

The Magic of Monologue

How Can Improvisation Become The Basis for the Creation and Performance of A Monologue?

Skill Level
Beginner

Learner Outcomes
Write and perform a character based monologue based on creation of a character with one's own personal interests.

Educational Standard(s)
National Theatre Standards 5-8: Standard 1.

Success Indicator
Writes and perform a character based monologue.

Life Skill(s)

- Communication
- Conflict Resolution
- Empathy

Tags

Playwriting, Acting, Auditions

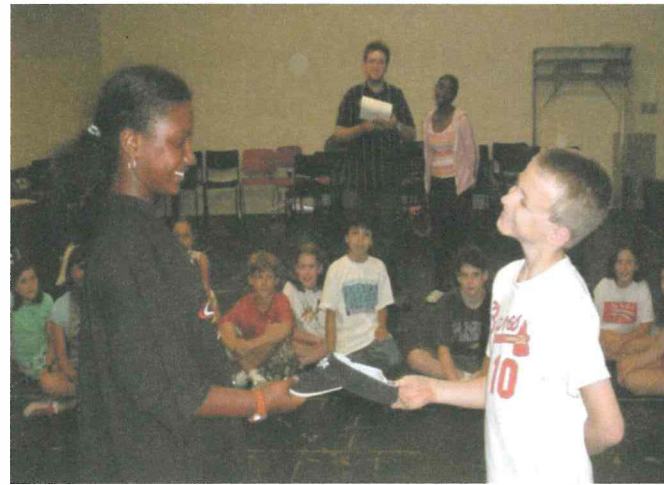
Time Needed
1 hour

Materials List

- Writing materials
- Possibly audio and filming equipment

Introduction

We have all seen plays, movies or television shows in which a character speaks on the phone in such a believable way that we truly believe another person is on the other line. This speaking part is defined as a monologue, when a character speaks without verbal response from another character. (“mono”-meaning “one”).



Monologues may be delivered in many ways. One is as one side of a phone conversation as described above. Another is speech the actor directs to a character not visible on stage. The actor's monologue may be projected out over the audience, as if the person being addressed is at a distance away. Some actors deliver their monologue directly to the audience. Sometimes, the monologue is actually more of an interior monologue, (an inner reflection that is spoken out loud). A monologue could also be a letter or diary read aloud.

As you can see, you have many options to choose from in preparing your monologue. Now we will explore one of these options, and create the Magic of Monologue!

Opening Questions

What can a character reveal through a monologue? What does the monologue tell us about the character, about the situation that he or she is in? About his or her personality? What motivates or drives him or her?

Learn More

You can find additional information on this activity and more at:

www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre2



Experience/ “What to Do”

Let's choose the option of creating a phone monologue.

A phone rings. On the other end of the phone is someone calling you to fix a problem. Who is calling you? What is the problem you are being asked to solve? What is your relationship to the caller? Doctor and patient? Mother and daughter? Social worker and client? Friend to friend?

Decide your character, your relationship to the caller, and the problem you have been confronted with. With imaginary or real phone in hand, begin speaking to the caller, with pauses representing the responses of the caller.

Here is an example:

John (you): Hello?.....Oh, hi, Sam.....You sound upset. What's the matter?.....Wow, that's a problem! What are you going to do?.....What's that?You want me to tell him you're sorry?.....

Because you are speaking without audible response from another character, you are speaking a monologue. (you alone speaking). By the end of your monologue, suggest a resolution to the problem.

For example in John's monologue, it might end with:

John: Sam, why don't you and I meet together with Jerry to let him know it was an accident and you're sorry. Would that help?.....Great, get back to me and let me know when we can meet..... You're welcome, buddy. Bye for now.

After creating your monologue, you may want to record it to hear how your voice and tone have brought life to the words. If you consider yourself a visual learner, you can write your monologue and thus capture your words for future acting. If you like drawing, you can draw a cartoon with your character's monologue in a cartoon bubble.

You have made the Magic of Monologue!

Did you know?

If you audition for a school, community, or professional theatre, you will often be asked to deliver a monologue. The monologue can be one that you have developed on your own through improvisation or playwriting, or it may be one you have selected from a script. The monologue should be 3-5 minutes long. Be prepared to deliver a comic and a dramatic monologue; the director wants to see your ability to express a range of emotions.

News & Careers

An Actor's Preparation for an Audition

Find more information at:
www.4-H.org/curriculum/theatre

**Share...**

What did your character reveal about him or herself through the response to the given problem?

Reflect...

How did your character's responses relate to your own personality?

Generalize...

If the scene became a dialogue between you and the caller, what parts of your monologue would you expand, maintain, or delete?

Term Concept Discovery/Facilitator Notes...

The creation and performance of the monologue is the precursor to the creation and performance of dialogue. Having mastered the delivery of a monologue, youth move to the level of interpersonal communication with one or more other actors. Moving from monologue (solo) to dialogue (partner or group) insures that youth do not prematurely engage in ensemble group work for which they feel unprepared. From monologue to dialogue safeguards that the performance experience will be a positive one, building self-esteem and confidence.

Youth should be encouraged to perform their monologues in various ways. The monologue can be directed to one or more actors on stage. Or the same monologue can be directed to one or more people the audience is expected to visualize. In addition, the monologue can be spoken as an interior monologue. Props can be added to enhance the monologue development process; for instance, the addition of smart phones or lap tops can inspire the creation of the monologue.

Apply...

How might you apply your character's conflict resolution to situations in your own life?