

Willy is a good father and husband essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In some respects Willy is both a good father and husband. Most of Willy's good points as a father can be seen using flashbacks within the play in his past and thinks about the things he did with Biff and Happy in Act One.

He encourages and supports his children,

Willy -“ That's it, that's it, good work. You're doin' all right, Hap.”

He also takes an interest in them and their lives,

Willy-[Examines the ball] “ Where'd you get a new ball?”

This shows the audience he wants his children to do well and is concerned about their lives. He also, in the past, maintained a good relationship with his children and this is shown in the fact he was missed while away,

Biff-“ Where'd you go this time, Dad? Gee we were lonesome for you.”

The boys not only idolise him and look up to him but also mimic him,

Biff- “ He's likes, but he's not well liked.”

This is an example of Biff copying Willy not only in his speech but also in his way of thinking.

Willy also tells his boys the right things to do in life and when Biff “ borrows” a ball he tells him,

Willy-“ I want you to return that.”

Willy also gives up things for his children. In Act One when Willy recalls his brother Ben we see this,

Willy-“ When Ben came from Africa that time?

Didn't he give me a watch fob with a diamond in it?

Linda-“ You pawned it, dear. Twelve, thirteen years ago. For Biff's radio correspondence course.”

He is willing, for his son's education, to give up something precious to him.

Even towards the end of Act One Willy has been attempting to give up his own life for, what he thinks, is for the good of his sons and Linda, his own life.

Linda-“ That all these accident in the last year – weren't – weren't – accidents.”

He is failing as a business man and knows that his life insurance, if he died, would support them more than he is at this present moment in time.

Although the latter points direct us to show Willy as a good father the bad points drag this view down. It is clearly seen that Willy favours Biff over Happy during his flashbacks to when his sons were teenagers,

Happy-“ I'm losing weight, you notice, Pop?”

Willy-[to Happy]” Jumping rope is good too.”

Despite Happy repeating the fact he has lost weight to his rather numerous times he is ignored and the focus is swiftly moved back to Biff. This cannot be good for his sons to experience and as we see later on in the play Happy still only wants to please his father with little success.

He also does this again when Happy says to Biff Willy wouldn't like the fact Biff stole a ball from school, instead of maintaining Biff should take the ball back Willy will not see Biff criticized and says,

Willy-“ Sue, he's gotta practise with a regulation ball, doesn't he?”

He contradicts himself and condones stealing to his sons, who idolise and look up to him. Willy also puts too much emphasis on being liked and looking good to succeed in the world to Biff and Happy.

Willy-“ Because the man who makes an appearance in the business world, the man who creates personal interest, is the man who gets ahead. Be liked and you will never want.”

He imposes his idea of the American dream upon his sons and this is in fact not true. He puts down Bernard, Charley's son who tries to help Biff with his work,

Willy-“ Bernard can get the best marks in school, y'understand, but when he gets out in the business world, y'understand, you are going to be five times ahead of him.”

This, as we see later on in the play is simply not true. Biff is a middle aged man with the maturity of a teenager and simply doesn't know what he wants and Happy is living the life his dad wanted him to but doesn't enjoy it. Willy had attributed greatly to this. Willy also puts his children down and is not supportive of them, especially Biff. As we see at the start of Act One,

Willy-“ Biff is a lazy bum!”

He doesn't give him any support and only suggests he should be a business man, achieving his dream, but in reality Biff, Willy and Happy could be closer to this dream if only they did what they were good at. The pressure the sons have received off their father has put them in the position they are now, lost.

Willy also has good and bad points of being a husband to his wife Linda.

Firstly is the respect he has gained from Linda,

Linda-“ He's the dearest man in the world to me, and I won't have anyone making him feel unwanted low and blue.”

Willy has obviously treated Linda right and earned her respect not only as a husband but also as a man. She admires him, sticks by him and won't let one bad word be said of him. Willy also tells Linda lies during Act One and throughout the rest of the play; these lies could be seen in two ways. One that he is deceiving his wife or trying to protect her, Willy believes however he is protecting his wife in telling these lies,

Linda-“ Did something happen, Willy?”

Willy-“ No, nothing happened.”

Willy would rather not tell Linda what really happened and conceal the truth than let her know what did actually happen. His intentions are good but give good and bad points to his role as a husband. Willy also will not let Linda “ go without” an example of this is her stockings,

Linda-“ Just mending my stockings. They're so expensive –

Willy-[angrily, taking them from her]" I won't have you mending stockings in this house! Now throw them out!"

This example is again, another bad point as his role of a husband but it does show he cares about Linda and how she appears to the world. Another example of Willy are his suicide attempts to claim insurance for Linda and his sons. Like his sons he wants to give Linda enough money which he simply isn't earning at the moment but in fact this is also another bad point as his life is more important to Linda than money.

As mentioned with good points above Willy also has bad points as a role of a father rather his lies and suicide attempts are made with good intentions but have the adverse affect. Willy is also unfaithful to Linda and various clues are made to this with the sound effect of a woman's laughter throughout Act One until a flashback is seen,

The Woman-" Sure thing. You do make me laugh. It's good for me. [She squeezes his arm, kisses him.]"

His duty, as a husband to Linda, is to be faithful and it is clear to the audience he isn't.

To conclude Will Loman has good and also bad points as a father and husband. As a father he is supportive of his children and also wants what is best for them. However, this is clouded by the American Dream and also of his priorities in life. As a husband Willy has gained his wife's respect, tries to shield her from his mistakes and won't let her go without but, in trying to do some of these things he is also being a bad husband to. Lying to Linda and

his suicide attempts are done with good intentions but will end up turning the situation worse. His unfaithfulness also means he has failed as his duty of a husband.