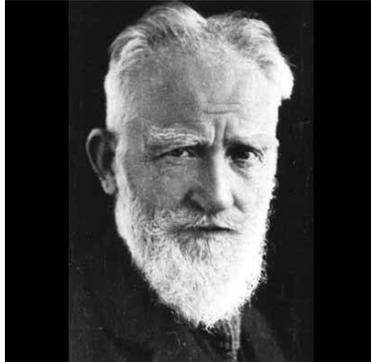


SAINT JOAN

by George Bernard Shaw



THE AUTHOR

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) was born into a lower-middle class Protestant family in Dublin, Ireland. His father was an alcoholic failed merchant, while his mother was a professional singer. When Shaw was sixteen, his mother ran off with her voice teacher, leaving him at home to complete school, which he despised. In 1876, he joined his mother in London and took up a career in journalism and writing, beginning with a string of five unsuccessful novels. Meanwhile, he became interested in political causes, especially socialism. This led him to become one of the founders of the Fabian Society, which had as its stated goal to transform Britain into a socialist society by means of education and legislation, while scorning the revolutionary violence of some of the Continental socialists.

His first success as a writer came through his works of art, music, and dramatic criticism. It was not until 1891 that he wrote his first play, but once he started, he rarely stopped until his death at the age of 94, eventually producing a total of sixty plays. During his first twelve years as a playwright, he wrote a number of plays that are now highly esteemed (*Arms and the Man*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Candida*), but found that London theaters were unwilling to stage them. But in 1904, the Court Theater in Chelsea came under new management, and Shaw's plays found a home among people interested in experimental drama. Here, he was able to direct his own works, and quickly became wealthy as a result of their success, culminating with the production of *Pygmalion* in a major London theater in 1914.

The arrival of World War I almost proved Shaw's undoing, as he spoke out strongly against the war, which he saw as the last gasp of imperialism, squandering the lives of the young under the guise of patriotic impulses. He became a social pariah, and was able to produce only one play, *Heartbreak House*, during the war years. When the war ended, he resumed his playwriting efforts with a five-play series on evolution called *Back to Methuselah* and the production of *Saint Joan* (1923), which led to the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1925. By this time, his plays were being produced all over the English-speaking world (in the United States, production of Shaw's plays was spearheaded by the Hedgerow Theater in Rose Valley, PA, which gained an international reputation for its productions of Shavian dramas). Shaw continued to write plays for the remainder of his life. He died a few days after falling off a ladder while trimming a tree in his yard, at the age of 94.

Shaw's personal life was somewhat of an enigma. He married Charlotte Payne-Townsend in 1898 and remained married to her until her death 45 years later, though according to sources close to the couple, their marriage was never consummated. Meanwhile, he carried on affairs and flirtations with many women, including two famous actresses (Mrs. Patrick Campbell, for whom the part of Eliza in *Pygmalion* was originally written, and Ellen Terry). He was a socialist but not a communist, though he was taken in by the public persona of Josef Stalin; a feminist, a vegetarian, and a believer in the Life Force (a sort of pantheism, though early in life he had been an avowed atheist).

Saint Joan (1923, shortly after Joan was canonized by the Catholic Church), based on thorough research of documents from the fifteenth century, is considered by many to be Shaw's greatest play, his only tragedy, and, according to T.S. Eliot, a work that "seems to illustrate Mr. Shaw's mind more clearly than anything he has written before." Though he readily dismisses any supernatural source for Joan's voices, he pictures her as a deeply imaginative girl who challenged the authority structures of her day in ways that even she did not fully understand. He also avoids the simplistic portrayal often given to her short life by picturing her judges as sincere and honest men who bent over backwards to be fair in their conduct of the trial, making the play "a tragedy with no villains." Shaw's admiration for Joan of Arc was such that he erected a statue of her in his private garden and ordered that his ashes be scattered on the ground at the foot of the statue after his death.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

- Captain Robert de Baudricourt – Squire of the castle of Vaucouleurs, he is the first to be confronted by Joan and reluctantly sends her to meet the Dauphin at Chinon.
- Bertrand de Poulengy – A French squire and one of Joan's first supporters, he escorts her to meet the Dauphin.
- Joan d'Arc – The Maid of Orleans, she is the central figure in the play. She lifts the siege of Orleans, crowns the Dauphin at Rheims cathedral, but is burned at the stake as a heretic and witch by the English.
- Duke de la Tremouille – Lord Chamberlain to the Dauphin of France, he heads the French army and resents Joan when she is given command by the Dauphin.
- Archbishop of Rheims – A worldly clergyman who initially responds positively to Joan's piety but later comes to see her as a heretic.
- Gilles de Rais – A well-dressed officer nicknamed Bluebeard because of his dyed goatee.
- Captain La Hire – A tough veteran soldier known for his penchant for swearing.
- Dunois – The Bastard of Orleans, commander of the French troops trying to lift the siege, he fights valiantly beside Joan but does nothing to deliver her after her arrest.

- Dauphin – The heir to the French throne, later to become King Charles VII, he is weak and immature and has little respect among his courtiers because he is widely believed to be illegitimate. He is easily influenced by the strong-willed Joan.
- Richard de Beauchamp – The Earl of Warwick who is determined to burn Joan at the stake in order to save the English cause and preserve medieval feudalism.
- John de Stogumber – An English chaplain who is convinced that Joan is a witch and will do anything to see her burned, he later repents after witnessing her execution.
- Peter Cauchon – The French Bishop of Beauvais, he believes Joan is a heretic and is willing to see her turned over to the English for punishment should the Inquisition condemn her, but at the same time is committed to giving her a fair trial.
- John Lemaitre – The Dominican monk who serves as the Inquisitor at Joan’s trial, he knows she is innocent but at the same time recognizes that her very existence is a challenge to church authority.
- Canon John D’Estivet – The prosecutor in Joan’s trial, he is narrow-minded and determined to see her burn.
- Courcelles - A young priest who has drawn up a long list of charges against Joan, most of them frivolous, and becomes frustrated when most of the charges are ignored by the court.
- Martin Ladvenu – One of the assessors at the trial, he tries his best to help Joan and save her from the flames and devotes his life to championing her cause after her death.

NOTABLE QUOTATIONS

“No sir: we are afraid of you; but she puts courage into us. She really doesn’t seem to be afraid of anything. Perhaps you could frighten her, sir.” (Steward, Scene I, p.51)

“Miracles are all right, Polly. The only difficulty about them is that they don’t happen nowadays.” (Baudricourt, Scene I, p.56)

“A miracle, my friend, is an event which creates faith. That is the purpose and nature of miracles.” (Archbishop, Scene II, p.70)

“The Church has to rule men for the good of their souls as you have to rule them for the good of their bodies. To do that, the Church must do as you do: nourish their faith by poetry.” (Archbishop, Scene II, p.71)

“The practical problem would seem to be how to save her soul without saving her body.” (Warwick, Scene IV, p.94)

“What will the world be like when The Church’s accumulated wisdom and knowledge and experience, its councils of learned, venerable pious men, are thrust into the kennel by every ignorant laborer or dairymaid whom the devil can puff up with the monstrous self-conceit of being directly inspired from heaven?” (Cauchon, Scene IV, p.95)

“I see now that what is in your mind is not that this girl has never once mentioned The Church, and thinks only of God and herself, but that she has not once mentioned the peerage, and thinks only of the king and herself.” (Cauchon, Scene IV, p.98)

“These two ideas of hers are the same idea at bottom. It goes deep, my lord. It is the protest of the individual soul against the interference of priest or peer between the private man and his God. I should call it Protestantism if I had to find a name for it.” (Warwick, Scene IV, p.98-99)

“Call this side of her heresy Nationalism if you will: I can find you no better name for it. I can only tell you that it is essentially anti-Catholic and anti-Christian; for the Catholic Church knows only one realm, and that is the realm of Christ’s kingdom. Divide that kingdom into nations, and you dethrone Christ. Dethrone Christ, and who will stand between our throats and the sword? The world will perish in a welter of war.” (Cauchon, Scene IV, p.99)

“She rebels against Nature by wearing men’s clothes, and fighting. She rebels against The Church by usurping the divine authority of the Pope. She rebels against God by her damnable league with Satan and his evil spirits against our army. And all these rebellions are only excuses for her great rebellion against England. That is not to be endured. Let her perish. Let her burn. Let her not infect the whole flock. It is expedient that one woman die for the people.” (Stogumber, Scene IV, p.100)

“I have to find reasons for you, because you do not believe in my voices. But the voices come first; and I find the reasons after: whatever you may choose to believe.” (Joan, Scene V, p.103)

“The day after she has been dragged from her horse by a[n Englishman] or a Burgundian, and he is not struck dead: the day after she is locked in a dungeon, and the bars and bolts do not fly open at the touch of St. Peter’s angel: the day when the enemy finds out that she is as vulnerable as I am and not a bit more invincible, she will not be worth the life of a single soldier to us; and I will not risk that life, much as I cherish her as a companion-in-arms.” (Dunois, Scene V, p.109)

“The Maid needs no lawyers to take her part: she will be tried by her most faithful friends, all ardently desirous to save her soul from perdition.” (Lemaitre, Scene VI, p.116)

“By all means do your best for her if you are quite sure it will be of no avail.” (Warwick, Scene VI, p.117)

“If you had seen what I have seen of heresy, you would not think it a light thing even in its most apparently harmless and even lovable and pious origins. Heresy begins with people who are to all appearances better than their neighbors. A gentle and pious girl, or a young man who has obeyed the command of the Lord by giving all his riches to the poor, and putting on a garb of poverty, the life of austerity, and the rule of humility and charity, may be the founder of a heresy that will wreck both Church and Empire if not ruthlessly stamped out in time.” (Lemaitre, Scene VI, p.121)

“I have said again and again that I will tell you all that concerns this trial. But I cannot tell you the whole truth: God does not allow the whole truth to be told. You do not understand it when I tell it.” (Joan, Scene VI, p.126)

“What other judgment can I judge by but my own?” (Joan, Scene VI, p.130)

“To shut me from the light of the sky and the sight of the fields and flowers; to chain my feet so that I can never ride again with the soldiers nor climb the hills; to make me breathe foul damp darkness, and keep from me everything that brings me back to the love of God when your wickedness and foolishness tempt me to hate Him: all this is worse than the furnace in the Bible that was heated seven times. I could do without my warhorse; I could drag about in a skirt; I could let the banners and the trumpets and the knights and soldiers pass me and leave me behind as they leave the other women, if only I could still hear the wind in the trees, the larks in the sunshine, the young lambs crying through the healthy frost, and the blessed church bells that send my angel voices floating to me on the wind. But without these things I cannot live; and by your wanting to take them away from me, or from any human creature, I know that your counsel is of the devil, and that mine is of God.” (Joan, Scene VI, p.137-138)

“His ways are not your ways. He wills that I go through the fire to His bosom; for I am His child, and you are not fit that I should live among you.” (Joan, Scene VI, p.138)

“Some of the people laughed at her. They would have laughed at Christ.” (Stogumber, Scene VI, p.142)

“Her heart would not burn, my lord; but everything that was left is at the bottom of the river. You have heard the last of her.” (Executioner, Scene VI, p.143)

“But I will tell you this about her. If you could bring her back to life, they would burn her again within six months, for all their present adoration of her.” (Charles, Epilogue, p.146)

“It was not our Lord that redeemed me, but a young woman whom I actually saw burned to death. It was dreadful: oh, most dreadful. But it saved me.” (Stogumber, Epilogue, p.153)

“O God that madest this beautiful earth, when will it be ready to receive Thy saints? How long, O Lord, how long?” (Joan, Epilogue, p.159)

NOTES

Scene I - The opening scene begins in the castle of Vaucouleurs with Captain Robert de Baudricourt reprimanding his steward because he returned from the barnyard with no eggs. The steward insists that there was no milk yesterday and no eggs today because the castle is under a curse because of Baudricourt's refusal to speak to a young girl at the gate. The Captain orders the steward to throw the girl out and fetch milk and eggs or answer to him for his failure. The steward responds that the girl cannot be intimidated, but instead gives the soldiers the courage to resist the Captain's bullying. Baudricourt summons Joan and she immediately tells him that the Lord has ordered him to give her a horse, armor, and some troops to appear before the Dauphin. She has already convinced three soldiers to go with her, and the captain is flabbergasted at her effrontery.

Baudricourt then asks Joan to leave and summons Bertrand de Poulengy, one of the volunteers. He suspects his friend has ulterior motives and warns her to keep his hands off the girl, but "Polly" denies any such intentions. He sees something different in Joan that makes him believe that she might succeed where others have failed. She clearly has an unusual effect on the men, and only a miracle can possibly save the French from the English scourge. Polly is even willing to pay for Joan's horse. When the Captain calls Joan up to the chamber again, she tells him that another nobleman has agreed to pay for half of the cost of the horse. Joan begins to speak of the voices she hears – the Virgin and St. Catherine and St. Margaret – telling her to lift the siege of Orleans and crown the Dauphin king in Rheims Cathedral and drive the English from France. Baudricourt reluctantly agrees to send her to the Dauphin with an escort of four knights. As the scene ends, the steward rushes in with five dozen eggs, exclaiming that the chickens have suddenly begun to lay again.

Scene II - This scene takes place in Chinon, the present headquarters of the Dauphin. While the Lord Chamberlain and the Archbishop of Rheims are waiting for the Dauphin to arrive, they complain about all the money he owes each of them. Soon a young dandy named Gilles de Rais, nicknamed Bluebeard because of his dyed goatee, and Captain La Hire, a tough old veteran, enter. They are agitated because "an angel dressed as a soldier" just rebuked Foul Mouthed Frank for his language, after which the man fell down a well and drowned. This angel, of course, is Joan, who somehow has succeeded in reaching Chinon untouched despite having traveled through dangerous enemy territory. The Dauphin, the uncrowned King Charles VII, then enters in a state of excitement. Baudricourt has sent him a saint, or at least a young girl who speaks to them. He insists on seeing her immediately, but his courtiers laugh at him and try to talk him out of it.

They finally agree to test her by having Bluebeard pretend to be the Dauphin to see if she can tell the difference. The Archbishop argues that she could pick the Dauphin out by common sense, since everyone knows that he is a weakling and that Gilles de Rais has a blue beard. He is nonetheless willing to affirm that she does miracles if her actions create faith, even if nothing truly supernatural is going on. In the same way that the king deceives soldiers to get them to fight, the Church deceives people to get them to believe. When Joan enters the throne room she quickly points out Bluebeard as a pretender, then picks out the Dauphin from the middle of a line of courtiers. She then falls down before the Archbishop and asks for his blessing, despite the mockery of the surrounding crowd. All then leave, and she turns to speak to the Dauphin alone. He admits his fear

to her and tells her that everyone bullies him. He then warns her not to expect him to lead the army to victory; he is a man of peace and doesn't have a military bone in his body. She insists that she will put courage into him and make him a king, though he has no desire to be one, especially since that means his wife will want a new dress. He finally but reluctantly agrees to try, after which he calls the courtiers back and announces that he is turning control of the army over to Joan. Some object, but a great cry rises from the rest.

Scene III - The third scene takes place outside the walls of Orleans. Dunois, the commander of the French troops seeking to lift the siege, stands on the banks of the Loire and bemoans the fact that the wind continues to blow in a contrary direction. He waits for the anticipated arrival of Joan of Arc. When she comes she rebukes him for standing on the wrong side of the river rather than fighting the English. She then tells him that what appears impossible can be done in the power of God and that she will lead his troops to victory. Dunois tells her that she must pray for a change in the wind, but before they can go to the church to pray, the wind changes. Seeing this as a sign from God, Joan and Dunois prepare for battle.

Scene IV - The fourth scene moves to the English camp. Richard de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and army chaplain John de Stogumber are puzzled at the long string of defeats suffered by the English following the fall of Orleans to the French. They decide that the cause is witchcraft, and that the Maid is a witch. Warwick plans to buy her from her enemies among the French, who will betray her to the Burgundians, who will in turn sell her to the English. Stogumber then plans to burn her with the connivance of Peter Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, who is jealous of her following among the people. When the Bishop arrives, the three sit down to plot Joan's downfall. Cauchon argues that the charge of witchcraft cannot stick because Joan's so-called miracles were not really miracles at all, but fully capable of other explanations. She is, on the other hand, undeniably a heretic and therefore should be brought before the Inquisition. Cauchon professes a duty to try to save her soul, but if the Inquisition finds her guilty of heresy, then the state (in the person of Warwick) may do with her as it sees fit. He compares her to Muhammad, Wycliffe, and Huss, those hearers of voices and critics of the Church, who in his mind caused untold destruction. Warwick, on the other hand, fears her doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, which would undermine the power of the aristocracy. Cauchon responds that another dangerous idea promoted by Joan is Nationalism, which he insists dethrones Christ and divides His kingdom. Finally the three agree that, try to save her though they might, she must come to the stake at the end.

Scene V - The fifth scene of the play takes place in Rheims Cathedral. As the curtain opens, Joan is praying in the aftermath of the crowning of Charles VII. Outside, the crowd is calling her name, but she is reluctant to appear before them. Dunois is trying to encourage her, but she can't understand why so many of the courtiers hate her, especially given the victories she has won and the succeeding honors that were given to the courtiers rather than to her. He explains that they are jealous of her. In her state of discouragement she determines to return to her farm after taking Paris from the English, but Dunois warns her that many men on both sides are seeking her destruction in Paris. When the king enters, she tries to persuade him to take Paris, but he fears that their "luck" has run out – a fear for which Joan sternly rebukes him, reminding him that their victories had come

from God. Both Charles and the Archbishop then accuse Joan of the sin of pride, but she insists that she speaks only what God tells her through her voices, in which none of them believe. Even Dunois believes the time of miracles has come to an end and that now stratagems of war must rule the day, and all affirm that, if she is captured, they will not lift a finger to help her. Despite being alone with only the help of God, Joan heads for Compiegne to relieve the city on the way to Paris.

Scene VI - The final scene of the play takes place in the castle hall in Rouen where Joan is on trial. Peter Cauchon serves as the presiding bishop, assisted by John Lemaitre, the Dominican monk who represents the Inquisition. Warwick summons Cauchon before the trial, and the bishop introduces him to Lemaitre and John D'Estivet, the prosecuting attorney. Warwick complains about the slowness with which the wheels of justice turn, noting that Joan had been captured nine months earlier by the Burgundians, that four months earlier she had been bought from them by Warwick himself, and that he had turned her over to Cauchon for trial three months previous. The bishop explains that the trial has not even begun; the previous eleven weeks have been occupied with fifteen examinations of the accused, both public and private. Finally the proceedings may go forward. Warwick's followers have threatened to drown anyone who supports the Maid, but Cauchon insists that she will have a fair trial – so fair, in fact, that she will need no defense attorney since she will be tried and judged by “her friends.” Warwick warns the clergymen about what might happen should they free the Maid, but they assure him that his cause is being promoted by one far more determined to see Joan burn than even he, and that is Joan herself, who condemns herself every time she opens her mouth.

The principals enter the chamber, and Stogumber and Courcelles, a French canon, immediately object that the sixty-four charges they have drawn up against Joan have been reduced to twelve by the Inquisitor, but he assures them that twelve will be more than adequate for the purpose. When one Dominican suggests that Joan's heresy is harmless, rooted in nothing more than simplicity, the Inquisitor warns him that what begins as simple faith and obedience can lead to extremes that will bring down Church and Empire alike.

When Joan is brought in she refuses to swear on the Bible because she has already told them all she has to say and they refused to believe her; further disclosures, presumably about her voices, would only lead to further howls of outrage. Stogumber and Courcelles demand that Joan be tortured, but the Inquisitor refuses because he has no interest in forced confessions. Joan professes herself to be a true daughter of the Church unless the Church requires her to deny the work of God in her life. She further argues that she, not the Church, is able to judge whether her voices came from God or the devil. To the judges this is heresy enough, but they then press her regarding her insistence on wearing men's clothing, which she claims is necessary because she was called to be a soldier; furthermore, dressing like a woman would put her in peril among her English guards. When her judges warn her that she is to be burned at the stake that very day should she not repent, she falls into a great panic because her voices have assured her that she would not be burned. Cauchon points out that her voices have clearly deceived her, and, much to everyone's surprise, she agrees. They tell her that she can save herself by signing a document affirming that her voices were of demonic origin, but she replies that she cannot write. Meanwhile, Stogumber and Courcelles are furious to think that Joan might slip through their grasp, and warn that Warwick will not be put off so easily and will burn her no matter what the court says. The document is brought out and Joan

prepares to sign it, but the Inquisitor insists that it be read to her first. The paper forces her to confess to edition, idolatry, disobedience, pride, and heresy, but she signs it anyway. The Inquisitor declares her free from the threat of excommunication, but then condemns her to life imprisonment. Shocked at the sentence, she tears the paper to shreds and tells them to prepare their stake. Her enemies rush her from the chamber and turn her over to the English outside, though the Inquisitor afterward admits her innocence because she clearly had no understanding of the two forces between which she was crushed, the Church and the Law. When the burning has been accomplished, Stogumber stumbles into the chamber in tears; he had not known what the execution for which he had so vociferously argued would be like in reality. Ladvenu, who had tried his best to spare her during the trial, mourns her passing and speaks of her steadfast faith to the end, convinced that Christ had appeared and received her into His arms; he also keeps the cross she held briefly while suffering at the stake. The executioner, in the meantime, has disposed of all that was left so no relics would remain for the faithful to cherish or the cynical to sell.

Epilogue - Twenty-five years later, Charles VII is restless in bed awaiting word of another trial - this one intended to exonerate the Maid. Ladvenu, who again testified in her behalf, enters his chamber and tells him that the deed is done. Ironically, while the trial that condemned Joan was conducted with justice and mercy and arrived at a true verdict under law despite her piety and innocence, the recent trial had exonerated her on the basis of bald-faced lies about the earlier proceedings and the people involved in it. All Charles is concerned about is that people can no longer claim that he had been crowned by a witch.

Charles then dreams as characters from the play appear before him. Joan speaks of her memory, which will last without any help from courts or monuments. Cauchon, who sought justice, ultimately received none, being hounded in life and excommunicated after death for his role in Joan's trial. Dunois then appears and tells Joan that the English have indeed been driven from France. An English soldier then emerges and tells them that he gets one day a year off from the fires of Hell because of one good deed he did in life - tying two sticks together in the form of a cross and giving them to a young girl who was about to be burned; he assures them that Hell isn't really such a bad place after all - a considerable improvement after the French wars. Stogumber then puts in an appearance; he is now a humble village rector and a changed man, though more than a little weak in the mind. The executioner then comes and insists that he was unable to kill Joan, and Warwick offers his apologies, insisting that the burning had been purely political; he also admits that it was a serious miscalculation, since it cost the English the war. He reminds Joan, however, that her eventual sainthood would be because of him; had she never been burned, she would never have been remembered. A twentieth-century gentleman then appears from the year 1920 to announce that Joan of Arc has been canonized by the Catholic Church and is now known as Saint Joan. The authorities in France, meanwhile, are complaining that statues of Joan, especially those of her on horseback, are becoming so numerous that they are interfering with the flow of traffic. All in turn then praise Joan for her blessings to them and those like them. She is so impressed with their praise that she asks them if she should come back from the dead, but each in turn slips away; no one wants her on earth again.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Discuss the following in a five-paragraph essay:

1. George Bernard Shaw, both in his preface to *Saint Joan* and several times throughout the play, speaks of Joan's ideas as Protestant. What did Shaw mean by this? How accurate is this assessment? Support your arguments from the script, from what you know of Joan historically, and from your knowledge of the character of Protestantism.
2. Discuss the playwright's portrayal of Joan of Arc in the preface to George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. Does the picture he paints tell us more about Joan as she really was or about the way Shaw wished to perceive her and the worldview he desired to promote? Support your conclusion with specifics from the preface.
3. Discuss the playwright's portrayal of Joan of Arc in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. Does the picture he paints tell us more about Joan as she really was or about the way Shaw wished to perceive her and the worldview he desired to promote? Support your conclusion with specifics from the play.
4. Compare and contrast the treatment of Joan of Arc in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* and William Shakespeare's *Henry VI, part 1*. How would you explain the difference in perspective in light of the more than 300 years that separated the plays? What do the portrayals tell you about the authors and their times?
5. Joan of Arc's voices have been interpreted in many ways by many people. What different explanations are given in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*? Be sure to include those given by Joan herself, by her supporters, and by her enemies. Which explanation did the playwright favor? Why do you think so? Support your argument using specifics from the play.
6. In George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, many explanations are given for Joan's "voices." Discuss these explanations, including their source and the motivations behind them. Which do you consider the most likely explanation? Support your conclusion from the script and from Scripture.
7. Compare and contrast the withdrawn confessions of the title character in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* and John Proctor in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. In both cases, the one on trial deliberately chose death over what he or she considered a worse alternative. What did they fear more than death? What do these choices tell you about the beliefs and attitudes of the playwrights in each case? Support your conclusions with specifics from both plays.
8. Would you consider George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* a tragedy? Does Joan qualify as a tragic heroine? If so, what is the tragic flaw that leads to her downfall? If not, why not? Be sure to support your answer with specifics from the play.

9. Often, works of historical fiction, whether novels or plays, reveal more about the author than they do about the subject of the story. T.S. Eliot, after seeing a production of George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* in the theater, said that the play "seems to illustrate Mr. Shaw's mind more clearly than anything he has written before." Would you agree? What does the play tell you about its author, his worldview, and his opinions concerning man and society? Use quotations from the play to support your assessment.
10. In George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, to what extent does the playwright portray the title character as a Christ figure? Be sure to point out specific parallels between Joan and Christ, but also analyze what those parallels tell you about Shaw's understanding of Christ's person and work. Give attention to both the play and the preface.
11. In George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, if the protagonist is a Christ figure, one must also expect to see parallels between her accusers and men like Pilate and Caiaphas. To what extent do these parallels exist? Cite specifics, both from the play and Scripture, to support your analysis.
12. In George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, the playwright pictures Joan's great sin as her insistence on placing the authority of her voices (her own private judgment and conscience, according to Shaw) above the authority of the Church. From a biblical standpoint, to what extent is it legitimate for an individual to place his judgment and conscience above the authority of the Church? Consider both the way Shaw handles the issue in the play and the way the Bible deals with it.
13. Discuss the function of the Epilogue in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. How does this dream scene underscore some of the major themes Shaw was seeking to communicate? Does it say more about Joan and her fifteenth-century society or about the society in which Shaw himself lived? Support your conclusion with details from the script.
14. In George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, the playwright uses the terms *Protestantism* and *Nationalism* in a way that is clearly anachronistic. Is this an obvious deviation from Shaw's claim to historical accuracy or do the ideas promoted by Joan really serve as forerunners of movements that would come one hundred and four hundred years after her death, respectively? To what extent may Shaw here be accused of putting words into Joan's mouth and ideas into her head that would have been completely foreign to a fifteenth-century farm girl?
15. George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* was written shortly after the end of World War I. Discuss the view of war found in the play. What similarities does Shaw find between the Hundred Years' War and the First World War? How does he use the script to promote the pacifist beliefs that almost led to him being charged with treason a few years earlier? In what ways does Joan become a mouthpiece for these views?

16. George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* ends with the protagonist speaking the words, "How long, O Lord, how long?" What do these words mean in the context of the play, and how is this different from their meaning in Scripture? Consider similar language found in Psalm 13:1, Habakkuk 1:2, and Revelation 6:10 in your answer.
17. In George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, some critics have argued that the playwright presents an existentialist heroine. Do you agree? What characteristics of the protagonist could be seen as emblematic of existential philosophy? Consider especially the trial in Scene VI, being sure to cite specific quotations in support of your arguments.
18. George Bernard Shaw greatly admired Henrik Ibsen and did much to promote his plays in England. Both playwrights engaged in social criticism and their works share many themes in common, including the idea that the world cannot tolerate saints and must destroy them for their own protection. Analyze the ways in which this theme is handled in Shaw's *Saint Joan* and Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. Be sure to consider the ways in which the protagonists are portrayed and the ways in which they are destroyed by society along with the aspects of their societies the playwrights are criticizing. Use specifics from both plays to support your arguments.
19. In Scene II of George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, the Archbishop says, "A miracle, my friend, is an event which creates faith. That is the purpose and nature of miracles." Discuss the views of miracles found in the play, including those of the playwright. Why would a humanist value the concept of miracles and need desperately to cling to such an idea?
20. Discuss the view of the Church and its place in society portrayed in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. What indications do you find that the playwright saw the Church as nothing more than a human institution? Did he find any justification for its existence as such? Why or why not? Support your conclusions with specifics from the play.
21. In Scene VI of George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, the Inquisitor says, "If you had seen what I have seen of heresy, you would not think it a light thing even in its most apparently harmless and even lovable and pious origins. Heresy begins with people who are to all appearances better than their neighbors. A gentle and pious girl, or a young man who has obeyed the command of the Lord by giving all his riches to the poor, and putting on a garb of poverty, the life of austerity, and the rule of humility and charity, may be the founder of a heresy that will wreck both Church and Empire if not ruthlessly stamped out in time." How accurate is this assessment of heresy? Give examples from your knowledge of church history to support or refute the Inquisitor's description.
22. In George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, the title character is often accused of arrogance. Is this an accurate characterization, or would she be more aptly described as humble? Support your conclusion with incidents and quotations from the play.

23. In the Epilogue of George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, John de Stogumber says, "It was not our Lord that redeemed me, but a young woman whom I actually saw burned to death. It was dreadful: oh, most dreadful. But it saved me." What view of salvation do these words imply? What does this say about Shaw's worldview? Support your assessment with quotations from other parts of the play.
24. Often those who pen historical dramas anachronistically incorporate modern ideas into the plays, especially through the dialogue they give to their main characters. Compare and contrast the incorporation of modern themes as it occurs in Jean Anouilh's *Becket* and George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. Give special attention to attitudes toward truth, organized religion, and morality as they are portrayed through the words of the protagonists.
25. Both Joan of Arc and Thomas à Becket were martyrs and have been declared saints by the Catholic Church. Consider how these two characters are portrayed in Jean Anouilh's *Becket* and George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. According to these two secular playwrights, of what did their sainthood consist? How do these portrayals communicate what the playwrights themselves consider to be the essence of goodness in a human life? To what extent do their visions agree?