

Act One

Standards Focus: Characterization

In order to understand a plot and its significance, it is important that the reader understand the characters and their relationships. In every story, each character has a **motivation**, which are forces and reasons that give the character a reason to act the way they do, or make the decisions they make. We can learn about a character's motivations and personality from the author's use of direct and indirect characterization.

Direct characterization is when the author or narrator directly tells the reader what a character is like. For example, "Jennifer is a fiery red-head with the tenacity of a mule." *Indirect characterization* is when the author gives information about a character and allows the reader to draw his or her own conclusions about that character. Two of the ways we can learn about a character through *indirect characterization* are:

- The character's own thoughts, feelings and actions
- What other characters say or feel or how they act towards another character

Conflict is the struggle between opposing forces. A character's motivation and a character's conflict are closely related. For example, if you wanted to buy a candy bar to get an energy boost while studying, that would be your motivation. Your conflict would be the fact that you do not have any money. How you respond to wanting that candy bar and not having any money would reveal a lot about your personality. If your choice is to say "Oh, well, maybe next time," then we learn that you are rational, and able to set aside your desires. If your choice is to borrow money from a friend, we may learn that you are resourceful and possibly trustworthy, since your friend is willing to loan you money. If you decide to steal the candy bar, we may learn that you are impulsive, selfish, and immoral.

Directions: For each of the following characters, use both direct and indirect characterization from Act One of the novel to identify:

- a) the character's main motivation
- b) the character's main conflict
- c) what the character's motivation and conflicts reveal about this his or her personality
- d) how this character and his or her motivations have affected the plot so far

An example has been done for you:

Abigail	
main motivation	to be with John Proctor
main conflict	she is unable to be with John because he and Elizabeth are still married; Abigail wants to get rid of Elizabeth
personality	conniving, lustful, vengeful, controlling, manipulative
effect on plot	After Tituba is forced to confess, Abigail jumps in and starts accusing others
Reverend Parris	
main motivation	
main conflict	
personality	
effect on plot	

Act One

Standards Focus: Characterization

John Proctor	
main motivation	
main conflict	
personality	
effect on plot	
Thomas Putnam	
main motivation	
main conflict	
personality	
effect on plot	
Reverend John Hale	
main motivation	
main conflict	
personality	
effect on plot	
Tituba	
main motivation	
main conflict	
personality	
effect on plot	
Giles Corey	
main motivation	
main conflict	
personality	
effect on plot	