

Bridge & Analysis: Step-by-Step Guide

Big idea: A quote can't explain itself. Your job is to show the reader **how the words work** (the bridge) and **what that means** and **why it matters** (the analysis). **Analysis answers one question: "So what?"**

Part 1: The Bridge (zoom in on the words)

Pick **1 or 2 exact words** from the quote, not a whole phrase. Then fill in:

The word "_____" suggests _____ because _____.
This word choice creates a _____ tone (or mood) by _____.

Tone = the speaker's attitude (angry, desperate, bitter, hopeful). **Mood** = the feeling the reader gets (tense, uneasy, sad).

Part 2: The Analysis (3 moves, in order)

1. CHARACTER	What does this show about how the character thinks, fears, or wants ?	<i>This shows that ____ believes / fears / wants _____, which reveals _____.</i>
2. THEME	How does that prove my claim ?	<i>This supports my theme because _____.</i>
3. SOCIETY	Why does this matter in real life ? What do real people do or struggle with?	<i>In real life, people _____ when _____. This matters because _____.</i>

Summary vs. analysis: the one-question test

Read each sentence you wrote. Ask: "**Could this answer 'What happened?'**" If yes, it is **summary**. Rewrite it so it answers "**What does this mean?**" or "**Why does it matter?**"

Summary (Beginning)	Analysis (Mastery)
Proctor decided to protect his name instead of confessing.	This shows that Proctor believes his name is the last piece of his identity he still controls, so giving it up would erase who he is.

Test-day checklist

- I picked 1-2 exact words (not a whole phrase).
- I explained what those words suggest and named the tone or mood.
- Analysis part 1: I explained what it shows about the character's thinking, not what happened.
- Analysis part 2: I connected it to my theme.
- Analysis part 3: I explained why it matters in real life.
- I did not retell the plot. Every sentence answers "so what?"

A Full Model (Proctor, "My honesty is broke")

Claim: When guilt makes people believe their mistakes have destroyed their goodness, choosing to act with integrity can help them see that they are more than their past choices.

Quote: "My honesty is broke, Elizabeth; I am no good man" (Miller 194).

Bridge

The word "broke" suggests something once whole that is now shattered, so Proctor sees his honesty as ruined. The word "good" suggests moral worth, so by saying he is "no good," he judges his whole identity, not just one mistake. Together these words create a hopeless, self-condemning tone.

Analysis

[Character] This shows that Proctor believes his guilt over the affair has destroyed his goodness completely. He thinks in absolutes, as if one mistake erases everything. But this is how he *feels*, not necessarily the truth, because he later refuses to sign a false confession. **[Theme]** That choice supports the claim: guilt convinces him he is beyond redemption, yet choosing integrity shows he is more than his past choices. **[Society]** In real life, people who feel defined by their mistakes may give up on improving, and shame can make them easy to pressure. Miller shows that recognizing this matters, because a person's worth is shown by what they choose next, not only by what they did before.

Why this works

- The bridge uses **two different words** and explains the **effect** (tone), not just the meaning.
- Nothing in the analysis retells the plot. Each sentence says what something **shows** or **why it matters**.
- It goes beyond the obvious by questioning Proctor's belief ("how he feels, not necessarily the truth"). That is the **original idea** that earns Mastery.

Self-rating scale (from the teacher's rubric)

Beginning	Approaching	Proficient	Mastery
Mostly summarizes or retells.	Some analysis, but general, repetitive, or about what happens.	Clear analysis; explains significance and connects to theme.	Insightful and original; clearly connects to claim and shows critical thinking.

Practice Worksheet: *The Crucible*

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

Claim for all four quotes: When people fear losing their reputation, they may sacrifice the truth, but protecting their integrity can matter more than protecting their image.

Directions: For each quote, write a bridge (1-2 exact words, what they suggest, the tone or mood), then three analysis sentences: **Character, Theme, Society**. Use the sentence starters from the guide.

Quote 1 - Proctor

"I have given you my soul; leave me my name!"

Hint: compare "soul" and "name." Which does he value more, and what does he mean by each?

Bridge (exact word(s), what they suggest, tone/mood):

Analysis - Character (what it shows about how he/she thinks):

Analysis - Theme (how it supports the claim):

Analysis - Society (why it matters in real life):

Self-check: ☐ exact words ☐ tone/mood named ☐ no retelling ☐ real-life connection

Quote 2 - Danforth

"...there be no road between." (a person is either with the court or against it)

Hint: what does it say about how Danforth thinks if he allows no middle ground?

Bridge (exact word(s), what they suggest, tone/mood):

Analysis - Character (what it shows about how he/she thinks):

Analysis - Theme (how it supports the claim):

Analysis - Society (why it matters in real life):

Self-check: ☐ exact words ☐ tone/mood named ☐ no retelling ☐ real-life connection

Quote 3 - Proctor

"Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life!"

Hint: look at "cannot" and "another." What do they suggest about how he sees his name?

Bridge (exact word(s), what they suggest, tone/mood):

Analysis - Character (what it shows about how he/she thinks):

Analysis - Theme (how it supports the claim):

Analysis - Society (why it matters in real life):

Self-check: ☐ exact words ☐ tone/mood named ☐ no retelling ☐ real-life connection

Quote 4 - Elizabeth

"He have his goodness now. God forbid I take it from him!"

Hint: she chooses not to pull him back. What does she understand about his choice?

Bridge (exact word(s), what they suggest, tone/mood):

Analysis - Character (what it shows about how he/she thinks):

Analysis - Theme (how it supports the claim):

Analysis - Society (why it matters in real life):

Self-check: ■ exact words ■ tone/mood named ■ no retelling ■ real-life connection

What Each Level Looks Like

Four quotes, five levels each (Mastery to No Evidence), based on the teacher's R7 rubric. Problems are marked so she can see exactly what lowers a score.

How to read the marks

Underlined = **summary**: it retells what happens. It answers "What happened?" instead of "What does it mean?"

Italic = **vague, unsupported, or disconnected**: a general statement, an opinion with no proof from the text, or a link to the theme that is not explained.

Nothing marked = no problems in that part.

What moves an answer up a level

No Evidence → Beginning	Use the quote's exact words and explain them. Stop giving opinions with no proof from the text.
Beginning → Approaching	After every event you retell, add: "This shows that the character thinks/fears/wants ____."
Approaching → Proficient	Replace the retelling with what it reveals, then explain <i>how</i> it proves the claim ("This supports my theme because ____").
Proficient → Mastery	Add an original idea (question an assumption, notice a change or contradiction) and make the real-life connection specific, not general.

Quote 1 - Proctor

"I have given you my soul; leave me my name!"

Claim: When people fear losing their reputation, they may sacrifice the truth, but protecting their integrity can matter more than protecting their image.

Mastery	This shows that Proctor believes he has already lost his moral standing by lying in his confession, so the only thing left worth protecting is his name, his sense of who he is. The command "leave me" sounds like pleading, which shows how close to breaking he is. This supports the claim because the pressure to save his reputation pushes him toward a lie, but he finally decides his integrity matters more than his image. In real life, people are often pressured by authorities to trade the truth for safety, and Miller shows that what a person refuses to surrender reveals who they really are.
Proficient	This shows that Proctor values his name more than his soul because he has already lied once and does not want to lose what he has left. This supports the claim because he is protecting his integrity instead of his image. <i>People today also have to choose between what is easy and what is right.</i>
Approaching	Proctor says he already gave his soul, so his name must be important to him. <u>He confessed to witchcraft but does not want to sign the paper.</u> <i>This connects to the theme because he cares about his name. It is important to protect your name.</i>
Beginning	<u>Proctor confessed to witchcraft, but when Danforth wants him to sign, he gets upset and says to leave him his name. Danforth wants the paper posted on the church door, and Proctor does not want that. He does not want to sign it.</u>
No Evidence	<i>I think Proctor is a good person and the court is unfair. I think he should have just signed it so he could live. <u>Lots of people were accused in Salem and it was a sad time.</u></i>

Quote 2 - Danforth

"...there be no road between." (a person is either with the court or against it)

Claim: When people fear losing their reputation, they may sacrifice the truth, but protecting their integrity can matter more than protecting their image.

Mastery	This shows that Danforth thinks in absolutes: by saying there is "no road between," he treats any doubt as guilt, so he cannot imagine an honest person who simply questions the court. This supports the claim because fear of losing his authority, and of being wrong, pushes him to protect the court's image instead of finding the truth, which turns innocent people into enemies. In real life, leaders who treat questions as betrayal silence the very people who could expose their mistakes, and Miller shows that refusing a middle ground is how fear becomes injustice.
Proficient	This shows that Danforth believes anyone who questions the court is against it. This supports the claim because he is protecting the court's image instead of searching for the truth. <i>In real life, some people refuse to listen to other opinions.</i>
Approaching	Danforth says people are either with the court or against it. <u>He says people must pick a side.</u> This shows he is a strict person. <i>This connects to the theme because he wants to protect the court. Sometimes people are too strict.</i>
Beginning	<u>Danforth is the judge in the Salem witch trials. He says people are either with the court or against it, and he keeps arresting the people who disagree with him. He does not let people have another opinion.</u>
No Evidence	<i>Danforth is a bad judge and I do not like him. Judges should be fair. <u>The Salem witch trials were a long time ago and people believed in witches back then.</u></i>

Quote 3 - Proctor

"Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life!"

Claim: When people fear losing their reputation, they may sacrifice the truth, but protecting their integrity can matter more than protecting their image.

Mastery	This shows that Proctor believes his name is his entire identity, so losing it would mean losing himself. This is a shift from earlier, when he called himself "no good man," because now he sees something worth protecting. This supports the claim because he is tempted to sacrifice the truth to survive, but he chooses integrity; here, "name" no longer means public image but who he is. In real life, people are pressured to say what authorities want to stay safe or accepted, and Miller shows that standing by the truth, even at a high cost, is how people keep their sense of self.
Proficient	This shows that Proctor feels his name is all he has left, so he will not give it up. This supports the claim because he chooses to protect his integrity instead of lying to survive. <i>People in real life also care about their reputation.</i>
Approaching	Proctor says he cannot have another name, so his name is important to him. <u>He refuses to let Danforth nail the confession to the church door.</u> <i>This shows he does not want to give up. This connects to the theme because it is about reputation.</i>
Beginning	<u>Proctor tells Danforth he cannot have another name. Danforth wants him to sign the confession, but Proctor tears it up. He is upset about it.</u>
No Evidence	<i>I think Proctor was brave and everyone should be like him. Names are important and people should be careful about what they do. <u>Proctor was in jail in the play.</u></i>

Quote 4 - Elizabeth

"He have his goodness now. God forbid I take it from him!"

Claim: When people fear losing their reputation, they may sacrifice the truth, but protecting their integrity can matter more than protecting their image.

Mastery	This shows that Elizabeth understands something Proctor could not see earlier: his refusal to confess is proof that he is good, not just a last act of stubbornness. By saying "God forbid," she treats interfering with his choice as a moral wrong, so she puts his integrity above her own wish to keep him alive. This supports the claim because Proctor, who once believed he was "no good man," shows he is more than his past choices once he chooses integrity, and Elizabeth recognizes it. In real life, people who love someone who made mistakes can help them see their worth by respecting a hard choice instead of rescuing them from it; Miller shows that integrity has to be chosen by the person themselves.
Proficient	This shows that Elizabeth believes Proctor has found his goodness by refusing to confess, and she will not take it from him. This supports the claim because Proctor chooses integrity over saving himself. <i>In real life, people sometimes have to let others make hard choices.</i>
Approaching	Elizabeth says Proctor has his goodness now, so she will not stop him. <u>She does not ask him to confess and she lets him go to be hanged.</u> <i>This shows that she loves him. It connects to the theme because he is good now.</i>
Beginning	<u>Elizabeth tells Hale that Proctor has his goodness. Proctor was supposed to confess, but he tore up the paper, so he will be hanged. Elizabeth does not try to stop him. She is sad about it.</u>
No Evidence	<i>Elizabeth is Proctor's wife and I feel bad for her. I think she should have tried to stop him because nobody wants their husband to die. This play is sad. <u>She was in jail, and she was pregnant.</u></i>