



ANSWERS

What were the witch trials: A series of persecutions between 1692 and 1693 when people were accused and put to death or imprisoned for practicing witchcraft.

Historical Context: The witch trials took place between 1692 and 1693 in Colonial Massachusetts. Church politics, family feuds, children having sudden and unexplainable hysterical fits, and an absence of political authority

Key People: Bridget Bishop, Cotton Mather, Governor Phipps

Key Events: The witch trials began when two young girls, nine-year-old Betty Parris and eleven-year-old Abigail Williams began to have strange screaming fits and witchcraft was suspected. Cotton Mather writes to the court to ask them to disallow spectral evidence. Governor Phipps moves the witch trials to a different court, disallowing spectral evidence. The witch trials were stopped in 1693.

Interesting Facts: The trials resulted in the executions of 20 people, 14 of them women and all but one by hanging. Five others (including two infant children) died in prison. Facts will vary.