**DEATH OF A SALESMAN ARTHUR MILLER**

**DEVELOPING YOUR CRITICAL AUTONOMY**

Read the essay by Matthew Roudané which was taken from *The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller*. Develop your critical response to the play by completing the tasks below. Some bits in the pdf of the essay have been highlighted in yellow. These are worth thinking about and maybe remembering for use in your 3.1 essay.

Take note of the principles Willy values as listed on p60. To what extent does Willy live out his belief in these values?

Roudané writes, “Willy Loman can only cling to idyllic fables that baffle as they elude him.” What does this mean?

What connections does Roudané make with Aristotle’s *Poetics* on p61?

On p62 is written, “The play’s protagonist is an unfit subject of tragedy, an unworthy man incapable of carrying the tragic burdens its author places on him.” To what extent do you agree that Willy is not fit to be a tragic hero?

On pp62-3 it is argued that the play enjoys international appeal. How is that possible for “the quintessential American play”?

This play is about the fall of Willy Loman. How does Miller emphasise “fall” as a metaphor? Read p66f.

Why might Miller have given so much emphasis to construction in the play? Read pp68-9.

Why did Miller emphasise Linda’s “centrality to the play.” When he directed the play?

On p74, Bloom is quoted as having said that while “Miller is by no means a bad writer … he is scarcely an eloquent master of language.” Do you agree?

Take note of some of the death allusions throughout the script, and which are summarized on p77.

The original working title of the play was *The Inside of His Head*. How suitable is this as a title and why might Miller have changed it to *Death of a Salesman?*

On p80, Roudané states that after 50 years, the play’s significance has increased. Miller supports this point of view. Why is the play so significant even now?