

# The Salem Witch Trials

11 The Salem witch trials were arrests made in the town of  
19 Salem, USA, between February 1692 and May 1693.

29 They began when two little girls, Betty Parris (aged 9)  
38 and Abigail Williams (aged 11), began to have seizures,  
46 which would make them twitch and scream – moving  
55 their bodies in an unusual way and making strange  
64 noises. The village doctor, William Griggs, said that they  
74 were 'bewitched' and people began to hunt for the 'witch'  
79 that had cursed the girls.

88 Three women were accused: Sarah Good, a local homeless  
98 person; Sarah Osborne, an old lady who did not attend  
108 church; and Tituba, a servant. Over the course of the  
117 trials, over 150 innocent people were put into prison  
122 after being accused of witchcraft.



# Quick Questions



1. In which country did the Salem witch trials occur?

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2. Find two words which the author uses to show that the girls' movements and noises were not normal.

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3. Why might the village doctor have said that the girls had been 'bewitched'?

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4. How does William Griggs' diagnosis compare to what a doctor might say today?

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# Answers



1. In which country did the Salem witch trials occur?

**Accept: 'USA' or 'United States of America' only.**



2. Find two words which the author uses to show that the girls' movements and noises were not normal.

**Accept: unusual and strange.**



3. Why might the village doctor have said that the girls had been 'bewitched'?

**Accept answers which discuss their unusual behaviour and symptoms and they did not know about those medical conditions at the time.**



4. How does William Griggs' diagnosis compare to what a doctor might say today?

**Accept any reasonable contrast which outdates and nullifies witchcraft, such as 'a doctor today would find a medical reason and would not say that witchcraft was the reason for an illness.'**