

## Act I- At a Glance

Discuss briefly the comment made by the play upon the following, to this point (end of Act I)

1. Corruption in modern business
2. Country vs. City
3. Importance of being well-liked
4. Importance of physical prowess
5. Importance of family ties
6. Questionable morality
7. Importance of sustained effort (Bernard?)
8. The hard struggle of the average family
9. Success through daring ventures

Which of the following appear to be symbols? Some of which are not clearly symbols may suggest meaning or importance. Explain what could be suggested by each of the following:

1. The old Chevrolet
2. The punching bag
3. The football
4. Biff's sneakers
5. Stockings
6. Diamonds
7. Ben's Watch
8. The rubber tube
9. Willy's travelling suitcase
10. Name symbolism. (Willy Loman, Happy)

Some Motifs we have encountered and should continue to monitor throughout the play are:

- a. Willy says he is "Vital to New England". This seems to be rationalizing for the fact that he cannot get a New York position.
- b. Debts and things appear to be used up by the time they are paid for. This comic idea becomes tragic.
- c. Biff's "personal attractiveness"
- d. Being "boxed-in" or "nothing will grow here"

Some more discussion on Act One.

1. The scene opens with flute music that "is small and fine, telling of grass and trees and the horizon." Immediately after, the city with "towering, angular

- shapes surrounded by an angry glow of orange” What atmosphere do these two phrases create and what is the effect of the contradicting ideas?
2. Describe the relationship between Linda and Willy. In your description, consider thoughts, feelings, and opinions of one another, as well as interactions with one another. What do these things reveal to us?
  3. What is the main conflict presented throughout Act One? Identify the type of conflict, characters involved, and explain the development of the conflict as it has been presented.
  4. Describe the relationship between Willy and both of his sons. Use specific details to support.
  5. How are Happy and Biff different?
  6. What does Willy seem to be yearning for? Explain.
  7. What has been the most important thing throughout Willy’s life? How has this affected him?