Writing Assignment
Literary Comparison – Two Modern American Tragedies
Mr. Ryan

For this assignment, you will be writing about Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman* and Eugene O’Neill’s *Long Day’s Journey into Night*. Specifically, you will be comparing them in terms of a specific element (theme, motif, characterization, etc.). I want you to choose a focus that isn’t blatantly obvious. For example, writing about how Willy Loman and James Tyrone are tragic figures would be a very bad idea. Nuance is the key.

Some details:
You will, of course, need to find quotations from each play that prove your arguments. However, you will also need to do some research on the plays. The purpose of the research is to find scholarly criticism that adds credibility to your opinions. You will be required to cite two sources (it won’t kill you to use more), one of which must be a book. Mrs. Davidson-Heller and I will be putting aside some selections that you will be able to use. You should also utilize the databases available through MC’s library. Website sources will not be accepted.

Please use MLA (Modern Language Association) style to format your essay and to cite sources. For assistance, our library has a MLA Style Guide and this website is helpful: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)

Length: at least three pages

Procedure:
1. Write a thesis statement. Please email it to me by Thursday night, 11:59:59.
2. Once I approve your thesis, write a general outline. Email it to me before class, Monday, April 29.
3. Once I approve your general outline, write a detailed outline. Email it to me before class, Friday, May 3.
4. Write your essay, including a Works Cited page. Email it to be by the end of school, Friday, May 10.

General Outline Template

I. Introduction
   A. Opening sentence
   B. Thesis statement

II. Body of Paper (Order your topic sentences from strongest argument to weakest)
   A. Topic sentence- Paragraph 1
      1. example from *Salesman*
      2. example from *Long Day’s Journey*
   B. Topic sentence- Paragraph 2
      1. example from *Salesman*
      2. example from *Long Day’s Journey*

   repeat (write at least six topic sentences)

Detailed Outline Template

I. Introduction
   A. Opening sentence:
   B. Thesis statement:
II. Body of Paper
   A. Topic sentence - Paragraph 1: ___________________________________________
      1. example from Salesman
         a. quotation from Salesman (with page #)
      2. example from LDJIN
         b. quotation from LDJIN (with page #)
      3. quotation from research (include author’s last name and page # if a book source)
      4. additional quotations as necessary
   B. Topic Sentence - Paragraph 2: ___________________________________________
      1. example from Salesman
         a. quotation from Salesman (with page #)
      2. example from LDJIN
         b. quotation from LDJIN (with page #)
      3. quotation from research (include author’s last name and page # if a book source)
      4. additional quotations as necessary
   C. Repeat as indicated above for each body paragraph

III. Conclusion
   A. Restated thesis:
   B. Concluding idea: