**Summary of ‘All My Sons’**

**(ONES IN RED ARE MOST IMPORTANT)**

**RAYMOND (NOT RAY)**

5. Themes:

* The American dream as depicted in All My Sons is a critical investigation of the quest to achieve material comfort and an improved social status through hard work and determination.
* Joe Keller’s suicide at the end of All My Sons is an act of atonement and escape from guilt which stems from Joe’s realization that there can be no real forgiveness for what he had done.
* The key in the tragic arc of All My Sons is Kate Keller’s refusal to accept the death of her son, Larry.
* Joe’s decision to send defective parts is not merely a result of skewed values; it’s a serious breach of ethics. By setting up this ethical situation, Miller clearly questions the implication of a value system that puts material success above moral responsibilities to others.
* Joe's death at the end of All My Sons is paradoxically both punishment and escape. In one sense, Joe pays for his crime with his life however death offers the only escape from the guilt and pain inherent.

6. Style:

* All My Sons has a very traditional dramatic structure, with carefully orchestrated action that reaches a final climax in the last act where Joe realizes his role in the deaths of the American pilots.
* Foreshadowing’s of an impending disaster appear in the first act of All My Sons. The memorial apple tree planted for Larry is destroyed during a storm in the early morning hours, suggesting a dark force that has the power to destroy the Keller family.
* All My Sons is a thesis play that focuses on a problem that Arthur Miller believed was eating at the fabric of American democracy: Material Greed.
* All My Sons conforms to the traditional Aristotelian concept of unities as the action is in one location and generally opens in the morning and end in the early hours of the next morning.
* The setting plays a fundamental role in the success of the play as the concept of comfort and isolation within the community is present. Destructive forces threaten the setting as shown through nature destroying the apple tree planted in memory of Larry.

**SAM**

4. Characters:

* **Dr Jim Bayliss**
* Close friend to Keller. Recently bought the house next to Keller’s with his wife, Sue.
* Jim suspects Keller, but doesn’t address these suspicions as he likes the Keller family.
* **Sue Bayliss**
* Reveals that the town knows about Keller’s actions as she dislikes the family.
* Her animus is largely directed against Chris, as she thinks he knows about her fathers guilt and is profiting from his situation.
* Deems him a phony, and deeply resents his friendship with her husband.
* **Ann Deever**
* Was in love with Larry, however, is now with Chris, much to the consternation of Kate, Chris’ mother.
* Ann shows Larry’s letter to Kate, forcing Kate to admit that her son is dead and forcing Chris to face his father’s guilt.
* **Chris Keller**
* 32 year old Chris Keller is Joe and Kate Keller’s surviving son.
* Ask Ann, his deceased brother’s girlfriend to the house where he plans to propose to her.
* **Chris believes his father is innocent after he was released from prison.**
* **Chris, being a war veteran, has a strong sense of justice and responsibility and bears guilt for surviving the war when many of his friends and his brother died.**
* **Although he loves his father, after his guilt is revealed, he has no choice but to see his father return to prison.**