THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

Lesson Guidance 21	
Grade	12
Unit	*2*
Selected Text(s)	*Death of a Salesman,* 122-132 Three poems about work, class, and whiteness: "What Work Is" by Phillip Levine, "Calling Him Back from Layoff" by Bob Hicock, and "In Order To" by Kenneth Patchen
Duration	Approx 1-2 days
SENSITIVE LANGUAGE WARNING	

Plan with guidance from the ELA Instructional Expectations Guide

Learning Goal(s)

What should students understand about today's selected text?

Students should understand the literary elements Miller uses to show how the main characters have developed throughout the play. They should also explore motifs that appear in both the play and in the pair texts, such as truth vs. lies, capitalism's effect on workers' mental health, masculinity, family relationships, and so on.

CCSS Alignment	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed). CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.) CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
End of lesson task *Formative assessment*	Ask students to complete a gallery walk where they move around the room responding in writing to key quotes from this climactic moment in the play, as

	well as from each of the poems. Students will identify and analyze literary devices they have been tracking in their Guided Reading Notebooks. Teachers may color code student responses ("graffiti style") or ask students to take notes on a handout for accountability.
Knowledge Check *What do students need to know in order to access the text?*	**Background knowledge** • Focus on motif and theme in Lesson 20 • Symbolism • Discussions of masculinity, family, and whiteness in previous lessons **Key Terms** *(domain specific terms to analyze the text)* • **reading against the grain**: analyze the dominant reading of a text and engage in alternative or "resistant" readings. Resistant readings scrutinize the beliefs and attitudes that typically go unexamined in a text, drawing attention to the gaps, silences and contradictions • **hyperbole:** extreme exaggeration used to create emphasis • **structure**: the way an author decides to organize and sequence their text • **climax:** The point in a narrative at which the conflict or tension hits the highest point **Vocabulary Words** *(words found in the text)* • **implacably:** in a way that shows strong opinions or feelings that are impossible to change • **ominously:** in a way that suggests that something bad is going to happen. • **contemptuous:** showing contempt; scornful. • **proposition:** a statement or assertion that expresses a judgment or opinion. • **spite:** a desire to hurt, annoy, or offend someone.

Core Instruction

Text-centered questions and ways students will engage with the text

Notes for instructors:

*The slur c**lie appears on p. 126. Before students read out loud, warn them and explain that this word should not be read out loud, as it has a violent history of use against people of South and East Asian descent.*

Additionally, the crux of this section of the play is Willy's suicidal ideation. In addition to providing a content warning for students so they are prepared for the heavy and potentially triggering content, it may be necessary to scaffold further or give students the option to read independently.

Opening Activity:

Ask students to complete a journal entry/free write: Respond to this excerpt from a poem we will read today. Sentence starters: *This makes me feel…. I wonder…This connects too… This reminds me of… I'm confused about…*

"[...]He
was on the couch watching cars
painted with ads for Budweiser follow cars

painted with ads for Tide around an oval
that's a metaphor for life because
most of us run out of gas and settle

for getting drunk in the stands
and shouting at someone in a t-shirt
we want kraut on our dog"

Lesson 21: DoaS ELD Tasks and Scaffolding

Content Knowledge:

The previous lesson focused on developing literary analysis skills. In this lesson, students will use the research they completed in the previous lesson to explore how this same theme continues into this next section of the play and also appears in a thematically-linked poem. Students should use their previous work on motif and theme, as well as their Guided Reading Notebooks.

Remind students of the difference between a topic/motif, a symbol, and a theme. Activate prior knowledge of themes at work in the play. Ask students to continue to track these themes during their reading/performance of the play today to see how they develop or come to a head during this climactic scene.

Preteach vocabulary words as needed using an explicit vocabulary routine.

Shared Reading:

Assign roles and read pages 122-132. **Characters:** Happy, Linda, Biff, Willy, & Ben.

As students read, stop to discuss the recurring symbols (diamonds, cars, and seeds) as well as clarify Willy's suicidal ideation in regards to being "worth" more dead than alive, as a result of his life insurance policy.

Reading questions:

1. How does Linda react when Biff and Happy come home from dinner with their dad? Why?
2. Which brother seems to feel more guilt? What is your response to this?
3. What might the symbol of seeds represent for Willy? Why? (125).
4. What is the tone of Willy's monologue on p. 126 beginning with "Oh, Ben, that's the whole beauty of it!" Is he being realistic about his funeral?
5. Why might Biff decide to estrange himself from the family? Are you surprised by the reaction of his family members? (128). Explain.
6. Analyze this exchange between Biff and Happy → Biff: "We never told the truth for ten minutes in this house!" Happy: "We always told the truth!" (131). What does this reveal about their characters?
7. What new information does Biff confess about his kleptomania?
8. How might Biff's monologue that begins with "No!" reveal character development or growth? (132).

Lesson 21: DoaS ELD Tasks and Scaffolding

Independent Reading and Analysis:

Explain that these poem selections are thematically related to the play. Ask students to read each of the poems and then choose one poem that stands out to them. If time is limited, teachers may have students jigsaw the poems and/or select one of them that is best suited for their students.

Student Discourse:

Consider asking students to answer or discuss the discussion questions below their poem (on the linked doc), or move into groups with others who chose the same poem to analyze the text collaboratively using those questions.

Ask students to choose one theme from their previous analysis that also appears within the poem. Remind students that a theme must be a phrase, rather than a single word, which is merely a motif or topic. For example, if topics/motifs are masculinity and consumerism, themes might be: "the damaging effects of toxic masculinity on men's mental health" or "consumerism's impact on American workers' search for financial stability." These themes must appear in both *Death of a Salesman* and these selected poems.

In small groups or pairs, students will discuss the way their chosen theme appears in the poem and compare it to the play. Ask students to record their thoughts in a table (like the one below) or venn diagram.

Theme statement:		
Only the Poem:	Both Texts	Only *Death of a Salesman*

Formative Assessment:

Ask students to complete a gallery walk where they move around the room responding to key quotes from this climactic moment in the play, as well as from each of the poems. Students will identify and analyze literary devices they have been tracking in their Guided Reading Notebooks, as well as respond authentically to specific quotes.

Gallery walk strategies to consider: Teachers may color code student responses and have them write on chart paper (graffiti style) or ask students to take notes on a handout for accountability. This activity can also be completed virtually on a Padlet or shared doc. Teachers might also ask students to select their own key quotes rather than providing them, depending on their context and time constraints.

1. Literary devices (teachers may choose to color code and ask students to write in specific marker colors depending on the device): symbol, motif, theme, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, satire, repetition.
2. Sentence starters for student gallery walk reader response: *I wonder… This connects to… This reminds me of…This is [literary device] and its purpose in this text is to …. This word/phrase stands out to me because… This [device]'s meaning is … and its impact is…*
3. Suggested quote list for gallery walk. Teachers might write these on chart paper, the board, or on a virtual shared doc or padlet:
    a. From DoaS p. 122-132:
        i. Linda: "Get out of here, both of you, and don't come back! I don't want you tormenting him any more!" (124).

ii. Willy: “What a proposition, ts, ts. Terrific, terrific. ‘Cause she’s suffered, Ben, the woman has suffered. You understand me? A man can’t go out the way he came, Ben, a man has got to add up to something” (125).
iii. Willy: “I see it like a diamond, shining in the dark, hard and rough, that I can pick up and touch in my hand. Not like—like an appointment. This would not be another damned-fool appointment, Ben, and it changes all the aspects. Because he thinks I’m nothing, see, and so he spites me. But the funeral—” (126).
iv. Biff: “I think I’m just not smart enough to make any sense out of it for you. To hell with whose fault it is or anything like that” (128).
v. Biff: “No, you’re going to know the truth—what you are and what I am!” (130).
vi. Biff: “What am I doing in an office, making a contemptuous, begging fool of myself, when all I want is out there, waiting for me the minute I say I know who I am!” (132).

b. From the Poems:
i. “the grin/ that does not hide the stubbornness,/ the sad refusal to give in to/ rain, to the hours of wasted waiting,/ to the knowledge that somewhere ahead/ a man is waiting who will say, “No,/ we’re not hiring today,” for any/ reason he wants” - “What Work Is” by Philip Levine
ii. “When he began to cry I tried/ with the shape of my silence to say/ I understood but each confession/ of fear and poverty was more awkward/ than what you learn in the shower” - “Calling Him Back From Layoff” by Bob Hicock
iii. “Well. . . it was my turn then to tell them something! Shucks,/ I didn't want any job that bad” - “In Order To” by Kenneth Patchen

Optional Extension Activity:

Write an original poem about work, race, and class from an intentional point of view (not necessarily your own).

Fluency, Comprehension and Writing Supports	
Fluency	Fluency Protocols
Sentence Comprehension	Juicy Sentence protocol with sample sentence “What am I doing in an office, making a contemptuous, begging fool of myself, when all I want is out there, waiting for me the minute I say I know who I am!” (132).
Writing	Pattan Writing Scope and Sequence N/A

Additional Supports	
ELD Practices	Lesson 21: DoaS ELD Tasks and Scaffolding

English Language Development ELA Tasks and Scaffolding	
SpEd Practice	Practices to promote Tier 1 access
MTSS Practices	Practices to promote Tier 1 access
Enrichment Practices	Practices to promote Tier 1 access