Language in Death of a Salesman

Word Choice
Define the following words. Were these words in the common vocabulary in 1949? Describe why they are important to the play – why did the playwright choose them?

- Simonize
- Dast
- Vital
- Anemic
- Ignoramus
- Requiem

Repetition
The following lines are repeated in the play. Who says them, why are they repeated, and what does it say about their character?

The woods are burning.
I'm losing weight, did you notice Pop?
When I was seventeen I walked into the jungle, and when I was twenty-one I walked out.
He's liked, but he's not well liked.

Flip Flop
Willy often makes a statement and then states the complete opposite. Look for this in the script regarding the following. What does it tell you about his character?

The Chevy
The Refrigerator
Biff being lazy

Images
Each of these images refer to Willy. Discuss what each image means.

- He's a man way out there in the blue, riding on a smile and a shoeshine.
- You can't eat the orange and throw the peel away--a man is not a piece of fruit!
- He's not to be allowed to fall into his grave like an old dog. Attention, attention must be finally paid to such a person.
- He's only a little boat looking for a harbor.