

Ex basketball player



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

American poet Robert Elliot Gonzales once wrote, “ A good many family trees are shady. ” What he means is that parents do not always give their children what is most necessary to achieve in life. In Ex-Basketball Player by John Updike and Death Of A Salesman by Arthur Miller the main characters lack self-esteem and cannot fulfill their dreams primarily because of their lack of familial support. More specifically, the protagonists, Flick Webb and Biff Lowman, suffer a life of failure and mediocrity as they experienced the pinnacles of their lives at far too young an age, and from an unsupportive family.

The Authors develop strong characterization within a bleak setting, use strong symbolism, and raise interesting themes about the hardship of self-realization. The ex-basketball player experienced the best day of his life during his high school career. Pearl Avenue is mentioned because he is very precious, and a road to riches. Pearl Avenue is accessed from the high school. “ A head at all-more of a football type” this means that basketball players are smarter than football players.

Flick has a potential for success because he was amazing at basketball. The team he played for was the wizards, this was magical. Flick was so good he bucketed three hundred ninety points. His hands were like wild birds. Flick Webb has a dark side to life. He never became the pro basketball player he wanted to be. Now he works at a gas station. “ As a gag, he dribbles an inner tube,” this means that he still has dreams about his basketball career. He hangs around Berths garage which is on the corner facing west.

This is a conflict because “ facing west” is similar to the westward expansion. This was a gamble for Flick and he could not take it. Updike named a

character Berth because that is where Flick will spend the rest of his life. Flick has absolutely nothing to fall back on. Biff experienced the “ best day of his life” during his high school career. Biff’s “ best day” was the big football game. He promised Willy that he would score a touchdown just for him; Biff knew that it was not his turn to get the touchdown; instead he stole someone else’s. There’s a crowd of girls behind him everytime the classes change” (Miller 31). Biff was well liked all throughout high school. Biff has a potential for success because Biff is a football star with scholarship prospects in high school. Biff is the only one that realizes that he can face reality and his situation and perhaps fulfill his dream to move out west and work with his hands. “ We never told the truth in this house for more than 10 minutes” (Miller 104). Biff is the one to finally step up and tell the truth.

Because Biff had his glorious moment in life way too early he no longer has what it takes to continue on in life. Biff is characterized a kleptomaniac because he always has the need to take things from others. Biff took a football from the boy’s locker room, and a fountain pen from Bill Oliver’s office. Biff’s kleptomania prevents him from getting employment. Biff only received Willy’s paralyzing dreams of unrealistic business success. Biff only receives Willy pressuring him into getting the fifteen thousand dollars from Bill Oliver.

After a long awaited cycle, Bernard is the one to continue this cycle of being the father and raising two children because he knows how to take care of them, and not only focus on being “ well liked”. Without familial support, children who focus only one subject will not succeed. Biff only focused on football, and his main goal was to just make his dad happy from that one

football game. Flick only focused on basketball and he ended up working at a gas station. These two families gave up on them. Flicks parents were never mentioned, and Biffs parents only focused on being well liked. This is why these two families will not succeed.