

# How to link your director design ideas to your context statement.



## Example Response Act 3—Costume

To create a link with the concept of the individual against the state I would create a connection between Proctor and Mary Warren. Proctor would wear brown cotton trousers and a white cotton shirt with a brown, worn looking leather coat and wide rimmed hat. This would represent his role as a typical, hardworking puritan farmer. In addition to this I would include a red leather belt which will create a link with Mary Warren. Mary Warren would be dressed in a long, grey cotton dress with long sleeves and a high collar. At the beginning of the extract she would wear a red scarf tied around her head securing the link with Proctor. The audience will be able acknowledge their connection and therefore alliance. On the line 'Mary God damns all liars' Proctor would hold Mary's head in both hands, intensifying the connection. I have chosen the colour red to represent the phrase 'reds under the bed' which was used as a threatening phrase and made reference to the hunting down and persecution of accused communist sympathisers.

The rest of the girls would wear similar costumes to Mary but with a white scarf. On the line when they repeat 'Never, never' they would unwrap the scarves and throw them to floor which would echo the growing hysteria of the McCarthy trials. On the line 'You're the devils man' Mary Warren would throw the red scarf to Proctor as she joins the girls who now all look identical in their long grey dresses and loose hair. This action would render the audience with a feeling of all hope disappearing.

## Example Response Act 4—Set

To allow the audience to see a link between the production and the context within which the play was originally written I would ask the set designer to create a red painted floor area where John Proctor stands. This would be centre stage and the floor space around him would be grey. Danforth, Hathorne and Parris would stand in grey area, surrounding Proctor. I have chosen the colour red to represent the phrase 'reds under the bed' which was used as a threatening phrase and made reference to the hunting down and persecution of accused communist sympathisers. Here Proctor represents both the hunted and the individual targeted by the state.

In addition to this I would ask the designer to add red metal prison bars into 3 gaps in wooden walls which would create the back drop of the stage space. The prison bars would be lit up brighter on the line 'because it is my name', therefore highlighting the climax of the play. While the bars are lit up an additional part the set would be seen by the audience. To produce this I would ask the set designer to create the effect of forced perspective forming an optical illusion for the audience. The audience would see the silhouette of many prisoners who have been arrested and imprisoned after being accused of witchcraft. This effect would be created by the set designer using black stiff card or wooden shapes to create of the outline prisoners, large at first and gradually getting smaller to get the required percep-

Individuals were put through public trials which were also televised.

The build up of hysteria and panic

1953 production was a naturalistic design

Key things to include when making links.

Links with the colour red.

The individual against the state

## Example response for Act 1—Sound

At the beginning of the extract I would have a low ominous drone which builds in intensity and volume. This drone would reflect the mass panic and hysteria of the American public of the 1950s and the growing fear of communist infiltration. The drone would come to an abrupt stop on the arrival of Hale. This would not only create a sense of tension for the audience but immerse them into the sense of fear and the need the characters have to find an answer.

## Example Response for Act 2—Lighting

To highlight the persecution of the individual and power of the state in 1950s New York, I would place John Proctor in an intense spotlight in the centre of the stage. Elizabeth would be stood slightly behind him half in the light. This light would begin to slowly fade up when Proctor says 'The Commandments'. The surrounding areas of white would begin to fade as the spotlight intensifies during the interrogation, giving the audience as sense of the torment the Proctors are facing. This would abruptly change to a deep red on the line 'There be no love for Satan in this house, Mister'. This would symbolise the link between those accused of 'trafficking with the devil' and the way the accused communist sympathisers were presented through propaganda.



### Context information

The **Red Scare (1947-57)** was a period of **paranoia** about **communist infiltration or invasion** in the United States. During this period, ordinary Americans were paralysed by a **fear of 'Reds under the bed'**.

