



## Contrast

*“To compare in order to show unlikeness or differences.”*

This is the very first rule on the evaluation sheet: “Two contrasting selections.” It’s amazing how many IE’s I’ve judged where I couldn’t tell the difference between the monologues!

Contrast shows your versatility as an actor. Choose monologues that are unlike each other, that have differences.

### Types of Contrast

**Character:** What makes the characters different in each piece? How do they physically move about the space? What emotion does each character experience? Are the stories for each character similar or different?

**Sound:** Read the monologues aloud. Sometimes monologues that look different on the page become similar when spoken. Do the pieces sound similar? Do they move at the same pace? Is the vocabulary different?

**Period:** Pair Shakespeare, Euripides or Molière with something modern. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNEST with Mamet. A Feydeau farce with Arthur Miller.

**Genre:** Classical, Absurd, Naturalistic, Modern, Post modern, Melodrama, Comedy, Drama, the list goes on. Don’t use two pieces from the same genre.

**Mood:** Contrast giddy with serious. Which of the following moods contrast well each other? Peace, fear, joy, anger, charming, frustration, warmth, playful, condescending, upbeat, festive, sombre, whimsical, anxious, sad, bored, excited, passionate. **Define the mood in your monologue.**

**Pace:** Pace is an excellent way to establish contrast. Some pieces will have the pace organically built in through sentence structure: pauses, run-on sentences, clipped sentences. If not, look to the character. How urgently do they want to share their story?

What do they want? What tactics do they use to get what they want? Let the character determine the pace.

### A Few Last Words

Choose monologues with characters in your age range. Avoid playing a seventy-year-old when you’re seventeen. More often than not, it’ll be a distraction for the judges, no matter how good the piece itself is.

Choose a piece that you love and connect to. The more you love a piece, the more fun you’ll be able to have with it, the more you’ll want to work on it, the more you’ll shine.

You get a Superior, when you shine in your work. When you bring a character to life. When you give your audience an experience. Choose monologues that will make you shine.