

Role Play

1. In groups of four, read the scene below.
Then make up your own scene: use the lines given and add a beginning and/or ending to this scene retaining its theme and mood.
(15 minutes)
2. Perform your scene in class.
(~ 3 minutes)
3. While watching your classmates' performance, think about what the topic of their scene is.

Dramatis Personae

WILLY (father)
LINDA (mother)
BIFF (son)
HAPPY (son)

WILLY. Biff is a lazy bum^o!

Rumtreiber

LINDA. [...] Get something to eat. Go on down.
[...]

WILLY. Biff Loman is lost. In the greatest country in the world a young man with such—personal attractiveness, gets lost. And such a hard worker. There's one thing about Biff—he's not lazy.

LINDA. Never.

WILLY. (*with pity and resolve*^o). I'll see him in the morning; I'll have a nice talk with him. I'll get him a job selling. He could be big in no time. My God! Remember how they used to follow him around in high school?

Entschlossenheit

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Dramatis Personae

WILLY (father)
LINDA (mother)
BIFF (son)
HAPPY (son)

BIFF. Gee°, I'd love to go with you sometime, Dad. *Mensch!*
WILLY. Soon as summer comes.
HAPPY. Promise?
WILLY. You and Hap and I, and I'll show you all the towns. America is full of beautiful towns and fine, upstanding° people. And they know me, boys, they know me up and down New England. *aufrecht*
The finest people. And when I bring you fellas° *Burschen*
up, there'll be open sesame° for all of us, [...]. *['sesəmi]*

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Dramatis Personae

WILLY (father)
LINDA (mother)
BIFF (son)
HAPPY (son)

WILLY. [...] Why didn't I go to Alaska with my brother Ben that time! Ben! That man was a genius, that man was success incarnate^o! What a mistake! He begged^o me to go.

*leibhaftig
asked me to go*

HAPPY. Well, there's no use in—

WILLY. You guys! There was a man started with the clothes on his back and ended up with diamond mines! [...] Walked into the jungle, and comes out, the age of twenty-one, and he's rich! The world is an oyster^o, but you don't crack it open on a mattress!

Auster

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Dramatis Personae

WILLY (father)
LINDA (mother)
BEN (uncle)
HAPPY and BIFF (sons)

LINDA. Africa!

WILLY. The Gold Coast!

BEN. Principally° diamond mines.

hauptsächlich

LINDA. Diamond mines!

[...]

WILLY. [...] Boys! Boys! (*Young Biff and Happy appear.*)
Listen to this. This is your Uncle Ben, a great man! Tell my boys, Ben!

BEN. Why, Boys, when I was seventeen I walked into the jungle, and when I was twenty-one I walked out. (*He laughs.*) And by God I was rich.

WILLY (*to the boys*). You see what I been talking about?
The greatest things can happen!

The American Dream



Key elements include:

An attempt to define it ...

One's prosperity depends upon one's own abilities and hard work, not on a rigid class structure (as in Europe). In general, the American dream can be defined as being the opportunity and freedom for all citizens to achieve their goals and become wealthy and renowned if only they work hard enough.

A critical view of the American Dream ...

"It's called the American dream because you have to be asleep to believe it."
George Carlin

"The American Dream has run out of gas. The car has stopped. It no longer supplies the world with its images, its dreams, its fantasies. No more. It's over. It supplies the world with its nightmares now: the Kennedy assassination, Watergate, Vietnam ..."
J. G. Ballard

The American Dream



Key elements include:

liberty

independence (abolition of class structure)

competition

equality (justice)

hard work (ambition, perseverance)

success

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