence 2: Date: _____ Evidence:

Evidence 3: Date: _____ Evidence:

Challenge 3: Character Journal

You are John Proctor on the morning of August 19, 1692.

You are about to be hanged. You asked Reverend Noyes to pray with you and he refused because you will not confess to a crime you did not commit. You know that confessing would have saved your life. Your wife Elizabeth is still alive because she is pregnant. Your children have had their food and cattle seized by the sheriff. You wrote to Boston ministers in July and compared the magistrates to the Spanish Inquisition. No one stopped the court.

Write 5-7 sentences from your perspective: What do you understand about what has happened to your community? Why did you refuse to confess? What do you hope for Elizabeth and your children? What do you want people in the future to know about what happened here?

Challenge 4: Share Your Learning

Take something you learned this week about colonial medicine and the "evil hand" diagnosis, the complexity of the Putnam family, John Proctor's refusal to confess, the frontier roots of the crisis, the fall of Fort Loyal, or the survival strategies of the accused and share it with your circle.

Check the method(s) you used:

- Explained the "evil hand" diagnosis and its consequences to someone
- Discussed the complexity of the Putnam family with a group
- Shared John Proctor's story and why he refused to confess
- Posted about the frontier connection to the Salem crisis on social media
- Explained what happened at Fort Loyal and who was responsible
- Discussed the survival strategies with someone and asked which they would choose

What did you share? How did people respond?

DISCUSSION REFLECTION

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

This week shows that the Salem witch crisis had roots in medicine, family politics, legal precedent, frontier war, and individual acts of courage and cowardice. No single cause explains it. No single villain drove it. Given that complexity, how do historians assign responsibility? What is the difference between understanding the conditions that made something possible and excusing the people who acted within those conditions?

Think about: William Griggs or another unnamed physician labeling children as cursed; Hathorne and Corwin leaving Fort Loyal defenseless; Sergeant Thomas Putnam recording 120 depositions; Reverend Noyes refusing to pray with a condemned man; Governor Phips issuing last-minute reprieves.

Your thoughts:

PROGRESS TRACKER

Week 8 of approximately 75 weeks | approximately 10.7% complete | January 2026 - May 2027

Timeline Milestone: February 16-22, 1692. The physician who will call the afflictions supernatural has just purchased his home in Salem Village. The Putnam household, with three afflicted women, is already in motion. The frontier has been sending refugees and trauma into Essex County for two years. The formal crisis is weeks away.

Coming Next Week: The examinations begin. The first accused are brought before the magistrates.

BADGE TRACKER

Mark the badges you have earned this week:

#SalemDailyStudent (started the course) #SalemWeek8 (completed Week 8)
#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 #SalemWeek8 #ThingAboutSalem
#SalemDailyYoutube #SalemDescendantPath

Resources and Links

This Week's Content

[Video Playlist](#)

[Podcast: The Thing About Salem](#)

[Salem Witch Trials Daily Hub](#)

[Previous Week Week 7 Blog](#)

Useful Websites

[The Thing About Salem](#)

[The Thing About Witch Hunts](#)

[Primary Sources](#)

Books

[Bernard Rosenthal, ed., *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*](#)

[Emerson W. Baker, *A Storm of Witchcraft*](#)

[Marilynne K. Roach, *The Salem Witch Trials: A Day-by-Day Chronicle*](#)

[Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*](#)

[Richard Hite, *In the Shadow of Salem*](#)

[Ben Wickey, *More Weight: A Salem Story*](#)

[George Francis Dow, *Every Day Life in the Massachusetts Bay Colony*](#)

[Sidney Perley, *The History of Salem, Massachusetts*](#)

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