

#9316

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE: YOUNG GOODMAN BROWN

FILMS FOR THE HUMANITIES & SCIENCES

1999

Grade Levels: 10-13+

30 minutes

DESCRIPTION

An adaptation of Hawthorne's classic story of Goodman Brown. Did he actually meet the devil in the forest near Salem or was it all a dream?

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Language Arts: Reading

- Standard: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts
 - Benchmark: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of literary texts
 - Benchmark: Understands relationships between literature and its historical period, culture, and society

Subject Area: Language Arts: Viewing

- Standard: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media
 - Benchmark: Understands how literary forms can be represented in visual narratives

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To study classic American literature.
2. To introduce the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne.
3. To dramatize the elements of a short story.
4. To explore themes present in "Young Goodman Brown."

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Provide background concerning the author, including these facts:
 - a. He was born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1804.
 - b. His great-grandfather was a judge presiding over the infamous Salem witch trials.
 - c. He built a resentment toward "Puritan Pride" and wrote this allegory about his feelings.
 - d. His works were deeply concerned with the ethical problems of sin, punishment, and atonement.
2. Define *allegory* and instruct the students to note its use in the story during showing.

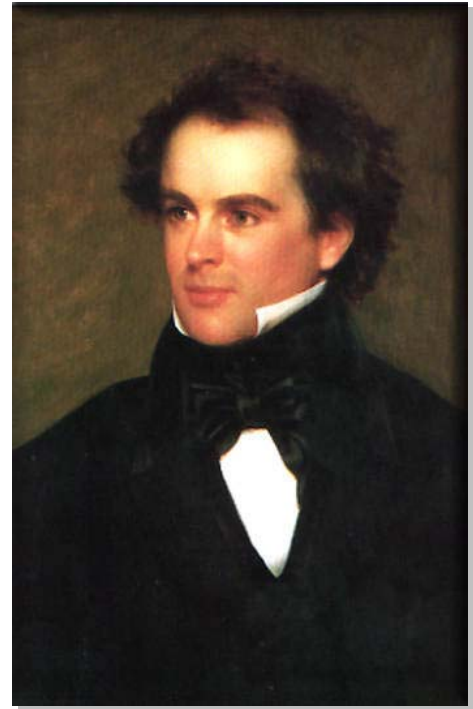


3. Provide a list of the following possible themes for the story, with instructions to the students to prepare during showing for discussion of them:
 - a. The reality of sin
 - b. The pervasiveness of evil
 - c. The secret sin and hypocrisy of all persons
 - d. The hypocrisy of Puritanism
 - e. The results of doubt or disbelief
 - f. The devastating effects of moral skepticism
 - g. The demoralizing effects of the discovery that all men are sinners and hypocrites

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Discuss the allegorical nature of this work: the title character's name, his wife's name, and the color pink.
2. What is the impact of the following on this work:
 - a. The supernatural
 - b. Salem witch trials
 - c. Romanticism
3. Was the forest real or part of a dream that Brown had?
4. Why does Brown go into the forest—and tonight of all nights?
5. Discuss the struggle between good and evil facing Brown.
6. What were Brown's beliefs before his journey?
7. Soon after beginning his journey to face his fears, Brown is approached by the Devil, who challenges his personal beliefs and his faith in his fellow man. Analyze Brown's effort to come to terms with his own self-doubt.
8. Regardless of whether Brown actually met the Devil in person or fell asleep in the woods, how did this experience affect his life afterwards?
9. Discuss the quote "Evil is the nature of mankind," stated by the Devil in this work.
10. Why did the author leave so many important questions unanswered?



Applications and Activities

1. The text of the work is in the public domain and is not copyrighted. Search for it online where it is available on numerous sites.
2. Compare and contrast the story with the video.
3. Research and discuss the views and beliefs of the people of that time period.
4. After viewing the short synopsis, "Young Goodman Brown in Context," included at the end of the tape, create a list of similarities between the lives of Hawthorne and Brown.

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- Light in the Shadows: A Biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne #2306



World Wide Web

The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and “kid safe” sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **NATHANIAL HAWTHORNE**

<http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/hawthorne.html>

Hawthorne’s works, notes on his writings, annotated editions, and more!

- **NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE IN SALEM**

<http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/>

Contains a plethora of information on the works of Hawthorne. Also includes information on his life and times and his connection to Salem, Massachusetts.

- **NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE ART**

<http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nha.html>

Catch a glimpse of this author via these links to historic portraits and engravings.