

DISTANCE LEARNING: SEND-HOME PACKET

MONOLOGUE WRITING PACKET

INTRODUCTION

This packet has been designed as a send-home resource for students who are learning from home. The material in this packet focuses on activities and exercises that do not require technology or internet access.

We encourage you to adapt further if required, to best meet the needs of your students, particularly as it relates to timing guidelines and submission requirements.

ASSESSMENT

Given the current situation with distance learning being new for everyone, assessments have been removed from the lessons

TOOLS

The following tools are provided:

- Teacher Info Sheet: list of exercises, including objectives, for the packet
- Cover sheet (teacher to complete)
- Exercises & activities
- Supplemental materials/handouts (where appropriate)

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MONOLOGUE WRITING PACKET

Monologue writing is an activity that is easily adaptable for distance learning. It's also something that students can do without technology. If you have students without access to computers or the internet, they can work on and write a monologue.

The purpose of theatre is to communicate. The purpose of a monologue is to communicate to someone or something. We want students to move away from storytelling and into a character communication experience.

In this Monologue Writing Packet, students will explore:

WHAT IS A MONOLOGUE?

- Objective: To introduce the basic elements of a theatrical form
- Description: Students are introduced to the basic elements of a monologue and then compare and contrast a story paragraph with a monologue.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MONOLOGUE?

- Objective: to identify and analyze the elements of a good monologue.
- Description: Students are introduced to the elements of a good monologue within the concept of "the monologue is a mini-play. Once they learn the criteria, they will analyze a monologue to see if it fits the criteria.

PRACTICING THE CRITERIA

- Objective: To apply separate criteria elements to monologue writing.
- Description: Students will practice writing monologues focusing on one criteria element at a time.

WRITING A MONOLOGUE

- Objective: To apply learned knowledge
- Description: Students will take everything that they have learned and write a one page monologue.

Outcome: Students will complete a piece of theatrical writing

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MONOLOGUE WRITING PACKET COVER SHEET

Student Name:

Teacher Name:

Class:

Teacher Message

Deadlines & Important Dates

Additional Notes & Submission Instructions



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MONOLOGUE WRITING PACKET

The purpose of theatre is to communicate. The purpose of a monologue is to communicate to someone or something. A monologue is not a story, it is a communication.

In this Monologue Writing Packet, you will explore the following:

- What is a monologue?
- What makes a good monologue?
- Practicing the criteria
- Writing a monologue

TASKS

- Each lesson comes with a journal prompt to respond to
- Each lesson has information sheets for you to read and review
- Each lesson has you practically apply learned information through exercises
- All of the exercises culminate in a monologue assignment

OUTCOME

- Compile the exercises and final monologue assignment and submit.



WHAT IS A MONOLOGUE?

Journal Prompt: Respond to the following in your journals or on a separate piece of paper: *Why are monologues important in plays?*

WHAT IS A MONOLOGUE?

- Text presented by a single character
- Uses the first person
- Can be comedic or dramatic
- Must communicate something: inner thoughts, emotions, secrets, the answer to a question.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MONOLOGUE AND A SOLILOQUY?

- **Soliloquy:** A character in a soliloquy is alone on stage and speaks to themselves. They are specifically thinking aloud.
 - The most famous example of the soliloquy are Hamlet's speeches in *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.
- **Monologue:** A character in a monologue is trying to communicate, and that means a monologue should have a listener.
 - There are a lot of varieties of listener, another character, an invisible friend, a ghost, the poster of a famous singer, an object.
 - The presence of a listener is key

A monologue is not a story. It is a communication.

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REFLECTION

Reflect in the space below on the idea that a monologue is not a story. It is a communication. What does that mean? What is the difference between a monologue and a story? How does a monologue communicate? 1 page.



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COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Read the two texts below. The first is a paragraph from the story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving, and the second is a monologue of the same moment from a theatrical adaptation of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Lindsay Price.

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow by Washington Irving

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this, and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burdened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness.

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow - Adapted by Lindsay Price

ICHABOD: I was just telling your father how... *(he looks around the room again and sighs)* spacious the land is here. And vast. And abundant. I've never seen such a meadow! Whoever wins the heart of your daughter, Mr. Van Tassel, will be very lucky indeed! *(he clears his throat)* For clearly Katrina is such a sweet girl. That's what I meant.



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COMPARE AND CONTRAST

TASKS

1. Read the two passages.
2. Identify the similarities and differences between the two

Similarities	Differences

3. Answer the question: what is the monologue trying to communicate?



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WHAT MAKES A GOOD MONOLOGUE?

Journal Prompt: Respond to the following in your journals or on a separate piece of paper: *In your opinion, what makes a good monologue?*

Concept one: A monologue is a communication - the character **must** communicate

Concept two: A monologue is a mini-play

WHAT MAKES A MONOLOGUE A MINI-PLAY?

- The writing is **active** and **present**. We want theatrical, not narrative.
 - Don't write "I remember" monologues. The past is over and done. It's hard for an audience to connect. The present is alive and active.
- There is a three dimensional character and a conflict.
 - Character & conflict are the backbone of good plays & good monologues
- The following three criteria:
 - **A journey:** When we talk about the structure of the monologue going from Point A to Point B, what we want to see is a journey. The best way to do that is through change.
 - A change in status.
 - A change in sentence structure (A character speaks in long sentences at the beginning and changes to short at the end)
 - An emotional change.
 - **A need to speak** for the character. What is their drive? Why are they speaking at this specific moment? What do they need to communicate?
 - A need to share, a need to reveal, a need to explain.
 - Forming as a need makes it urgent and action filled.
 - **A character specific voice.** How a character talks, the character specific voice is another criteria of a good monologue.
 - How does the character convey their story?
 - What's their pace?
 - Their slang?
 - Their language?
 - Their language personality.
 - How is the character communicating?

A monologue is not a story. It is a communication.



WHAT MAKES A GOOD MONOLOGUE: MODEL

TASKS

1. Read the following monologue out loud.

Play: *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw, Act V

Moment Before: On a bet, Henry Higgins has turned Eliza, a lower class flower seller, into a refined lady with language to match. By Act Five Eliza with new found self-respect, no longer needs her teacher and in fact threatens to become independent and teach herself. Higgins becomes furious at this and threatens to “wring her neck.”

ELIZA: Wring away. What do I care? I knew you'd strike me some day. *(he lets her go)* Aha! Now I know how to deal with you. What a fool I was not to think of before! You can't take away the knowledge you gave me. You said I had a finer ear than you. And I can be civil and kind to people, which is more than you can. Aha! That's done you, Henry Higgins, it has. Now I don't care that *(snapping her fingers)* for your bullying and your big talk. I'll advertise it in the papers that your duchess is only a flower girl that you taught, and that she'll teach anybody to be a duchess just the same in six months for a thousand guineas. Oh, when I think of myself crawling under your feet and being trampled on and called names, when all the time I had only to lift up my finger to be as good as you, I could just kick myself.

2. **Analysis:** Review the following questions and the suggested answers.

- Who is the speaker and who is she talking to? *Eliza. Henry Higgins*
- Why does she need to speak? *She needs to reveal that she doesn't need him anymore.*
- Is there a character specific voice? *The first thing we need to know is that Eliza used to speak very differently, and exhibited a much different class. In this moment of anger, she keeps her refined language. She also expresses her victory vocally - Ah ha!*
- What is the journey of the monologue? What emotion does she start with? What emotion does she end with? *She starts exasperated, moves into celebration, ends in anger.*
- Is this a good monologue? Why or why not? *Yes! It meets the criteria, it's a moment of vivid realization for the character. This isn't about whether you like the monologue or not, that's a different question.*

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MONOLOGUE: EXERCISE

TASKS

1. Read the monologue out loud.
2. Answer the questions on the next page.

Play: *Bottle Baby* by Lindsay Price

Moment Before: Alice is Beeb's (Barbara's) younger sister. Beeb has been battling sobriety for a year, after Alice got seriously hurt in a car accident. Alice walks with a limp. Beeb is on the verge of suffering a relapse but is relying on Alice to save her. Alice doesn't want to be the one everyone relies on.

ALICE: I have headaches. I have terrible headaches. Everyone knows. I was in this "little" car accident a year ago. No one ever questions that I have a big bottle of aspirin in my backpack. And no one ever shakes the bottle. No one's ever wondered why there aren't any pills. How come I don't hear any pills? How come it sounds like liquid in there? How could that be? I had a cough syrup bottle for a while, liquid for liquid, but I thought, that's too easy. This past year has been the most fascinating experiment. I should have documented the whole thing for posterity. "How far can an Invisible Good Girl go before anyone pays attention?" What the hell do I have to do to get noticed in this town? The funny thing is that no one notices. No one cares. They think they see a good girl and that's what they believe. They think they see a bad girl and that's what they believe. Good ole, hell raising, car smashing, money stealing, amount to nothing, take her little sister for a joy ride on a bottle of Jack so she almost killed her, bad girl Beeb. If I'm the good girl white hat coming in on my horse from the sunset to save everyone, life jackets for everyone, then I won't be able to handle a pull from that bottle. *(she holds out her hand)* Give me the bottle. What are you afraid of? You're right aren't you? *(ALICE wipes her mouth, tips up the bottle and takes a long pull. It's obvious she's done it before.)* Who's the bottle baby now, huh Bee Bee? Who wears the crown? Who's the one who drinks her liquor straight from the bottle, no mix, no nothing and it's smooth like butter. You think you're the only one who sneaked drinks at Mom's? You think you're the only one who got Roger Thompson to buy you bottles? You think you're the only person in this house? This world? This life? Aw Beeb don't cry. You're not supposed to cry. How can I feel good about being bad if you cry?

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MONOLOGUE: EXERCISE

Answer the following questions:

1. Who is the speaker and who is she talking to?
2. Why does she need to speak?
3. Is there a character specific voice?
4. What is the journey of the monologue? What emotion does she start with?
5. Is this a good monologue? Why or why not?

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PRACTICE THE CRITERIA

NEED TO SPEAK EXERCISE

TASKS

1. Write a monologue which explores one of the following 'needs to speak.' Circle your choice.
 - a. The character needs to reveal a secret to the listener.
 - b. The character needs to prove something to the listener.
 - c. The character needs to stand up to the listener.
2. Choose a character who has this need to speak. Give them a name and write it below.
3. Identify a listener, who is the character speaking to? Write the listener below.
4. Add a location. Where does this monologue take place?
5. Write your monologue. Start below and go to the back of the page if you have to.



PRACTICE THE CRITERIA

CHARACTER SPECIFIC VOICE

How a character talks, and their specific voice is another criteria of a good monologue. The more specific a character’s voice is, the more specific your character will be. Focus not only on **what** your character says, but **how** they say it.

One way to create a character specific voice is to create a **language profile**. Get specific with the volume, speed, word choice, sentence length and tone.

TASKS

1. Choose one of your need to speak monologues (the practice monologue or the exercise monologue)
2. What is this character’s name? _____
3. Complete the Language Profile (next page) for this character.
4. Apply language profile for character. Write a paragraph in which the character tries to explain to a friend what they did last night/on the weekend. Focus on how the character shares the story, focus on character specific language. Bring the language profile to life as they try to communicate.



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PRACTICE THE CRITERIA

LANGUAGE PROFILE SHEET

CHARACTER: _____

Circle the answer that best fits this character.

Speed	Slow	Medium	Fast
Tone	Melodic	Neutral	Shrill
Volume	Soft	Medium	Loud
Vocabulary	Small	Medium	Large
Rhythm	Slow	Metered	Quick
Pitch	Low	Neutral	High
Strength	Weak	Neutral	Strong
Primary Punctuation	Ellipses	Periods	Exclamation Point
Sentence Length	Clipped	Measured	Run On

How does your chosen Language Profile reflect in the personality of this character?

Note: If you choose mostly medium and neutral think about how that makes your character sound. How will you avoid a boring sounding character?



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PRACTICE THE CRITERIA

Put your language profile into action! Write a paragraph in which the character tries to explain to a friend what they did last night/on the weekend. Focus on how the character shares the story, focus on character specific language. Bring the language profile to life as they try to communicate.



PRACTICE THE CRITERIA

JOURNEY

When we talk about the structure of the monologue going from Point A to Point B, what we want to see is a journey. The best way to do that is through change: a change in status. A change in sentence structure (eg: a character speaks in long sentences at the beginning and changes to short at the end). An emotional change.

TASKS

1. Practice writing an emotional journey for a character.
2. Take your chosen “Need to speak” monologue character, for whom you created a language profile.
3. Write a half page monologue. Character starts with one emotion, ends in another.
4. First line: This is the best day of my life.
5. **Starting emotion:** happy. **End emotion:** Choose one - mad, sad, jealous, scared.

This is the best day of my life!



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WRITE A MONOLOGUE

Journal Prompt: Respond to the following in your journals or on a separate piece of paper: *What concerns you about writing a long monologue? What interests you?*

STEP ONE: CHOOSE A SITUATION

Choose one of the following as the situation for your monologue (or adapt your own, using one of the situations as a template). Circle your chosen situation.

1. The character in your monologue is saying goodbye to a childhood talisman (blanket, teddy bear, doll, imaginary friend)
2. Write a monologue in which the character has to convince another character to stay.
3. Write a monologue in which a character is trying to convince another to commit a "good" act.
4. Write a monologue in which a character is trying to convince another to commit an "evil" act.
5. Write a monologue in which the character is trying to convince another character of something, but it's all a lie.
6. Write a monologue from the perspective of your pet. (or the pet you'd like to have) If your dog or cat could talk, what would they say to you.
7. A nun confronts a bank teller and states that she is there to rob the bank. Keeping the nature of the character in mind, why would the nun need to rob a bank? How capable is she at the task? What is the outcome?
8. Write a monologue in which a character reveals a secret that no one else would think was necessary to keep secret.
9. Write a monologue that explores the word "crush."
10. Write a monologue in which it's the day after the apocalypse and the character is thrilled about this turn of events.



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WRITE A MONOLOGUE

STEP TWO: COMPLETE AN OUTLINE

Fill in the blanks to create detail for your monologue character. Remember the situation you've chosen, does the situation influence any of the details?

Character Name: _____

Character Profile:

Give this character three personality traits (mix of positive and negative traits)

Family situation:

Who is in their family? What's the nature of the relationships?

Where does the character live:

Urban, rural, small town, mountains, beach, forest



OUTLINE

How does the character live:

Neat, messy, minimalist, apartment, bungalow, mansion

Character's biggest pet peeve:

Character's biggest secret:

Favourite food, music, movie, type of clothing, hair style

Least favourite food, music, movie, type of clothing, hair style



OUTLINE

Who is the listener?

What is the speakers "need to speak?" What are they trying to communicate?

I need to....

Complete a language profile (see next page)

What emotion does the character start from at the beginning of the monologue?

What emotion does the character end with? It has to be a different emotion from where they started.



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WRITE A MONOLOGUE

LANGUAGE PROFILE SHEET

CHARACTER: _____

Circle the answer that best fits this character.

Speed	Slow	Medium	Fast
Tone	Melodic	Neutral	Shrill
Volume	Soft	Medium	Loud
Vocabulary	Small	Medium	Large
Rhythm	Slow	Metered	Quick
Pitch	Low	Neutral	High
Strength	Weak	Neutral	Strong
Primary Punctuation	Ellipses	Periods	Exclamation Point
Sentence Length	Clipped	Measured	Run On

How does your chosen Language Profile reflect in the personality of this character?

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FIRST LINES PAGE

1. It was only a small mental breakdown.
2. My cat is mentally ill.
3. My cat is the smartest person I know.
4. Sit down, I have to tell you something.
5. So, do you often hang out under the bridge?
6. Ok boys, it's whistle time.
7. Ok girls, it's teeth time.
8. Are you ready, are you really ready for this?
9. Sometimes it's better to lie.
10. You have no idea what happened yesterday, do you?
11. My dad is not your normal guy.
12. I'm going to be sick.
13. The balloon, the balloon, don't you get it?
14. This is not an ordinary ferret.
15. Most folks, rarely know what's going on inside a person.
16. This is the best day of my life.
17. This is the worst day of my life.
18. Mister.... hey mister I'm talking to you.
19. I won't go near the water.
20. I can't marry you.
21. Every night it feels the same.
22. Donuts are not my friend.
23. I could just kill you.
24. Sometimes I feel like the universe is going to swallow me.
25. You don't know me, you never did.
26. She just sits, staring at nothing.
27. What's the problem, he's still dead.
28. You will not stomp, stomp, stomp all over my happiness.
29. What's it like to be dead?
30. What do you want me to say, she was the love of my life?
31. I don't remember what it was like before.
32. There's no one here, just you and me.
33. Come in, come in, isn't this exciting?
34. It's paradise, isn't it?
35. I'm going to change my name, that's the first step.

