Joan of Arc, a peasant girl, was born in 1412 in France. At 13, she began hearing voices that told her to drive the English from France. She presented herself at 17 to the French King, and after an examination by religious scholars, the voices she heard were believed to be from God. Joan successfully led a French army against the British in the 100 Years War for two years.

She was captured, turned over to the English, imprisoned for a year, and tried for heresy and witchcraft. She was not provided legal counsel and found guilty. She was burned at the stake in 1431. Twenty-five years later, she was cleared of the charges at a second trial and was declared a saint of the Catholic Church in 1920.

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***Directions: Read each account of Joan of Arc. Mark if it is a positive perspective by placing a plus sign next to it. If it is a negative perspective, mark a negative sign next to it. The perspectives are from her first and second trials.***

***1. Joan’s military leadership****:* It was said that [Joan] was as expert as possible in the art of ordering an army into battle, and that even a captain bred and instructed in war could not have shown more skill… (Aignan Viole, the court’s advocate)

***2. Joan’s forcing her leadership on the army*:** …In her [arrogance] and pride, [she] had gone so far as to take command over men; she had made herself commander-in-chief and had under her orders nearly 16,000 men, among whom were princes, barons, and a number of gentlemen… (Document outlining Joan’s accused crimes).

***3. Joan’s military leadership:*** …she was a very simple girl; but for warlike things, bearing the lance, assembling an army, ordering military operations, directing artillery [weapons of war such as crossbows and siege equipment]—she was most skillful. Everyone wondered that she could act with as much wisdom and foresight as a captain who had fought for 20 or 30 years. (The Duke d’Alencon)

***4. Joan’s encouraging of war and bloodshed:*** So as long as [Joan] remained with [King] Charles she did dissuade him with all her power…from consenting to any treaty of peace…affirming that they would only have peace by sword and lance, and that God willed it so… (Document outlining Joan’s accused crimes).

***5. Joan’s devotion:*** From her early youth, [Joan] was brought up with care in the Faith, and in good morals; she was so good that all the village…loved her….She had modest ways, as becomes one whose parents were not rich…. (Jean Morel, a laborer near Joan’s home village)

***6. Joan’s manipulation of people to worship her:*** Joan had [led astray] Christian people that may have in her presence adored her as a Saint[[1]](#footnote-1) and in her absence do adore her still…such things are [harmful] to the Christian religion, scandalous, and [harmful] to the salvation of souls. (Document outlining Joan’s accused crimes).

***7. Joan’s Christian values:*** She was a good and modest woman, living as a Catholic, very [religious], and when she could, never failing to be present at the Mass.[[2]](#footnote-2) To hear blasphemies[[3]](#footnote-3) upon the name of our Lord vexed[[4]](#footnote-4) her….As a rule, no one in the army dared swear or blaspheme before her, for fear of being reprimanded. (Louis de Contes, Chamberlain to the Duke of d’Orleans)

***8. Joan’s contradicting of Church teachings:*** She has said…published and [instilled] within the hearts of the simple, false and lying [statements] allied to heresy, even themselves heretical, contrary to our Catholic Faith and its principals, to Gospel rules… (Document outlining Joan’s accused crimes).

***9. Joan’s ability to see the future:*** I saw [Joan] for the first time at Poitiers. And then she foretold[[5]](#footnote-5) to us—to me and to all the others who were there with me—these four things which should happen, and which did afterwards come to pass: first, that the English would be destroyed, the siege of Orleans raised, and the town delivered from the English; secondly, that the King would be crowned at Reims; thirdly, that Paris would be restored to [the King’s rule]; fourthly, that the Duke d’Orleans should be brought back from the English…. (Brother Seguin de Seguin, dean of the faculty of Theology of Poitiers)

***10. Promotion of witchcraft:***She made herself a diviner[[6]](#footnote-6), she caused herself to be adored and [respected]; she has [summoned] demons and evil spirits, consulted them, associated with them, had made and had with them compacts, treaties, and conventions….she has said, affirmed, and maintained that to act thus, to use witchcraft, divinations, superstitions, was not a sin[[7]](#footnote-7), was not a forbidden thing, but… [a thing] to be praised. (Document outlining Joan’s accused crimes).

***11. Joan’s immoral actions***: Previous to, and since her capture… [Joan] had been many times advised with gentleness by noble persons of both sexes, to give up her man’s dress and resume suitable [clothing]. She had absolutely refused, and to this day also refuses with persistence; she disdains also to give herself up to feminine work, conducting herself in all things rather as a man than as a woman. (Document outlining Joan’s accused crimes).

***12. Joan’s goodness:*** She was a girl of good disposition, devout, patient, loving the Church, going often to confession, and giving to the poor all that she could. I can attest to this, having been witness…at my own house at Burey, where she [stayed] six weeks. (Durand Laxart, Joan’s uncle)

***13. Joan’s acting as a temptress:*** She did behave in an unseemly manner with men, refuses the [company] of women, wishes to live only with men, to be waited upon by them, even in her own room…a like thing had never been seen or heard of a chaste and pious woman.[[8]](#footnote-8) (Document outlining Joan’s accused crimes).

***Total Marked Positive: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Total Marked Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

***Circle one and finish the sentence: I found the positive/negative perspectives more convincing because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

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1. Someone acknowledged as holy and typically regarded as being in heaven after death [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Mass is the Catholic worship service. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cursing or swearing in God’s name. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. annoyed [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. predicted [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Someone who speaks for God [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. An immoral act considered to go against God or divine law [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Pure and religious [↑](#footnote-ref-8)