

**Setting the Stage**

1. How does the juxtaposition of Willy's house with the backdrop symbolize themes of the story?
2. What kind of music and colors is Miller asking for in the production? What mood do they create?
3. Why design the house with “imaginary wall-lines?” How does this choice fit the motivation and plot of the play?

**Act One**

Tell me about Biff—history, motivations, conflicts, characteristics. Support with examples.

Tell me about Happy—history, motivations, conflicts, characteristics. Support with examples.

Describe the difference between the Willy's “salesman” persona and his true character. Use examples to show how he inflates and deludes. Use examples to show the invented image versus the true man.

Who is Ben? Why does Willy admire him? What doesn't Willy consider about him? How did Ben become rich? What does it say about making it big and obtaining new wealth?

What criticisms does Linda have of her sons? Why does she reveal to her sons about Willy?

Discuss some of things that we have learned about Linda through the elements of characterization. What do you think of her? Is she strong or weak? Honorable or pathetic?

Biff says that he is going to visit Bill Oliver. What is the backstory? What are some of his motivations for doing so? Why are his decision and his father's reaction ironic?

Near the end of the act, Happy says to his mom, "I'm gonna get married, Mom. I wanted to tell you." How does this relate to him telling his father that he is losing weight? What is he trying to do by telling his parents these things? How does it relate to the way he and his brother are treated by Linda and Willy?

With what imagery/memory does the act end? How does this image/memory and Willy's contemplation relate to Willy's overall motivation, to his dreams and self-worth?

Outline and discuss one scene in which Miller manipulates, changes, or shifts the mood.