Death Of A Salesman Socratic seminar

…To me the tragedy of Willy Loman is that he gave his life, or sold it, in order to justify the waste of it. It is the tragedy of a man who did believe that he alone was not meeting the qualifications laid down for mankind by those clean-shaven frontiersmen who inhabit the peaks of broadcasting and advertising offices. From those forests of canned goods high up near the sky, he heard the thundering command to succeed as it ricocheted down the newspaper-lined canyons of his city, heard not a human voice, but a wind of a voice to which no human can reply in kind, except to stare into the mirror at a failure.

*Arthur Miller, “The ‘Salesman’ Has a Birthday,” The New York Times, February 5, 1950Arthur*

While Salesman is a story about a middle class family trying to make ends meet, it is also a criticism of certain aspects of American culture, particularly the American Dream and how it affects a person’s hopes dreams, and fears. It is also an exploration of capitalism, materialism, masculinity, notions of success. How does the text achieve all of this at once and how effective is it in its treatment of these subjects? Also, why does the play still resonate with the contemporary audience?