The Crucible in-class essay Sidell Essay Prompts 11th American Lit

*Below are essay prompts for an in-class essay you will write on The Crucible. I highly recommend that you make a graphic organizer or preparations for each topic so that you are prepared (any day this week) to write on ANY ONE OF THESE TOPICS; you will be instructed to begin writing your essay at the beginning of class and you will not have extra time to work on it. The essay must consist of at least four paragraphs (intro, conclusion, and at least two body paragraphs), although it may be longer if necessary. You must use as much specific detail from the play as possible, including a* ***minimum of two direct quotes*** *to support your writing.*

*It is important to be prepared; you will have a much easier time with the essay if you already have a graphic organizer with quotes to use for each essay topic ahead of time...*

1.The main reason Arthur Miller wrote this play was to comment on the movement in the 1950’s led by Senator Joe McCarthy to seek and identify members of the Communist Party that he felt were trying to overthrow the government. This movement ruined many innocent people because of its drive to seek what it thought to be the truth no matter who was hurt in the process. Compare and contrast this incident in history to the Salem Witch Hunt in The Crucible.

2. As the action heats up, some of the characters in The Crucible stay the same, but a few of them change. Write a detailed character study on one of the play’s dynamic characters who undergoes some sort of change from the beginning of the play to the end of Act 3.

3. Preserving one’s reputation is a prevalent theme in The Crucible. Examine three characters in detail who are concerned with their reputations. How does this affect how they act? How are their situations similar or different? Is a good name more important than the truth?

4. Two characters in a literary work who serve as contrasts to each other are called ***foils***. With this term in mind, explain how either Abigail and Elizabeth or Danforth and Hale serve as foils for each other. What character traits do each have which makes them foils for the other?How are these characters different? Do they change as the play progresses?

5. How much is Abigail to blame for the events that took place? Is she a victim of her society in The Crucible? What events in her past and present influence her behavior? Can she be excused or pardoned because outside forces “made” her the way she is? Why or why not?