

## Discussion Guide: *Gallows Hill*

1. Patience and Thomas belong to different branches of Christianity, and each disapproves of the other's branch. What beliefs and values do they turn out to have in common?
2. How do gender roles impact the characters' lives? What unspoken rules of womanly conduct does Patience break over the course of the story?
3. Why do you think Pru takes in Thomas and Grace? What qualities do Thomas and Grace come to appreciate about her?
4. Most of the characters in this story are white people of European descent. How do they view "Indians"—Indigenous peoples of the Americas? What does this tell you about their attitudes toward people from different backgrounds and cultures?
5. Why do you think Tituba confesses to witchcraft? Why do you think Sarah Good denies the charges against her?
6. What do people claim the Devil has promised them in exchange for their service? What threats do they say he has made? What might this tell you about Puritan New England society?
7. Thomas wonders several times if the afflicted girls could be feigning their torments as a way to get attention. What do you think of this idea? What might the girls have to gain by pretending? What risks would they take by doing so?
8. How does Dorothy's arrest and treatment in jail change the way Patience sees her community? What questions does she find herself asking as she tries to help Dorothy?
9. When Thomas goes to the pasture at midnight, he has a powerful and unsettling experience, and afterward he isn't sure how much of it was real. How does it compare to the characters' experiences at the accused witches' examinations and trials?
10. How are criminal cases handled differently in 1692 Salem than they are in the United States now? Do you see any similarities?
11. According to Thomas, why is it so easy for people to believe Pru is a witch? What might motivate people in your community to turn against a neighbor?
12. What explanation does Abigail eventually give for accusing Pru of bewitching her—and for sticking with that accusation despite her doubts? What else do you think might have motivated Abigail to make accusations?
13. Over the course of the story, which characters defy your expectations and in what ways?
14. By the end of the story, what do Thomas and Patience expect for their futures? What do you think will happen to Thomas, Patience, Dorothy, and the other characters?