

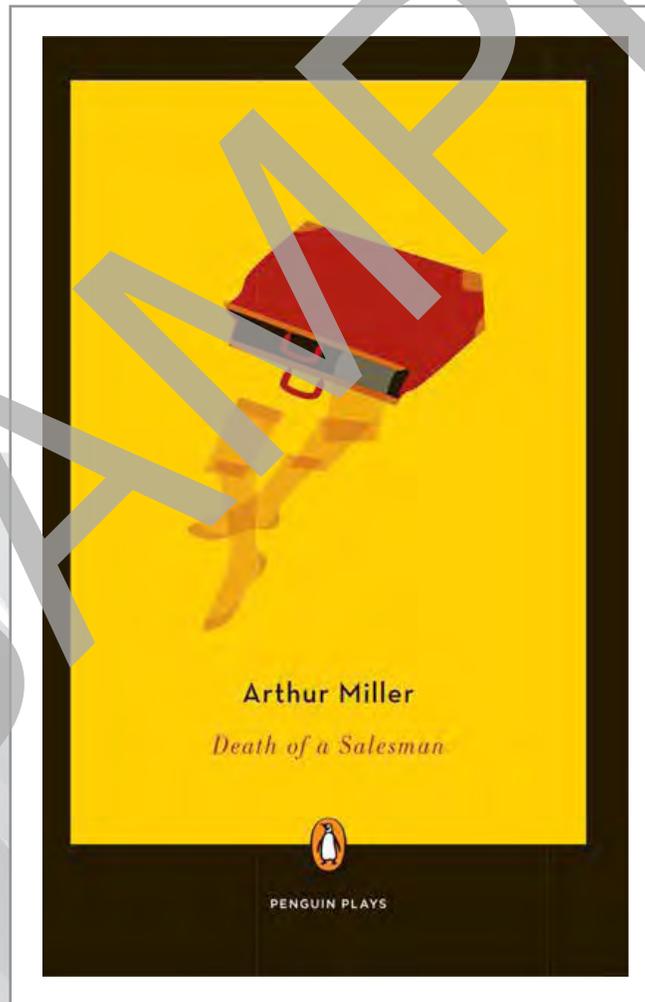


STUDENT PACKET

GRADES 9-12

Death of a Salesman

Arthur Miller



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Death of a Salesman

Arthur Miller

STUDENT PACKET

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Name _____

“Success is What You Make It”

The adage above is often quoted when people discuss the nature of success, because success can mean many different things. To a student who is having trouble with algebra, earning a “C” might be considered a great success. To a student who has always earned straight-A’s, a “B” might mean failure. Think about what success means to Willy Loman, to Biff, and to you. Then answer the questions below as thoughtfully as you can.

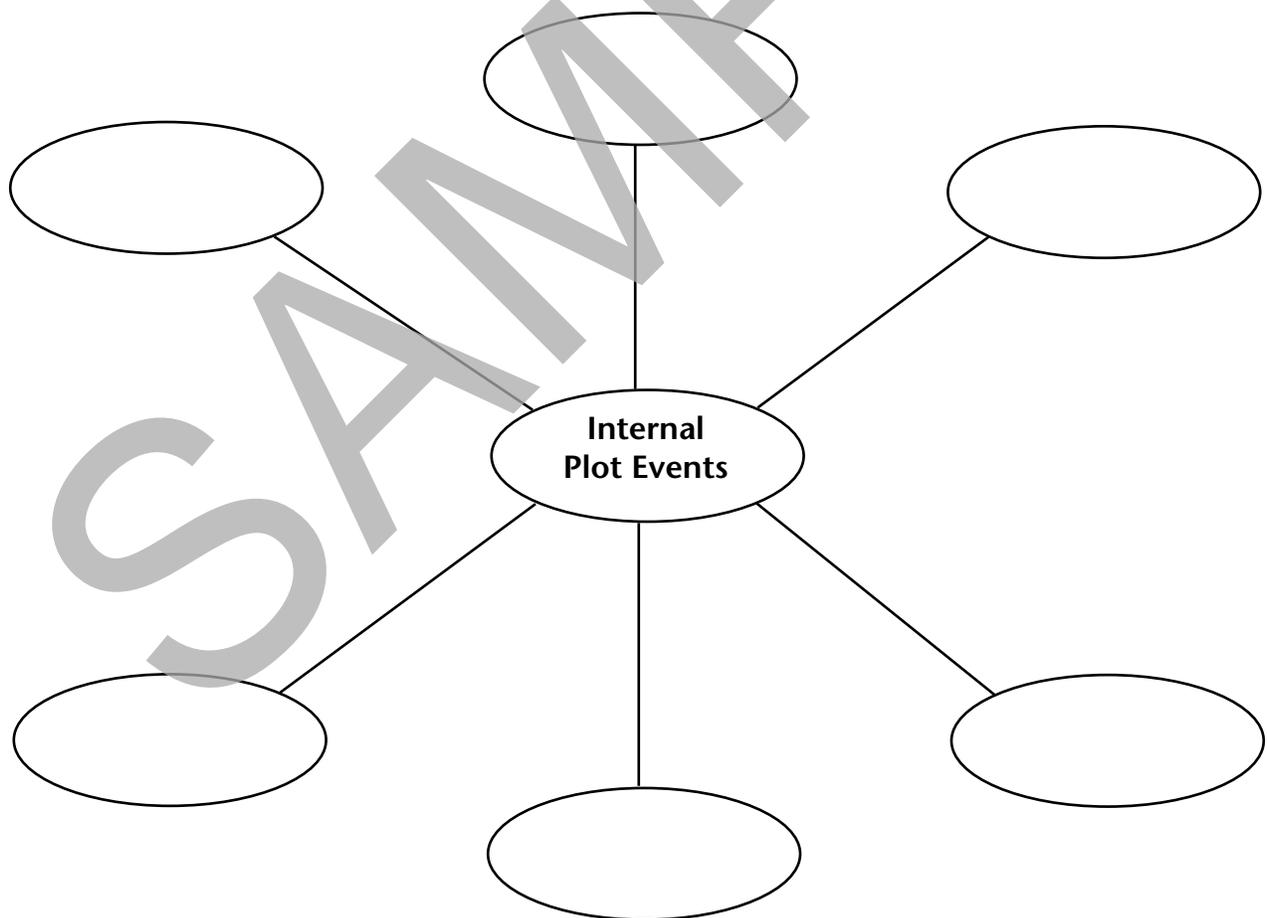
1. Willy Loman would consider himself a success if—
2. Briefly explain Willy’s “formula for success.” What is *supposed* to work?
3. Biff would consider himself a success if—
4. I would consider myself a success if—
5. My “formula for success” is—

Name _____

Plot

The **external plot** of *Death of a Salesman* consists of the events which occur in real time, i.e., from the time Willy returns home in the first scene until the final funeral scene. Write the main events of the external plot in correct sequence below.

The **internal plot** consists of flashbacks that take place in Willy's mind in remembered time. List the most important of these internal plot events in the balloon map below.



Name _____

Study Guide

Act I

1. Describe Willy. What is his profession?
2. Why has Willy come back home at the beginning of the play?
3. Describe Linda.
4. What advice from Willy caused Biff's downfall in high school?
5. What is causing Willy to contradict himself when he speaks? What is causing his mental faculties to be so muddled?
6. Who is Ben, and what does he epitomize for Willy?
7. What makes Charley admirable?
8. What type of job did Biff have in Texas? To what types of jobs is he naturally drawn?
9. How did Biff lose his jobs, one after another, after high school?
10. How is the audience transported back in time?
11. What writing technique is used by Miller throughout the play to show the difference between the past and the present?
12. Discuss the differences between Willy and his father.
13. What evidence does Linda present to Biff and Happy to show that Willy is considering suicide?
14. Where did Ben make his fortune?
15. What role does Bernard serve in the play?
16. What two comments does Happy make (one in the past, one in the present) to get his father's attention?