

In what way do charley and willy differ as fathers essay



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In this essay I am going to analyze and compare the two characters of Willy Loman and Charley and their sons, and find out how they differ as fathers and why. Willy Loman is the main character in this story; we see him from many different angles and in many situations.

He constantly has flashbacks and seems to be living in the past. He is a two-faced character and it is hard to make out his real personality. Every other character in the play sees him and thinks of him differently; Arthur Miller leaves it to us to make out Willy's character and wants us make our own opinion of him. Charley is Willy's next-door neighbours and only loyal friend.

He watches Willy change and pities him for who he has become. Both Willy and Charley have sons who are approximately the same age. The sons reflect their fathers, so by looking at Bernard's character we can deduct what kind of man Charley is; the same thing stands for Willy and his two sons Hap and Biff. Hap, Biff and Bernard grew up living next to each other and going to the same high school; they were childhood friends even though all three were very different from each other (as children and later, as adults). This was due to the way their parents and more importantly their fathers raised them. Bernard is constantly made fun of as a child and is defined by the Lomans as a nerd and a bookworm.

He doesn't have the same aspiration for sports as Biff has, and believes that academics/ his studies are much more important. He is a very caring person, at the beginning and end of the play. We can see that he always tries to help Biff even though he is many times rejected and insulted by him. This quality of caring so much for people comes from his father who is always trying to

help out Willy. We do not know much about Happy's character as a child only that he deeply admires his father just like his brother Biff, and that he doesn't focus on his studies either.

This is probably due to Willy regularly telling his sons, that brains aren't everything, it's just how you can sell yourself and how well you are liked; therefore his sons do sports to increase their popularity in school among the 'kids' and totally give up on their studies: '- You did it? The kids liked it? - They nearly died laughing!' (Willy and Biff, pg. 89). Later in life, Bernard becomes a successful man and a happy father, with a good job and a nice family, everything Willy has dreamed of for his sons. Happy and Biff do not achieve the goals their father has set for them, making him unhappy.

None of them have a stable job or a family by the time they're 30. Happy sleeps around with his boss's wives and survives by telling lies to everyone (including himself). His brother Biff cannot seem to settle down and get a proper job. His attitude towards his father is a mystery for all of us and we find out towards the end of the play why his life ambitions were shattered. The Loman brothers maintain quite a bad relationship with their father.

Biff hardly ever sees his parents as he lives in a different state; Happy still lives with his parents, but isn't sincere and open with them. There are lies going around in the Loman household, as both Willy and Happy would rather lie to make things better, rather than tell the truth, go through a fight, and solve their problems. The 'boys' get into constant fights with each other and their father, which results in them, being on bad terms. The relationship of young Bernard and his father doesn't really come out in the play; later in the

play though, Charley tells Willy that he never really cared about what his son did, never took real interest in him, and wanted to give him full freedom in life: ' My salvation is that I never took any interest in anything.

'(Charley, pg. 71) Considering that Bernard got quite far in life compared to Biff or Happy, Charley's way of raising his son was fine. Bernard became who he is because he was born with good qualities. He didn't care as much about appearance and popularity as the Loman brothers did. Willy brought his sons up telling them that being ' well liked' was what mattered the most.

Willy fed his whole family lies and lied to everyone around him. Willy is a very stubborn parent and he basically decided everything in advance for his sons. He wanted them to become successful businessmen. He doesn't know who they really are; and wants them to become people they aren't.

When young, the boys don't often see their father around as Willy is always on the road. Therefore every time he comes home, the boys are full of respect for him and admire him, making him feel special and satisfied. Willy doesn't really know his two sons and his sons don't know the real Willy Loman either. The boys grow up literally never seeing their father. Willy cannot always be there for his boys when they need him. A false image of their father builds up in the boys, and later causes disappointments and misunderstandings.

There is also a great lack of communications between the two boys and between them and their father. We don't find out much about Charley as a father in the play, but by looking at Bernard we can deduct that, as a father he was helpful, caring and a loyal type of person. He raised his son the way <https://assignbuster.com/in-what-way-do-charley-and-willy-differ-as-fathers-essay/>

he thought was right and didn't put his expectations high for him. He let his son be himself. Willy and Charley differ a lot as fathers and as husbands or just friends.

Charley has lost of good qualities and it seems that his friendship for Willy has no limits. He is a very tolerant person. Willy on the other hand is a real disappointment; not just for his sons but for all the people around him. He even makes his wife unhappy, but she tries not to show it.

Willy is also disappointed in himself and thinks of his sons as failures, while he is the one that failed in life. He is not the ideal father but his love for his sons is endless. He becomes so touched when he misunderstands Biff's tears, and thinks that his son is crying because he loves him so. Charley on the other hand doesn't care too much about love; he tries to show his concern for people by always being there for them and staying loyal and honest. He does not lie to his son or to anyone else to make himself seem better than he really is.

I think that the major difference between Charley and Willy is that Willy has too much pride in himself and is afraid to reveal the real him to his sons. He chooses to live by lies, so hopefully his sons get further in life. He also hesitates a lot about the way of raising his boys. Several times, he asks his dead brother for advise, in his flashbacks: ' Oh, Ben, that's good to hear! Because sometimes I'm afraid that I'm not teaching them the right kind of - Ben how should I teach them?' (Willy, pg. 35) Charley is not concerned about appearance and wants to make sure that his son will do fine on his own

when he grows up. He does this by enforcing that studying is very important if you want to get somewhere in life.

He shows his son a good example by working hard and being honest to people. He also has a better sense of priority than Willy.