

Good analyzing a play essay example

[Experience](#), [Happiness](#)



The aim of this essay is to present you with a theatrical analysis of the play ‘Death of a Salesman’, written by Arthur Miller in 1949. This analysis will present you with the look of a hypothetical producer. Therefore, it will focus on the summary of the play, the world it represents and the wider cultural background within which it was first produced. Finally, it will emphasize on all the details concerning a production set nowadays. The essay will give the overall look of the hypothetical producer, focusing on the aspects which are to be taken into consideration in this particular hypothetical production.

The ‘Death of a Salesman’ consists of two acts and a requiem. The thematic core of the play’s plot is the death of a man who has always been a salesman. Even the name of his main leading actor, ‘Willy’, is a name which declares both willingness and unwillingness. Willy Loman is the salesman who dies at the end of the play. The play emphasizes on the life of Willy who seems to be facing a critical self-criticism as far as his life’s course is concerned. Willy has been happily married to Linda and has had two sons, Biff and Happy. The story of Will’s life is given to the audience through self-narration and the travelling which the main hero of the play performs during the play. There is an interplay of past and present and Willy performs this interplay in such a way that all the members of the audience follow him and witness his experiences. The play opens with Willy sitting in the kitchen of his house, in semi-light since he is about to go back in time and enlighten all those aspects and events of his life which have been kept in the darkness of his soul during all these years. This is the way in which Arthur Miller emphasizes on the fact that each individual has his own dark moments in life. Life is a struggle and Miller wants to put this across to his audience

along with the knowledge that this struggle is not always a victory. There are people who seem to be content and happy with what they have achieved. But there are people like Willy who seem to be unhappy and feel that they have wasted their life going after a dream which they have not managed to accomplish. Arthur Miller presents his main hero to address a question which remains unanswered and turns into the main motivation for the audience to think and reflect on what they have witnessed. Willy questions the importance and the value of his dream. This is the most tragic and most significant, in my opinion, element of the play. Arthur Miller writes this play about four years after the end of the Second World War. The American society has followed the common fate of the whole world. All societies of all countries, no matter their geographical post and nationality, have witnessed the fear, the horror and the disaster of the war. As a result, people have started adopting behaviors which were supposed to help them get out of that tunnel which the war had created. People turned to consumerism and started equalizing happiness to material goods and wealth. So, most dreams of people started taking flesh and blood in terms of the money they would earn and the lifestyle they would achieve to have. Willy Loman is the representative of this social mentality. Arthur Miller presents his audience with the demolition of this social belief. Willy followed the impositions of his dream to be socially successful, to become rich and obtain a high, wealthy lifestyle. However, not only did he fail to accomplish all his material goals, but he has reached the conclusion that this dream did not represent his real needs. Light is shed on Willy's soul during his personal thoughts and trip back to time. Willy reconsiders and reevaluates his choices, his dilemmas, his

decisions and his actions. He realizes that richness was not what he really wanted. He spent all his life working and feeling lonely. The more he earned, the unhappier he felt. There was a certain point in his life when he tried to fill the emptiness he had inside him with the companionship of another woman. Even his lover did not manage to make him feel happy. Willy shares his tragic truth. His lover was a substitute as well. He convinced himself that he had found happiness and love but all he had found was the false belief that he was not alone. Unfortunately Willy was alone because all he had ever wanted to do was to follow his own dreams. But Willy hid his real dreams and followed the social norm. He hoped that he would make it and reach the accomplishment of the so-called American Dream. This American Dream was the common dream built for all people regardless of their nation, their social status or education. Everybody was to be given equal opportunities to follow his own chance to become successful. America turned into the country of paradise where everyone had a chance to gain a successful lifestyle. This is the social aspect of this play. Arthur Miller states his own despise and opposition towards the social norm, the social structure and organization. This is what he does when he presents his main hero to feel like a shipwrecked person, who is not at all happy to have survived the tempest. Willy is the pillar of the play beyond any doubt. The actor chosen for Willy's role ought to be a middle-aged experienced man, with intense facial characteristics. The light will be shed upon his eyes so that his look can magnetize the audience and lead everyone to follow him to the maze of his thoughts. Biff and Happy, his two sons represent the double edged knife of life's dilemmas. Biff is the son who tried to follow his father's steps but has

failed tragically. He failed his college studies, he seems incapable of coming in terms with his failure and he ends up becoming a kleptomaniac. He feels he cannot fill his emptiness with wealth and a rich lifestyle. He tries to find peace and calmness through the difficult path. He will leave and go west to go after his dream to become a farmer. He is not afraid to follow his dream and he is not at all willing to compromise with anything less. He is not afraid of failure because he knows what it is that really fills him with happiness. This is the reason why he has the courage to follow his dream. It appears that Arthur Miller also wishes to emphasize on the need to find the courage to follow your dream and not stay behind because of social intimidation. People ought to be brought up in such a way that they can find the courage to go after what they have been dreaming of. There ought not to be any material criteria upon which one ought to be judged as a successful one or not. This is a social discrimination of the worst kinds on which Arthur Miller wants to focus.

Happy, on the other hand is the representative of the ambitious, stubborn and selfish side of Willy. He works as an assistant but he is too insecure to admit to the real status of his job. This is why he decides to adopt the behavior of a very successful person and find alleged, false happiness near women. He spends his life trying to convince himself that this is what happiness is supposed to be. Even the sudden death of his dad does not seem to shed the light of truth to his life. He refuses to see the things for what they really are. This is why he will keep on living in his false world which will probably one day collapse like his dad's. This is not said directly to the audience but it is left as a thought, hanging over their heads and minds.

Linda, Willy's wife remains quite silent but at the end she appears to have had perceived everything that the play has revealed to the audience. It is amazing how she represents those people in life who know what is going on, but they decide to let others do as they like, since they do not feel strong enough to help them. All the other persons of the play, Willy's boss, Willy's brother, the neighbor of Loman's family, Charley, Charley's son and secretary, the waiter at the Frank's Chop House where Willy and his sons have dinner, and the Woman who was Willy affair along with the two women who accompanied Happy and Biff over their dinner with their dad, will be guided to perform their roles keeping in mind the failure that Willy experiences.

It is the mental death of the salesman on which my production will focus. All actors and actresses will be guided to perform their roles as marionettes moved by the strings pulled by the feeling of emptiness which conquers the whole play. Great emphasis will be given on the lighting of the play since this interplay of the past and present is strongly attached to the interplay of the truth and false which takes place in Willy's life. So light ought to serve the appearance of truth and false accordingly. Light will be shed when moments of personal apocalypses are given to the audience, whereas dim light will exist on the stage when sorrow and evasion conquers the behavior and thought of the actors and actresses.

The production will follow the play's structure and will keep the design and setting faithful to the instructions given by Arthur Miller himself. It is important in my opinion to depict the mental death of Willy within the socio-historical context of his era. This is the only way in which the audience will

manage to personalize and reflect on the need for internal thought and quest for their personal truths and dreams. The production of the play ought to serve its goal. The goal of such a play according to my opinion is to highlight the classic value of ethical values and principles which ought to be the criteria upon which people ought to organize and lead their lives.