**Death of a Salesman**

**Study Questions—Act II and Requiem**

**Act II**

1. What is the source of the optimism at the beginning of this act?
2. The scene with Howard, Willy, and the tape recorder goes on for nearly two pages. What is the purpose of this scene? What purpose does Howard serve for the audience?
3. What does Dave Singleman represent for Willy?
4. How accurately do you suppose Willy is remembering Dave Singleman? What is significant about Singleman’s name?
5. How might Willy’s comparing himself to an orange be interpreted as a criticism of the capitalistic system?
6. Judging from what Bernard says, what took the life out of Biff? What about Bernard irks Willy?
7. What important exposition do we learn from Bernard?
8. What is the purpose of the scene between Stanley and Happy and then between Happy and the girl?
9. What is significant about the way Biff’s meeting went with Bill Oliver? What seems to be odd about Biff’s response to the meeting?
10. How do Willy and Happy prevent Biff from introducing reality into their conversation at dinner?
11. How does the dinner meeting and Willy’s final flashback represent the convergence of plotlines in climax?
12. What is the lowest point of the sons’ relationship with their father?
13. What do the seeds and Willy’s “planting” a “garden” represent?
14. What occurs in the absolute moment of climax that determines this play will be a tragedy?
15. What is the guaranteed, “gilt-edged” proposition to which Willy refers?
16. What is the plot point that ends Act II and thrusts us into the Requiem?
17. What do we realize is the irony of the title of the play?

**Requiem**

1. What is a requiem? Why is this section called a Requiem?
2. Are we surprised that no one has come to the funeral? Why or why not?
3. What does Biff mean when he says of his father, “He had all the wrong dreams. All, all wrong”?
4. What is ironic about Linda’s wondering why no one came to the funeral?
5. What does the ending of the play suggest is in store for Happy?