

Death of a salesman essays examples

[Psychology](#), [Success](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Death of a Salesman is the Pulitzer Prize winning play by Arthur Miller, it was published in 1949. The play is an American tragedy that details the life and death of Willy Loman, a traveling salesman. Note that Arthur Miller named this character "Loman" a name that literally derives from Low Man. Willy Loman lives in Brooklyn New York, where Arthur Miller was born and lived his professional life. Loman's home life revolves around his nagging wife Linda, deadbeat son Biff, and younger son Happy. Loman fantasizes about being younger and having a young, joyful family with productive happy sons and a supportive wife. In his fantasy, he is going to start his own business. Loman's fantasies sometimes veer off into the unpleasant where he is reminded that the family is broke, cannot afford the new appliances they own, and that he is not successful at his job. Loman seeks a fantasy life but at the same time seems to dread it. He mentions, "I have such thoughts, I have such strange thoughts" revealing that he is disturbed by his day dreaming (Act I). Willy Loman fantasizes about his ex-mistress. The fantasies start out well enough but turn sour. Loman having a mistress caused an irreconcilable break in the relationship between Loman and his son Biff. Biff discovered Loman's infidelity and accused Loman of being a fake: "You fake! You phony little fake! You fake!" (Act I). After which Biff left Loman kneeling on the ground, impotently threatening to beat and whip his son. In his real life Loman starts talking to himself and to people who are not there. He lapses in and out of his fantasy world, which is sometimes pleasant and sometimes aggravating and depressing. When Loman's family discusses his mental and emotional deterioration, they are not entirely sympathetic, especially Biff. There is mention of Loman's suicidal tendencies. The action becomes

increasingly confusing as Loman fluctuates between fantasy, reality, and the past. Biff's success in football and his failure in math are recurrent issues for Loman. Loman's brother and neighbor are successful in the business venture. He and his sons entertain daydreams about heading West to find their fortune. When the family goes out to dinner there is a prostitute at the restaurant and then there is the mistress at a hotel. Biff cannot get a job and Loman is fired. It becomes clear as the play progresses that Loman has fantasies about fantasies he had in the past. Loman used to fantasize about making it big, his dreams of success were never fulfilled. He worries about paying for appliances and the mortgage on the house. Loman resents that his son Biff remains an unemployed freeloader, but at the same time is wracked by the guilt of adultery. After Loman dies, family and friends contemplate his life. Some of the talk revolves around Loman's fantasies, which are also acknowledged as his unfulfilled dreams. Referring to Loman's dreams-fantasies Biff comments, " He had the wrong dreams. All, all wrong" and Loman's neighbor answers, " A salesman has got to dream, boy. It comes with the territory" (Requiem). Loman's dry-eyed wife is relieved he is dead, his son Biff declares he will head West, and his son Happy declares he will stay in New York and carry on. Mrs. Loman has apparently collected on her husband's life insurance policy because she mentions paying off the mortgage. Loman fulfilled one of his dreams by dying, the house is finally paid off.