

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

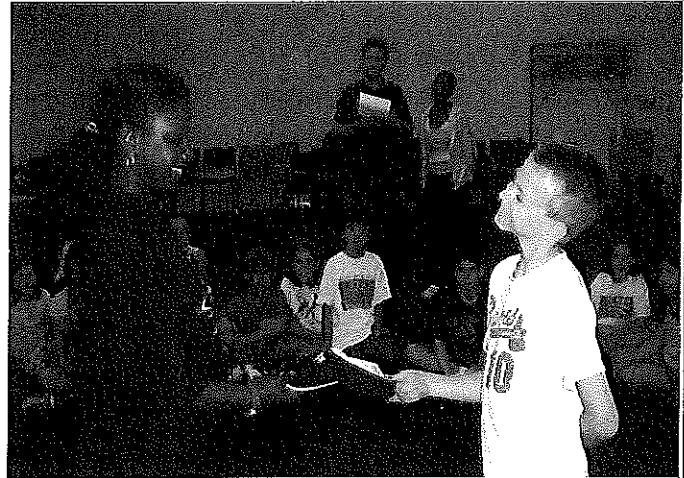
1 hour

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!

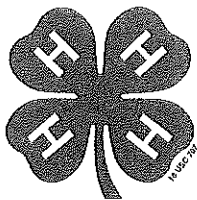
Opening Questions

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!

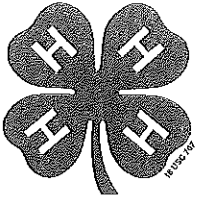
Did you know?

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/theatre2



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?

Extra! Extra!

Communication Skill:
Writing a press release
or PSA

Life Skill: Communicating
with others; presents
complex ideas

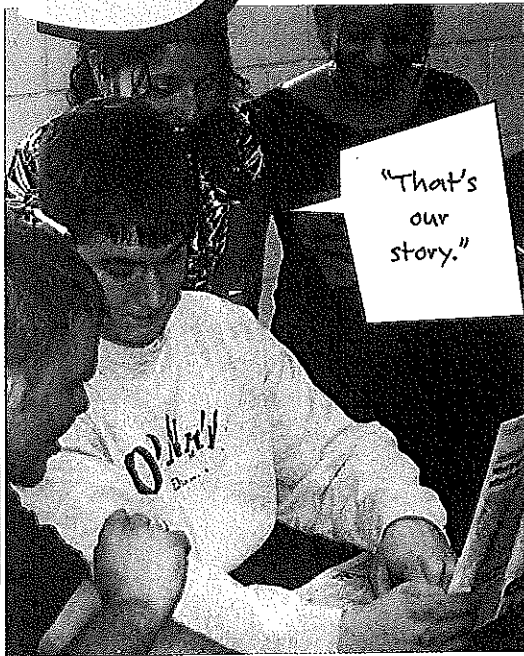
Educational Standard:
NL-ENG.K-12.6 Apply
knowledge of language
structure to create texts

Success Indicator:
Prepares a press release
or public service
announcement.

Read all about it! Even though we live in the Internet age, most people still keep track of events by reading the newspaper or listening to the radio. By learning to use the proper format, you can improve your chances of getting your news items published or aired. In this activity you will learn how to get your information released about an upcoming activity or event.

Making CONTACT

Write a press release to let others know about a recent or upcoming event. When you are finished use the checklist below to make sure you have included the necessary information. Make your revisions and get the news out! Include as many elements as possible in your press release.



Check It Off: Writing a Press Release

	Yes	No	Revisions Needed
Is the topic timely?			
Important?			
Of local interest?			
Does the story tell:			
Who?			
What?			
When?			
Where?			
Why? and/or How?			
Does the story begin with a strong informative lead?			
Is it written in newspaper style?			
Are the most important facts included here?			
Is it written in an objective way?			
Does it include the writer's contact information? (Name, address, phone number, e-mail address)			



REMEMBER:
Store your Press
Release in your
Communications
portfolio.

Chat Room

Publicize It! share

- How did you choose what to write about?
- What do you think made this event newsworthy?

Headline It! process

- Which of the five elements did you emphasize in your press release?
- Why did you choose to emphasize those?

Link It! generalize

- About what topic have you written a press release or PSA in the last year?
- Why are press releases an effective form of communication?

Network It! apply

- In what other situations could you use a Press Release or PSA?



Press Releases

- Inverted pyramid

NOTE IT

All newspaper articles use the who, what, when where, and how—occasionally the how is not applicable.



News Stories, Press Releases and PSA's

Do you know the difference between a news story, press release and PSA? Each one of them has a specific purpose and format to get information to the public.

Five elements of a News Story (plus how)

- **Who** – who is the story about?
- **What** – what happened?
- **Where** – where did it take place?
- **When** – the date and time it happened?
- **Why** – or how did it occur?

Press Release

A **press release** is a written account of the five basic elements of a news story along with additional details and could include photos. It would be printed in a newspaper or magazine.

Share the most important information first and then work your way down to include the details that aren't as interesting or urgent. This style of writing is called an **inverted pyramid**.

On the top left hand side of your page you should start with **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** followed by a few spaces and the date of writing the release. Always include the name, phone, email and fax of the contact person. Skip a few lines and title your release and then write the article covering all the main parts outlined in the checklist provided in the activity.

Public Service Announcement

A **Public Service Announcement (PSA)** is a short version that includes just the vital information of the five elements. It is usually transmitted electronically, via radio or television in a short spot of ten to sixty seconds. When writing a **PSA**, the words **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT** should be written at the top middle of your paper followed by a few spaces and then the date that you'd like your announcement to air. Next include name, phone, e-mail and fax of the contact person. Skip a few lines and title your announcement, in bold letters, by the name of the event, followed by a short, complete explanation of what you want aired. **PSA** should be sent about three weeks in advance.

Upgrades

1. Write a PSA for your local radio station or cable access channel for National 4-H Week. Review your PSA with your helper and then have it posted.

2. Write a press release for an upcoming 4-H or other event going on in your county. Ask your helper to assist you in submitting it to a local paper.

Communication Skill:
Writing a song

Life Skill: Communicating
with others – communicates
appropriate verbal messages

Educational Standard:
NL-ENG.K-12.4 Youth use
spoken, written, and visual
language to communicate
effectively

Success Indicator:
Composes and sings a song.

Compose Your Song

Singing a song, playing an instrument, making music—did you know that you can talk to others in a tune? They will hear you loud and clear. Music can help you feel happy, get energized or share your feelings. You can put your thoughts into words, tell a story, or teach a lesson. Did you ever think about being a songwriter? In this activity, you will learn how fun and easy it is to put your thoughts into words and your words into a song.

Making CONTACT

Have you noticed how song writers are able to communicate their ideas through their songs? Now, it is your turn to make your words and ideas sing by creating a song. Start by choosing a topic that will impact others in a positive way. What do you especially care about? Peace, kindness, helping others, honesty, family or saving our earth? Select a familiar song and then take the melody and replace it with words of your own. The more you practice the easier it will be. Before long, you will be able to compose a new melody to go along with your message.

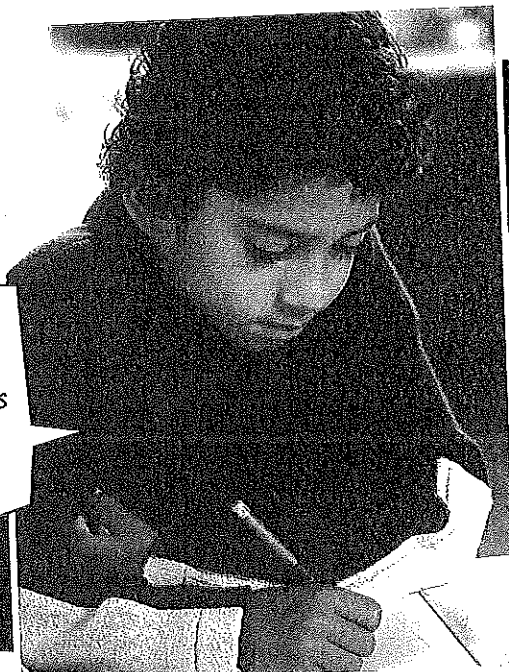
Row, row,
Row your boat,
Gently down the stream
Merrily, merrily
Merrily, merrily
Life is but a dream.

Friends

Be, be,
Be a friend
All across the land
It's always good
To have a friend
Who needs a helping hand.

My Sample Song

"Writing
my
thoughts
into
song..."



Express Yourself

www.threes.org/communications

Chat Room

Publicize It! share

- What was most difficult about writing a song?

Headline It! process

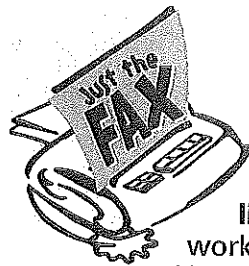
- What did you learn about delivering a message through this activity?

Link It! generalize

- How can delivering a message in a different way help you share your feelings with others?

Network It! apply

- In what other ways could you communicate your message to different audiences?



Does Poetry Make the Song?

How well do you understand and appreciate poetry? Poetry can range from the funny **limericks** of Ogden Nash to the more serious works of such poets as Robert Frost or Carl Sandburg. Unlike other kinds of writing, poetry uses some type of rhyme or stress meter, has a natural rhythm and can be set to familiar melodies like nursery rhymes. Poetry creates an image that will remain long after the words are spoken or sung.

Tips to Writing a Catchy Song

A song needs to do three basic things to impress a listener.

1. Needs to draw the listener in with interesting **lyrics**.
2. Needs to be 'catchy', as a song must please the ear rather than just reading it like a poem.
3. Needs to have good sound structure.

Parts of a Song

1. A **stanza** is similar to a paragraph in a book. One or two stanzas making up the verse usually give the details of the song.
2. **Rhyme** patterns are the poetry of songs and should match other verses in a song. Usually rhymes come at the end of a line, but not always.
3. The chorus is a section of lines that generally contain the catchiest part of the song and often contains the title.

Upgrades

1. Read a variety of poems. Choose a poem and describe to your helper or a friend the scene or mood set by the poem. "I like to see it lap the miles" by Emily Dickinson is an excellent poem for this type of activity.

2. Listen to a favorite song. Interpret the message in your own words. Share it with your class or group.

3. Create a catchy **jingle** to market 4-H. See if a local radio station will use the jingle during National 4-H Week.

4. Design a campaign song for your club president that states his or her qualifications and persuades people to vote for him or her.

NOTE IT

Poetry Writing Tips (from *Poetry Starting From Scratch* by Michael A. Carey)

- Do more with less
- Start with basics—not rhyme
- Match sound with meaning
- Use rhythm & line breaks
- Compare with similes and metaphors
- Create vivid imagery
- Be specific
- Use memory
- Exploit the senses

• Lyric • Rhyme • Stanza

• Jingle • Limerick

• Jingle