

Sample Pages from
Emergency Lesson Plans: Middle School
Drama Class Task Sheets

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EMERGENCY LESSON PLANS:

**Middle School
Drama Class
Task Sheets**



By Lindsay Price

Emergency Lesson Plans: Middle School Drama Class Task Sheets
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e-mail: help@theatrefolk.com
website: www.theatrefolk.com

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INTRODUCTION:

MIDDLE SCHOOL DRAMA CLASS TASK SHEETS

Emergency lesson plans are lessons every drama teacher needs; they just don't know when they'll need them. Because of that, it can be frustrating to know what to have on hand when you're unexpectedly away. Ideally, you want your students to continue working within your scheduled lessons.

But that's rarely possible. It's highly unlikely the substitute taking over your class will have a theatre background. Middle school students can easily become anywhere from unfocused to actively disruptive when their teacher isn't present, and substitute teachers may not have access to any of the supplemental components you use on a regular basis (projector, slide decks, television, props, costumes, set pieces).

To that end, the most effective emergency lesson plan is something that can be connected to your scheduled lessons but doesn't involve your substitute having specific knowledge; a task students can complete individually and independently and does not require any access to additional technology; and something you can easily assess without adding to your already heavy workload.

What Are Task Sheets?

A sheet that provides students with a task to complete. Each task will have an itemized list of steps. (**Read** the article. **Answer** the questions. **Reflect** on the exercise.) All tasks are written so they can be completed individually and independently using pen and paper. If you are a computer or laptop one-to-one school, simply adapt any substitute Instruction to reflect that students will work digitally and submit online.

Emergency Lesson Plans: Middle School Drama Class Task Sheets includes single-task sheets. That means all the instructions have a single subject focus (monologues, scene writing, theatre vocabulary).

Task Sheets come with additional handouts and worksheets to make it as straightforward as possible for substitutes to give information to students and for students to complete their tasks. In this way, you can create task packets to always have on hand when you need them. If you feel this is too much paper, feel free to have students work in drama journals, digitally, or in whatever format works best for your situation.

Not all Task Sheets will take an entire class to complete. You may have to put together more than one Task Sheet to fill an entire class. The time it takes to complete a task is suggested in the **Teacher Notes**. Please keep in mind that this time will change depending on the student working on it, their ability to focus, and the pace at which they work.

The provided **Lesson Plan Template** is written so you are choosing specific Task Sheets for students to complete while you are away. Having said that, you know your students best. If you feel your students would prefer more agency and the ability to choose their own Task Sheet, adjust the template to suit your situation. Perhaps you have industrious students who will complete the task quickly and need something else to do; suggestions are provided in the **Teacher Notes** section.

How should you organize your tasks sheets?

This is something you can put together at the beginning of the year. Copy class sets of as many of the sheets as you like. Use an accordion folder and divide the sheets into the different categories. You could further divide sheets into subjects (vocabulary, playwriting). Some task sheets come with answer keys; laminate them for repeat use.

What do you do if you have industrious students?

It is inevitable that you will have students working at different paces with different skill sets and different aspirations toward getting work done when there is a substitute. Review the **Teacher Notes** section for suggestions to accommodate your industrious students who work at a faster pace than others.

SETTING YOUR STUDENTS UP FOR SUCCESS WITH A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

1. Try to keep the shell of the class as familiar as possible. If students complete a journal prompt at the beginning of class, do the same with the substitute. It's a great way to start the class while the substitute takes attendance and reads through their instruction sheet.
2. However, your regular classroom routine will not be exactly the same as a class with a substitute teacher. It's not possible to expect this of a substitute coming into your classroom for the first time. And it's not possible to expect that students will act exactly the same as well. The change of routine is what often leads to misbehavior. Let your students know that things will be different.
3. If you know you're going to be away, share with students your class expectations while you're away. Example:
 - a. Respect and respond to the substitute.
 - b. Give focus and effort to completing the task.
 - c. Complete the student accountability sheet at the end of class.
 - d. Submit the required work at the end of class.
 - e. Know that the substitute will be sharing their experience. Misbehaviour will result in consequences when you return.

You know your students best. Decide what you expect students to follow when you're absent and share them with students ahead of time.

4. You could also have a discussion of expectations when you're absent as part of your beginning-of-the-year procedures. Create a handout based on this discussion to have on hand if you are ever unexpectedly absent.
5. And finally, think about the things your substitute needs to know in order to work with your students to the best of their abilities.
 - a. Are there any materials in certain cupboards (meaning they're not out and obvious)?
 - b. Where is the first aid kit located?
 - c. Are there numbers they'll need to know (e.g., the office)?
 - d. Are there any specific policies they'll need to follow (e.g., going to the bathroom)?
 - e. Is there a seating chart?

TASK SHEETS

WHAT IS A MONOLOGUE?

Name: _____

YOUR TASK

1. Read the provided "What Is a Story?" information.
2. Write down your thoughts on the purpose of stories.
3. Read the provided "What Is a Monologue?" information.
4. Write down your thoughts on the purpose of monologues in a play.
5. Read the provided "Story vs. Monologue" information.
6. Read the two texts. One is a section of a story, the other is a monologue.
7. Reflect. Explain in your own words the difference between narrative writing (stories) and dramatic writing (monologue). Use examples from the two texts. What is similar between the two texts? What is different between the two texts?

Use the space below to take notes on the information you read for this task. What do you need to write down to help you remember the information?

What is a Story?

**A story is...**

- a piece of prose with events and characters
- a narrative with a well-developed theme or multiple themes

A story can be....

- comedic or dramatic
- written from various points of view (first person, third person)

In your opinion, why do we write stories? Write your thoughts below in complete sentences.

STORY VS. MONOLOGUE

The first thing to remember when writing a monologue is that you can't write a monologue the same way you would write a story. Monologues and stories exist in different genres. They look different, sound different, and approach plot/character differently.

Here is an example from a story: *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.

Here is an example of the same moment but written as a monologue: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* adapted by Lindsay Price

ICHABOD: I was just telling your father how *(he looks around the room again)* 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.

In the story, Ichabod is *thinking* greedy thoughts about how rich he might be and how much property he would gain if he married Van Tassel's daughter. The narrator is talking to the reader.

In the monologue, we can't hear what Ichabod is thinking, so the character has to express their inner thoughts out loud. In the monologue, Ichabod is expressing his greed directly to Katrina and Mr. Van Tassel. The monologue has a listener!

NOTE the formatting differences between the two: How do they look different on the page?

REFLECT

Name: _____

Explain in your own words and in complete sentences the difference between stories and monologues. Use examples from the two texts. What is similar between the two texts? What is different between the two texts? **Length:** one page

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

VOCABULARY WORD AND MONOLOGUE

YOUR TASK

1. **Read** each of the following definitions for the vocabulary word.
2. **Choose** which definition, in your opinion, fits the word best and put a check mark beside it. Not all of them do!
3. You are going to **write** a brief monologue for a character who embodies your chosen definition of the vocabulary word.
 - a. A **monologue** is one character speaking in the first person to someone else. Don't forget to give your character a name!
4. Take the following steps to write your monologue.
 - a. **Brainstorm** ideas for your character. How can you make the character "buoyant"? Don't judge or censor your ideas. Get them all down.
 - b. **Write** a rough draft of your monologue in the provided space. Don't be afraid to make mistakes! Write things down, scratch them out, start again.
 - c. **Write** a good draft of your monologue in the provided space.

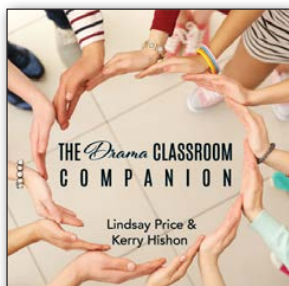
Choose a Definition: Buoyant

- ☐ Resilient and animated
- ☐ Lively, cheerful, optimistic
- ☐ Ability to spring back
- ☐ Sad, down, unhappy

Brainstorm ideas **below**. How can you make the monologue character "buoyant"?

Teaching Resources

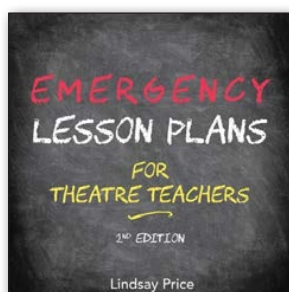
Quality resources to use in your drama classroom



The Drama Classroom Companion

The Drama Classroom Companion is filled with articles and exercises to build the skills needed for theatrical performance as well as real world skills like creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

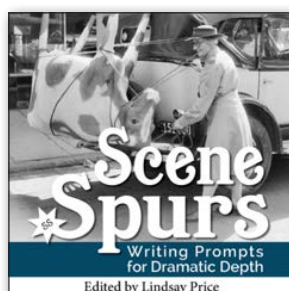
theatrefolk.com/companion



Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers

Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers, 2nd edition gives you the tools and resources you need to confidently leave your class in the hands of a substitute teacher. Customize your lesson plans to suit the specific needs of your class when you can't be there.

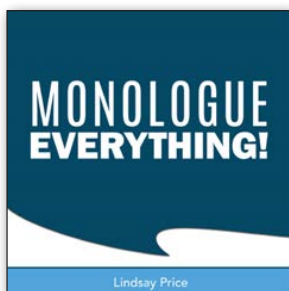
theatrefolk.com/elp



Scene-Spurs: Writing Prompts for Dramatic Depth

Scene Spurs is a collection of photo-based writing prompts developed by playwright Lindsay Price. The set includes 35 different Spurs along with an instruction guide to integrate them into your drama classroom.

theatrefolk.com/spurs



The Monologue Everything Program

Want your students to write their own monologues? Have you tried to incorporate monologue units into the classroom with less-than-satisfactory results?

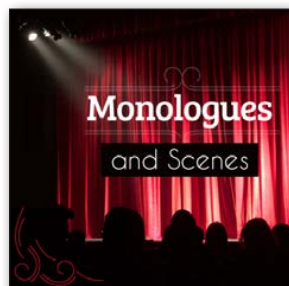
theatrefolk.com/monologue-everything



Practical Technical Theater: The Complete Solution for Technical Theater Classrooms

This series of instructional DVDs is perfect for the teacher who feels more at home with a prompt book than a hammer, and would welcome a new, visually oriented teaching tool for their tech classes and production crews.

theatrefolk.com/ptt

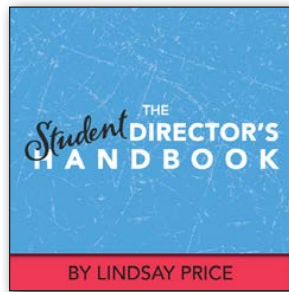


Monologue and Scene Collections

Whether it's for classwork, competitions or auditions, these collections of student-appropriate monologues and scenes can help you find what you're looking for.

All monologues and scenes come from published plays and include running-times, descriptions, character notes and staging suggestions.

theatrefolk.com/collections



The Student Director's Handbook

Help students take their show from first audition to opening night with *The Student Director's Handbook*. This easy-to-use ebook is full of guidelines, tips and templates designed to help students create a vision, circumvent problems and organize rehearsals on their way to a successful production.

theatrefolk.com/student-director



Write Your Own Vignette Play

Your students want to write and perform an original play. You want to include a playwriting unit in your program. But where to start? What if your students have never written a play before? What if you've never written before?

Write Your Own Vignette Play will answer all your questions and more

theatrefolk.com/write_vignette



Competition Material

Plays, monologues, and scenes for drama competitions including royalty information and exemptions.

theatrefolk.com/competition



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