

## **Suggested Research Paper Topics - Arthur Miller Plays (Remember your research paper is to be 3 to 4 pages in length – that’s including the intro and the conclusion)**

1. Investigation of one (or more if related) theme(s) in *The Crucible* and/or *Death of a Salesman*
2. Investigation of one (or more if related) symbol(s) in *The Crucible* and/or *Death of a Salesman*
3. Investigation of one (or more if related) motif(s) in *Death of a Salesman*: Ben, Biff’s stealing, planned obsolescence, etc.
4. Investigation of Title: *The Crucible*
5. Character study: any major character from either play.
6. Willy’s motives in his relationship with either son.
7. Willy’s view of money: how it works; can it buy “anything;” can he “buy” soundness of mind?
8. Major character’s ultimate decision – what precipitates it, what the consequences are, was it the right choice
9. Arthur Miller’s conclusions and judgments about life, society and/or people.
10. Comparison or contrast of a theme, symbol or motif in *The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman*
11. Comparison and/or contrast of Willy and John Proctor.
12. Comparison and/or contrast of Linda Loman and Elizabeth Proctor.
13. The importance of one of the minor characters (Ben, Dave Singleman, Giles Corey, one of the judges, etc). Is this character essential to the plot/theme/motif?
14. Investigation of a minor character. Why does the author include this minor character?
15. A reader’s perspective: Is Willy or John Proctor pitied by the reader/audience? When and why? Why not?
16. Biff as the hope of the story.
17. The role of “social class” in the events of the novel.
18. The role of the American Dream – Willy’s American Dream.
19. The universality of Willy Loman and/or John Proctor
20. The paradox of life as presented through the hypocrisy of characters and/or ironic twists of plot.
21. The play (either one) as a reflection of time period.
22. The play (either one) as a reflection of author.
23. The play (either one) as a reflection of literary genre.
24. Investigation of the footstool tragedy and its effectiveness in one of the plays
25. Historical allegory of *The Crucible* (Parallels of *The Crucible* and McCarthyism)
26. Blend of fact and fiction – effectiveness – in *The Crucible*
27. The role of hysteria in the group dynamic
28. The effect of reality and fantasy in *Death of a Salesman*
29. Contrast of Biff and Happy
30. Biff as the hope of the story (“Salesman”)
31. Dignity versus life – which is more important?
32. Miller’s commentary on the demise/corruption of Puritanism
33. Comparison/contrast of Miller and Hawthorne’s view of Puritanism
34. Individual Topic – Must be approved!