
Salem Witches: Cold Case



Unit 5, Lesson 13

Essential Question:
What happened?



Warm Up!

Complete Resource
1: Warm Up
by completing the
ReDiWrite process
described on
Resource 1.

Resource 1: Warm Up

Name _____

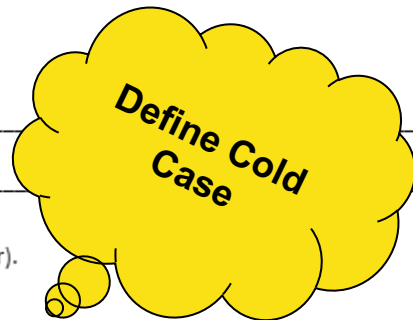
Directions

1. Read the paragraph to find clues for the definition of "cold case."
2. Discuss possible meanings and clues with a partner
3. Write a definition of "cold case" based on the context in which the term appears.

In March 18, 1990 thirteen incredibly valuable and expensive paintings by great artists such as Vermeer and Rembrandt were stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Massachusetts. This remains a cold case for the police. They continue to look for new evidence to find out who stole the paintings and have them returned.

Task: Based on how the term is used in the paragraph above, infer and write a definition of the term "cold case" in the space below.

Dictionary definition (will be given to you by your teacher).



An Introduction to this lesson:

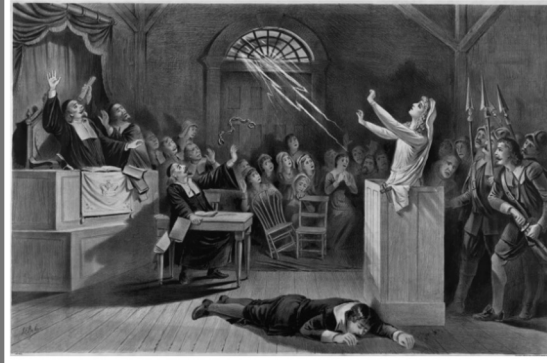
We are going to try to solve a **cold case** that dates all the way back to 1692...

This is the case → In 1692, nineteen people were killed under unusual circumstances. Your job in this lesson will be to use clues from the past to try to solve the mystery of what happened to these people.

Source 1a accessed [here](#)



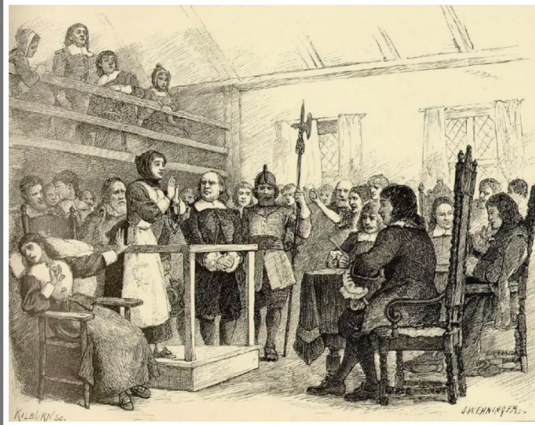
Source 1c below accessed [here](#)



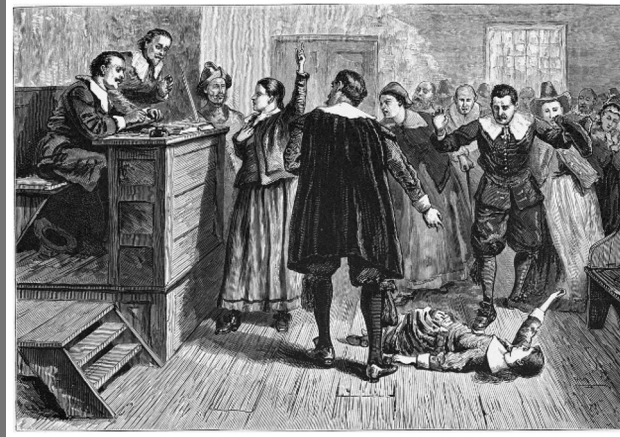
Source 1e below accessed [here](#)



Source 1b below accessed [here](#)



Source 1d below accessed [here](#)



Source 1f below accessed [here](#)



Evidence included in
Resource 2 - Evidence Packet

Resource 2 - Evidence Packet 1 Instructions:

1. Use the sources to try to construct a tentative account of what happened to the 9 people in 1692.
1. Analyze and discuss the evidence.
1. Conclusions must be based on the evidence in the packets.

New Evidence Has Been Found!



Source 2a

Persons Put to Death

June 10, 1692

- Bridget Bishop

July 19, 1692

- Rebecca Nurse
- Sarah Good
- Susannah Martin
- Elizabeth Howe
- Sarah Wildes

August 19, 1692

- George Burroughs
- Martha Carrier
- John Willard
- George Jacobs, Sr.
- John Proctor

September 22, 1692

- Martha Corey
- Mary Eastey
- Ann Pudeator
- Alice Parker
- Mary Parker
- Wilmott Redd
- Margaret Scott
- Samuel Wardwell

Accessed [here](#)

Source 2c

Whereas,

- Sarah Good Wife of William Good of Salem Village
- Rebecka Nurse wife of Francis Nurse of Salem Village
- Susanna Martin of Amesbury Widow
- Elizabeth How wife of James How of Ipswich
- Sarah Wild wife of John Wild of Topsfield

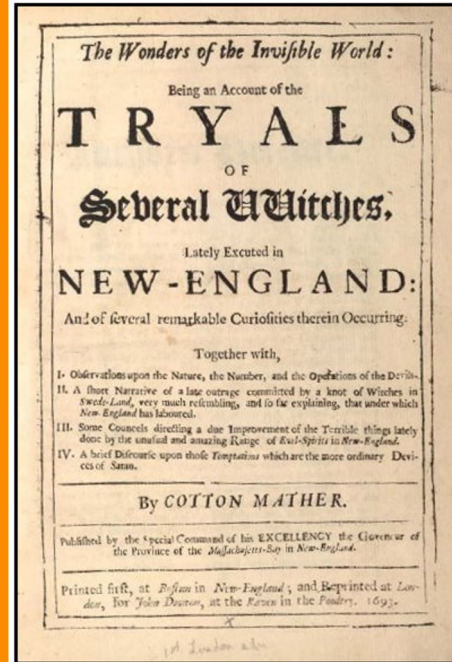
...all of...Salem on the 29th day of June were Severally arraigned on Several Indictments for the horrible Crime of Witchcraft...whereupon they were Each of them found & brought in Guilty by the Jury that passed On them... Sentence of death ... will & Command you that upon Tuesday next being the 19th day for [torn] Instant July between the hours of Eight & [torn] in [torn] forenoon the same day you Safely conduct ... Sarah Good Rebecka Nurse Susann Martin Elizabeth Howe & Sarah Wild From their Malign goal [jail] in Salem...to the place of Execution & there Cause them & Every of them to be hanged by the Neck untill they be dead

Salem July 19th, 1692

George Corwin Sherif

Accessed [here](#)

Source 2d



Source 2e below accessed [here](#)



Evidence included
in Resource 3 -
Evidence Packet 2

Source 2b

"If any man or woman be a WITCH, that is, hath or consulteth with a familiar spirit, they shall be put to death. Exod. 22. 18. Levit. 20. 27. Deut. 18. 10. 11."

Accessed [here](#)

Resource 3 - Evidence Packet 2 Instructions:

1. Use the sources to try to construct a tentative account of what happened to the 9 people in 1692.
1. Analyze and discuss the evidence.
1. Conclusions must be based on the evidence in the packets.
1. OVERALL → Examine the evidence to see if the new sources call for revisions to the tentative accounts.

While you watch the video,

1. Corroborate, compare/contrast your accounts with the one in the video.
1. Create a list of the causes of the Salem witch hunts

SALEM WITCH TRIALS



COLD CASE

Unfortunately, the causes remain a bit of a “cold case” due to the lack of conclusive evidence.

Perhaps someday new evidence will be found.

Read Resource 5: Correcting Mistakes of the Past

As you read, focus on how people felt after the witch hunts ended.



Resource 5: Correcting Mistakes of the Past

The Salem Witch events of 1692 represent an extremely interesting but tragic episode in American history. Between 140 and 150 people were arrested on charges of witchcraft. Nineteen people were hanged. Four others died in jail waiting for trial. And one man, Giles Corey, was crushed to death by people who put heavy rocks on top of him in an effort to get him to plead guilty. He courageously refused to confess and said, "more weight."

The youngest person accused was a 4-years-old girl named Dorcas Good. Dorcas was not hanged but did spend over six months in jail. Margaret Scott was hanged. She was 77 years old.

The main people who accused others of being witches were a group of girls aged 9-19.

The fact remains, there were no witches then, and there are none now!

Although some people did believe in witches back in 1692, it did not take long for the people of Salem to feel shame and guilt because of what they did.

- In 1697 the colony held a Day of Official Humiliation - a day for people to feel ashamed and foolish.
- In 1711 the colony passed a law that said most of the accused were never witches.
- One year later the colony paid 600 pounds (English money) to the families of those who were put to death.
- In 1957 the Governor of Massachusetts signed a law that officially apologized for the Salem witch trials.
- And in 2001, Massachusetts passed another law that said all of the accused people were never witches.



Sadly, people who lived in Salem at the time of the witch hunts were too afraid to stand up for the people who were falsely accused of being witches. **What was the effect of their silence? Innocent people died!**

So, the big question is: what will you do if you ever hear of people being accused of something that they did not do?

Resource 6: Connecting Past and Present

The story of the Salem Witch Hunts can help us understand why studying the past is important. People who know about this unfortunate event in American history helped later generations realize that people who are only accused of crimes in the United States need to be protected.

Back then, a person was presumed to be guilty until they proved that they were innocent. This is why many of the accused witches spent so much time in jail before their trials.

Today, we presume that a person is innocent until proven guilty. And the government - not the accused person - has to prove that a person is guilty. Additionally, a person who is accused can usually be let out of jail on bail. Bail is money that is given to the government to ensure that accused people will show up for trial. If they do show up, their bail money is returned.

Back in 1692 the courts accepted very weak evidence as “proof” that someone was guilty of witchcraft. This included

- spectral evidence (a person saying that they were interacting with an unseen witch who was torturing them)
- “witch marks” on a person’s body (Source 1e that you looked at shows people in court looking for witch marks on a woman’s body)
- a “touching test” - person claiming to be under the spell of an alleged witch would become calm after touching a witch

Today, the government needs much better evidence to prove that a person is guilty.

Today we also have a Bill of Rights in our country’s Constitution (laws) that protect people who are accused of crimes. This is partly because the people who wrote our laws probably heard about what happened to people like 4-year-old Dorcas Good, 77-year-old Margaret Scott, and 81-year-old Giles Corey.



Remember the story of the Salem witch hunts later this year when you learn about the Bill of Rights. It will help you understand why we have certain rights.

Read Resource 6: Connecting Past and Present

As you read, think about how the past can help explain the present.



It's time to Check for Understanding!

Individually complete Resource 7: Checks for Understanding



1. Take each of the numbered statements below and write the number of each statement into the CAUSE or EFFECT column to show which are considered causes and which are effects of the Salem witch trials.

- 19 innocent people were hanged
- people in Salem were having disputes
- accused people are presumed to be innocent
- rye was infected with a bacteria
- Massachusetts held a Day of National Humiliation
- outbreak of hysteria

CAUSES	Salem Witch Hunts	EFFECTS

Two accounts of the Salem witch hunts appear below.

Account 1

When you look at a map of Salem and see that most of the accusers lived on one side of the village while most of the people who were accused lived on the other side of the village it becomes clear that the Salem witch hunts were part of a feud between old Salem and new Salem.

Account 2

The Salem witch hunts happened because a group of young girls started behaving weirdly. An enslaved woman named Tituba baked a "witch cake" as a cure for the girl's behavior and was accused of being a witch. Tituba then began accusing others so that she would not be hanged.

2. Explain why there are two different accounts of the Salem witch hunts in the space below. Support your answer with information from the Accounts 1 and 2.

The paragraph below comes from a reading that was part of this lesson.

Back then, a person was presumed to be guilty until they proved that they were innocent. This is why many of the accused witches spent so much time in jail before their trials. Today, we presume that a person is innocent until proven guilty.

3. Underline the sentence in the paragraph above that BEST describes a change that occurred as a result of the Salem witch trials.