Death of a Salesman / text 2 / Reading B

Answer the questions below on a separate paper:

1. Biff has been away for 15 years. What is Happy trying to explain him?

HAPPY: He's going to get his [driving] license taken away if he keeps that up. I'm getting nervous about him, y'know, Biff?

(just after Willie nearly had a car accident)

HAPPY: [...] I wanted to talk to you about Dad for a long time, Biff. Something's—happening to him. He—talks to himself.

2. What does Biff's puzzling answer suggest?

BIFF: There's one or two other things depressing him, Happy.

HAPPY: What do you mean?

BIFF: Never mind. Just don't lay it all to me.

3. 15 years ago Willie and Biff had an argument, that's why Biff went away from home. How does Willie feel now?

HAPPY: [...] And you know something? Most of the time he's talking to you. [...]the fact that you're not settled, that you're still kind of up in the air...

4. How does Biff describe his state of mind?

BIFF: I tell ya, Hap, I don't know what the future is. I don't know—what I'm supposed to want.

HAPPY: What do you mean?

BIFF: Well, I spent six or seven years after high school trying to work myself up. Shipping clerk, salesman, business of one kind or another. [...]To suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of a two week vacation, when all you really desire is to be outdoors, with your shirt off.

5. How is this feeling suggested in the picture below: frames, shadows, geometry?



Ask the questions below to your partner:

- 1. How do the two brothers express the feeling of nostalgia?
- 2. How can we feel Happy's admiration for his elder brother?
- 3. How does this feeling show in the picture below?



- 4. How do the two brothers consider their evolution in life?
- 5. How do the two brothers judge the American way of life?