The 30-Second Monologue Project

By Lindsay Price
A monologue unit is an excellent way for students to demonstrate learned skills: vocal skills, movement skills, memorization skills, character development. It also touches on soft skills such as communication, confidence, and attitude.

That being said, monologues are not easy. A typical monologue is two minutes long. That is a lot of text to memorize, block, and develop into an engaging presentation. Two minutes can be a long time when you’re watching a poorly executed monologue. How often have you sat through a bad monologue performance with little to no characterization, wandering blocking, and a tenuous grasp of the lines?

Performing a monologue is a learned skill. And the best way to learn a skill is in steps. Instead of starting with the end goal – that two-minute piece – start at the beginning. In this eBook you’ll find a four-lesson unit that will take students up the ladder toward that goal.

Once they get to the final project, students will be ready to tackle a longer monologue with the confidence, skills, and tools they need to present an engaging piece.
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APPENDICES

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Beginning and End Activity

1. Give students a character name. You can create your own, or use one from the back of this sheet.

2. Students create a stance based on the name. *What is the physical expression of the character? What is their pose?*


4. Give students a location. The goal is to establish the world of the monologue before students begin working with the text.

5. Ask students: *How can you show the location? How would your character respond to the location? Is your character lower or higher status in relation to the location?*


7. The monologue is counting from 1 to 10. Say “Monologue.” Students count from 1 to 10 in character.

8. Say “End.” Students count to 2 silently, break character, and say thank you.

9. Say “Monologue” and then “End.” Students count to 10, hold, break character, and say thank you. Everyone is doing this at the same time.

10. Students, on their own time, go through the sequence without the commands. Can they make the sequence a seamless action?

11. Discuss: *What was easy/difficult? What was it like to put all the pieces together?*

12. Design the beginning with an action.


16. Combine the character pose and the action so that they happen at the same time.

17. Say “Character Go Action.” Students simultaneously pose and do the action with the emotion.

18. Do the whole sequence: “Character Go Action,” “Monologue,” “End.” Side-coach students to do the action throughout. Side-coach students to speak in character.
19. Students find a point where the character has a reason to stop doing dishes. For every movement in a monologue there has to be a reason.

20. Do the “Monologue” section where students count to 10, mime doing the dishes, and show their reason for stopping.


22. Repeat the sequence without speaking the commands.

23. Discuss: What was it like to combine character and action? How did it change the way they said the numbers when they had an action to focus on and then a change of that action?

24. Discuss the process: What was easy about the exercise? What was difficult? Did students think this type of detail was part of the monologue process? Why is it important to formally begin and end a monologue? Why is it important to set the scene? How did the work on the beginning and end affect the monologue?

**CHARACTER NAMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alexandria/Alexander Sharp</th>
<th>Sunny Temples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mackenzie Orlando Eslick</td>
<td>Wynter Van Dusen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eugene/Eugenia Waldroop</td>
<td>Brooklyn Swan</td>
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<td>Hemingway McBurney</td>
<td>Madison Bravo</td>
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<td>Lucienne/Lucien Dufour-Frank</td>
<td>Atlas/Athena Power</td>
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<td>Sam Jones</td>
<td>Carl/Carla Carl</td>
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<td>Dr De’Ath</td>
<td>Ricky/Ricki Zima</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigo Turgis</td>
<td>Bob/Barb Sinnamon</td>
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<td>James/Jame Urankar</td>
<td>Rain Dobkin</td>
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<td>Stan/Sue Green</td>
<td>Tamsett Ralph</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moxie Alazar</td>
<td>Jordan Freundenberger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoenix Bloom</td>
<td>Babe Picasso</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seven Lee</td>
<td>Sir/Madam Storm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee Faithful</td>
<td>Jyn Toledo</td>
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Lindsay Price
Three-Line Monologue Worksheet

Name: ____________________________________________

ONE: You and I are supposed to be in the same boat. We’re supposed to be in the same boat with the leaky bottom, bailing as fast as we can, laughing, sinking – together. Why am I alone in the boat?

QUESTIONS
Answer these questions in order to prepare and plan out your monologue.

Who
1. What is your character’s name?

2. Who are they talking to?

The Beginning
3. Where does the monologue take place? Will you show the location? How?

4. What action could you do in this location? Will you show it? How? What emotion will you use?

5. What is your character’s physical expression? What descriptors/mannerisms come to mind?
Monologue

6. What is the monologue about?

7. How does your character’s movement match their physical expression?

8. How does your character’s movement oppose their physical expression?

9. When will your character move? Why? What is the reason?

10. When will your character stand still? Why? What is the reason?

11. Have you made powerful visuals?

End

12. Have you designed the end? ☐ Yes ☐ No

RUBRIC

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student demonstrates understanding of the task.</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The worksheet is complete with all questions answered.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a designed beginning and end.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is character-driven movement in the monologue.</td>
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<td>Student demonstrates effort and engagement in the presentation.</td>
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TOTAL: ________/50