Realism In Death Of A Salesman Essay, Research Paper

Realism in Death of a Salesman Realism can be defined as an attempt to reproduce the surface appearance of the life of normal people in everyday situations (Kennedy 1410). Basically realism is a situation that normal people can relate to based on their own experiences. Realism is extremely prevalent in the play Death of a Salesman. The characters in the play all have real world problems. Lack of money is one of the problems, which is a problem for many people. There are also many conflicts within the family; the biggest is over what success is; money and power or happiness. Willy Loman also wants his children to have a better than he has and tries to do everything he can so they will have a better life, including ending his own. One realistic situation that many people can relate to is money problems. Money is one of the main problems that Willy Loman had throughout the play. The Loman family had many purchases on payments. Linda even states ?for the vacuum cleaner there?s three and a half due on the fifteenth? (Miller 1650). The Loman family was living from week to week. Every time Willy came home from a fairly successful day selling, he would think he was finally getting ahead. Willy would tell Linda how much he had made, but she would then point out how much they owed on everything. Willy then felt overwhelmed and said ?My God, if business don?t pick up I don?t know what I?m gonna do!? (1650). Linda would then reassure Willy and tell him ?Well, next week you?ll do better? (1650). Many people in real life have this same problem. Every time they feel they are getting ahead financially, a problem occurs and they find themselves right back where they started. Most people also have to deal with problems and conflicts within their family throughout their life. Family problems were not exempt from the characters in Death of a Salesman. Biff?s idea of success was completely opposite from Willy?s. Willy viewed success as achieving money and power; Biff however viewed success in life as being happy. Biff realized that ?I?m just what I am, that?s all? (1703). Biff realized he was ?a dime a dozen? (1703), but his father could not accept this reality. This situation where parents always keep telling their children what else they could be is common in many families. In actuality the children are where they want to be in life, but the parents just cannot accept their children?s contentment. Biff spent most of his life trying to please Willy, but Biff finally realized that he never could. He was what he was. The most realistic part of the play may have been about how much Willy loved his children and how he wanted their life to be better than his own. Willy raised his children the best he could. The character Ben even seemed to appear when Willy was trying to make a decision on how to make the boys lives better. This situation with Ben makes it appear that Willy has such a hard time making a decision about what is best for the boys, that he relies on his imagination for an answer. The main reason Willy ends up killing himself is because he thinks it will help Biff start his own business with the life insurance money. Willy did everything with the best of intentions and thought his actions and decisions would benefit his children. Most parents are the same way and will do anything in their power to help their children. When reading Death of a Salesman, most people can relate to the problems of the Loman?s. The similarities of the Loman?s problems to the everyday problems that average people face make this a play full of realism.

Kennedy, X.J., and Dana Gioia. Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 1999. 1410 Miller, Arthur. Death of a Salesman. Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama. Seventh Edition. X.J. Kennedy, and Dana Gioia. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 1999. 1636-1707