Junior Regular English

Summer Reading 2016-2017

**Book title**: *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller

**Essay prompt (after we get back to school)**: How does the form of a play contribute to Arthur Miller’s message about the American Dream in *Death of a Salesman*? Write a synthesis essay answering the prompt using your annotated play and incorporating your nonfiction article(s).

\***The American Dream** is defined as: “*the ideal that every U.S. citizen should have an equal opportunity to achieve success and prosperity through hard work, determination, and initiative.”*

**Note-taking/Annotation Guide**

Be marking and reflecting on the following quotes in the book:

1. Quotes the speak to a specific character's perspective on the American Dream
2. Quotes that effectively directly characterize (explicitly stated, “*He was a stubborn man”*) or indirectly characterize (leads to an inference, *A quote explaining how a character would not give up may mean he’s determined OR may mean he’s crazy, based on context*) a character. Look for quotes that lead you to a better understanding of who that character is and what (s)he represents.
3. Quotes that show the usefulness/ effectiveness of the play format (such as powerful moments of stage directions, setting, asides, monologues, etc.). Please refer to the attached “Resource Page” for guidance.

Also, please fill in the following quote tracker with five (5) of your most effective annotations. In the “Extended Annotation” box, you should reflect on the purpose/ meaning of this quote in relation to one of the annotation requirements listed above (at least 3 sentences long). This will be the due on the second day of school.

***Death of a Salesman*: Quote Tracker**

fill in the following quote tracker with five (5) of your most effective annotations. In the “Extended Annotation” box, you should reflect on the purpose/ meaning of this quote in relation to one of the annotation requirements listed above (at least 3 sentences long). This will be the due on the second day of school.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Quote (with correct citation)**  | **Extended annotation**  |
| 1.  |  |
| 2.  |  |
| 3. |  |
| 4.  |  |
| 5.  |  |

Resource Page: Elements of a Play/Drama

How to Read a Play

* Plays are written in lines of dialogue in the form of a script
* Acts--major divisions in a play
* Scenes--smaller divisions; usually a change in setting means there will be a change in act or scene
* Stage directions--notes in italics or parentheses that help the actors interpret the scene for the audience (*Unlike a novel, which may devote several paragraphs to describing the setting, the play is limited to what the audience can see on stage. It is important that the playwright give some indication to setting, especially if the actors will use the items on stage. In some cases, the stage directions provide information on what the stage should look like. Other times, they tell the actors where or how to move, or what facial expressions or tone of voice is appropriate when speaking a line*)
* Before the dialogue, the playwright will often include a **Cast of Characters**. Typically, each character, major and minor, is listed alongside a brief description of the character’s role in the story.
* The biggest difference between characters in prose and characters in drama is that actors are representing the characters in drama.
	+ The actors are chosen based on both their physical and verbal ability to interpret the character
	+ Sometimes it’s important that an actor has certain physical characteristics because it is an important aspect of the play
* Plot structure doesn’t really differ from prose: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution

Useful literary devices that often occur in play:

* Imagery--The use of “word pictures” to provide an imaginative, yet specific, description. Appeals to the five senses
* Hyperbole--Exaggeration used to create a specific effect
* Personification--Giving human traits to a non-human thing
* Tragic Hero--Torn by internal conflict; makes a wrong choice which triggers his/her downfall
* Visualize:
	+ The movement of the actors
	+ their gestures
	+ the grouping of actors
	+ their relationships to one another
	+ their expressions
	+ their voices
	+ their silences
	+ the sound effects
	+ the lighting
	+ the scenery
	+ the costumes