

# Death of a salesman by arthur miller analysis

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Usually suicide is the last measure a human being would take when he or she sees no way out of a situation. Willy Loman, the protagonist of the drama *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller, appears to be attempting suicide several times before he succeeds at the end of the play. His family does not seem to understand what is driving him into suicide until very late, as there seem to be several reasons.

Behind the word success Willy Loman does not seem to see anything more than material possession. Self-fulfillment is nothing else than earning a lot of money to provide a good standard of living for one's family. This ironically is Willy's ideology, even though he is a salesman with a low salary who can barely pay the upcoming installments. Willy's view of the world is based to a large extent based on two men. His brother Ben, who made a fortune by finding diamonds in the jungle, and an old salesman called David Singleman, the salesman he aspires to become.

Willy desperately tries to believe that he is a success, something he always tried to tell his sons. But of course at the age of sixty-three, near retirement, he has to realize that he cannot achieve what he was longing for. He starts going back into his past and seeing his brother Ben, who he thinks has all the answers. His life lies in ruins in front of him and he starts realizing that according to his ideology he is a failure.

Materialistic things are everything that count for him is how it seems.

Therefore he cannot see what he has in his wife and two sons, who stand behind him by the end of the play. The idea that his life insurance money could help his son to set up his business prevails for him. He had always

wanted his sons, especially Biff, the elder one of them, to be successes. At the age of thirty-four, though, Biff has still not settled down, as he wants to be a success in the eyes of his father but on the other hand realizes that he is best at working with his hands.

This of course would mean not making much money but would probably give him a feeling of self-fulfillment. By the end of the play Biff realizes exactly this but is not able to make Willy drop his views. These views prevent Willy from doing what he also shows talent in, which is construction working. Only materialistic things are what count in a man's life.

As Willy slowly seems to comprehend how much he failed, according to his narrowed views, a process begins in him, which many of the other characters would describe as confusion. It is much more than that, though, he loses his touch with reality and gives up his will to live. On his long journeys in his car he deliberately tries to crash and at home he connects a plastic attachment to the gas pipe in his cellar in order to suffocate himself. This not only shows that he has given up but also that his family is not enough reason for him to continue his life.

This cannot be explained simply by saying he does not love them but it is that he thinks he is unworthy of living with them when he cannot provide them with money. Therefore his line of thinking continues with the idea that in his death he can give them a lot more financial support than he could in his life time. Following his logic this is to say that he is a much better husband and father, dead than alive.

In the play there is a rather optimistic part, where the future of the Loman family seems rather good. Willy is about to see his boss for a non-traveling position and his sons have the plan to open a sports article retailing business. All of these hopes for a better future get crushed at once and the way to Willy's suicide is free. In a last vision of Ben, Willy sees a new hope at least for his sons in his life insurance money and therefore his death. Ben encourages him in this unspoken intention Willy takes the last step and drives into the next tree.

Willy Loman, husband and father is driven to his suicide by a perverted version of the American dream. His view of success and self-realization has reduced to a materialistic meaning. All he can see is his failure in providing his family with a good financial situation. His real failure, though, is not to see what he has in his family and what else he can give them besides money.