

The Crucible

Act Four
Handout 2

Name _____

Date _____ Hour _____

Creating Comic Relief With Clerihews

Certainly, not much is funny about a tragic play such as *The Crucible*. A common technique used by authors of tragedies is to incorporate comic relief. Comic relief is a bit of humor inserted into a serious drama primarily to break the tension. In addition, comic relief also often emphasizes key elements or the serious nature of the story.

What is a clerihew? It's a short poem about a person or character. The rules for writing a clerihew are quite simple:

1. The poem is four lines in length.
2. The first and second lines rhyme with each other.
3. The third and fourth lines rhyme with each other.
4. The first line names a person.
5. The second line usually ends with something that rhymes with the name of the person.
6. A clerihew is usually funny.

Directions: Read the two clerihew samples below to get an idea of the poetry form. Then, get creative, and write your own character clerihews. Be sure to share with your classmates, and create some comic relief of your own!

John Proctor

A Puritan farmer, this man named John.
In Abigail's game he became a pawn.
To set the court straight, he tried his best.
It cost his life to pass this test.

Thomas Putnam

Thomas tore the town apart.
Full of greed and low in heart.
Accused his neighbors to buy their land.
With deeds he sits, but on the gibbet they stand.

Try your own!

Title _____

Line 1 with the character's name _____

Line 2 rhymes with Line 1 _____

Line 3 elaborates on the character _____

Line 4 rhymes with Line 3 _____

Title _____

Line 1 with the character's name _____

Line 2 rhymes with Line 1 _____

Line 3 elaborates on the character _____

Line 4 rhymes with Line 3 _____