

Willy loman and walter lee younger

Business



Any good drama should be based on strong characters. This is because good characters' set makes the intended audience identify fictitious characters with those in their real world. An individual's character is composed of his/her personality, individualities and behaviors. Characters can be compared, evaluated and related to the real life experiences; and in this way we can draw conclusions. This essay will analyze Walter Lee Younger from the play *A Raisin in the Sun* and Willy Loman from the play *Death of a Salesman*, who both have an important role in the two respective dramas.

The two characters seem to have a lot of similarities, while at the same time there are a lot of differences in their behavioral personalities, which eventually leads to different outcomes. Willy is the main character in the play *Death of a Salesman*. He is an old salesman, who has big hopes for his two sons, Biff and Happy, and for himself, but he is shown to have crushed all those dreams. He is married to Linda, who is a housewife. Willy tends to lapse into the past and even to talk to himself at times.

He strongly believes that physical appearance can lead to a successful career. This thought is, however, contrasted, when his attractive and well built sons fail. As a result of his two sons' failure, he is hurt, but tries to pretend to be very successful in front of Linda. Willy has a specific dream – a contorted version of the American dream. He always dreams of being successful, wealthy, and popular.

This is a twisted version of the American dream, which is to have a happy life. He is so driven by the desire for success and popularity, that he ignores his calling for nature and instead chooses to become a salesman (Miller). On

the other hand, in *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, Walter Lee is shown to be disillusioned living in an all white racist society. He is, however, a chauffeur and is married to Ruth and has a son, Travis. In the whites' community, opportunities for African Americans are limited, and he nearly breaks apart before he is rescued by his loving family. His frustrations do not end there; Walter is shown to be disappointed in his lack of success.

He complains about his job when talking to his mother: “ Mama a job? I open and close cars all day long” (54). He is equally embarrassed and frustrated by his failure to secure a successful job. Segregation in America has just ended; and Walter has a strong desire to leave his white employer. Well, it is very immature, since he has a family to care for and his wife is pregnant. He is even shown to indirectly agree to his wife's idea of an abortion, but his mother bashes him hard.

Harries, his friend, wants to capitalize on this shortfall and steals money from him, with which they were to open a liquor shop, despite the fact that Walter is ignorant about this kind of business. After the loss of the money, Walter comes out to be a better person. An obvious comparison for the two characters is their perseverance to chase their dreams. Willy wants to be the well liked and respected salesman, while Walter wants to be rich and goes ahead to devise plans of acquiring wealth. Walter and Willy are shown to be the characters with a strong drive to success, but they end up losing everything. Although they share the same fate, their outcome of the failure is totally different.

They are both shown to be strong-willed characters, who have good manners, with which they are able to capture the audiences' attention. The two are depicted to be living on pipe dreams: Willy bounces from the past into the future and imagines how things could have turned out if he had visited either Alaska or Africa with Ben or would have been different when Howard makes him a showroom salesman. Walter Lee, who is shown to be a smart and hardworking man, is also enthusiastic to be successful and this makes him lose his common sense and allows a con man, Harries, to take the family's \$10,000 insurance money paid on the death of his father. Willy's reality is tested from his conflict with Biff, Howard, and Charley. Willy believes that he is better than those who surround him and that his two sons are great as well. Ironically, the people he does not believe in are more successful than he is.

Willy never comes to the realization that being an 'average guy' is okay; and, therefore, he believes that he is more valuable dead than alive. Willy Loman ends committing suicide. Walter Lee seems to have the best grasp of reality, but his reality comes to check through his mother, Lena Younger. Although she raised him to be a good man, he is keen to find a way out from his ghetto life and to become a respected man. His wife, Ruth, is a good wife and supports Lena through hard work. In the end, Walter realizes that there are more important things in life than money.

The both stories deal with a working class family, who are struggling through different family illusions. *The Death of A Salesman* ends in the tragedy, because Willy believes that his death would be more valuable than his 'miserable life' and finally commits suicide, while *A Raisin in the Sun* ends in <https://assignbuster.com/willy-loman-and-walter-lee-younger/>

victory of the family, when Walter Lee realizes that life is more significant than money and takes his place as the head of his family.