

Adopting Hawthorne's Style

Choose one of the two prompts below, and respond by writing the letter described.



1. Year: 1660. You are a Puritan female in Boston, the wife (or unmarried sister—remember Mistress Hibbins!) of the governor. You are aware that the magistrates and ministers are discussing with great consternation a book published in England about an American Puritan adulteress. You are curious, although you know that *The Scarlet Letter* is a forbidden book until the officials can decide whether to censor it, or how to deal with it. You manage to obtain a copy of the book and, over a period of several days, while your husband is out, you read it. Write your response to it in the form of journal entries or in the form of a letter to a close relative or friend in another community. (Obviously, the *epilogue*, chapter 24, would not be in a 1660 version of the book.)
2. The time and place are the same as in the first scenario. You are one of the hoary-bearded magistrates involved in the judgement of the novel. In a letter, you convey your responses to a magistrate in another town, to apprise him of how the Boston eminences are dealing with the situation and what they are doing to safeguard the public.