

Lesson Plan Title: How to Write a Monologue

Grade Level: High School Proficient

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Description: In this writing lesson, students will write a monologue about a memory in their lives. They will revise this monologue based on self- and peer feedback.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

- Create a monologue
- Critique their own monologues and others' monologues
- Revise the monologue based on feedback

SEL Competencies Taught:

Self-awareness, which is the ability to recognize one's emotions and know one's strengths and limitations

Social awareness, which is the ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others

2014 National Core Theatre Standards:

TH:Cr1.1.8.c. Develop a scripted or improvised character by articulating the character's inner thoughts, objectives, and motivations in a drama/theatre work.

Time to Teach: Two days, 50 minutes

Materials Required for Instruction:

Paper and writing utensils or a computer

Chart paper or a SMART Board

Opening:

Partner students up as you see fit (pre-assign, randomly assign, allow them to choose.)

Have one partner be A and one be B.

Have B tell A about what they did during the day. A should only listen and not respond.

Have A tell B about what they did during the day. B should only listen and not respond.

SEL Social Awareness “While listening to your partner’s story, think about what is similar and different from your own experiences. It’s important to be aware of how we relate to each other and how we can learn from each other. Also be aware you will be sharing each other’s stories. Think about how you can really take in the other person’s perspective.”

Instructional Procedures:

Day 1:

Step 1: Bring students together in a circle. Ask them to TURN and TALK about what they noticed about the hook. Have a few students share what their partners said. (Possible shares: I heard a story, it was a monologue, it was boring, it was cool, we did the same thing this morning, etc.)

Step 2: Share with students “What each person did is called a monologue. Who has heard of a monologue before?” Some students may say it’s what you use to audition, others where one person talks onstage, others might not know. “A monologue is where one person speaks onstage. It could be to another person or people, to the audience, or to themselves. Today we are going to write monologues about a memory we have. This should be a memory that produces a strong feeling, good or bad. It’s whatever you want, as long as your monologue has something at stake with clear objectives and tactics. Think-Pair-Share, what are objectives, tactics, and stakes??”

Step 3: Allow students a minute or two to think, a minute or two to share, and then bring them back to share about what objectives, tactics, and stakes are. (If you need an example, a student has a bad report card. If they show it to their parents, they will get their phone taken away (STAKE). Their objective is to not show them the report card. Their tactics might be getting home and hiding the letter in the mail from their parents. They might lie about it. They might blame the teachers for their grades. Etc.)

Step 4: Hand out Worksheet 1. Give students time to write their monologue. (Provide computers and/or research materials if they want to write a response to a current or historical event.) IMPORTANT: Let students know that they can write their monologue first and then fill out the worksheet OR fill out the worksheet and then write the monologue OR complete part of the worksheet, write the monologue, then finish the worksheet OR start the monologue, complete the worksheet, then finish the monologue. Basically a choose your own adventure as long as the end result is a completed monologue and worksheet.

SEL Self-Awareness: Say “All writers have different processes for creating. You know what works best for you, and you get to choose how you want to write. If one way isn’t working for you, acknowledge that and try something else! Maybe you need to start writing first and complete the worksheet second. Or

maybe you start writing and get stuck and need the worksheet to get you out of it. It's important as an artist to change tactics, just like a character would in a play. Pay attention to what works for you! Recognizing and learning from our limitations helps us grow as artists and people."

ALTERNATIVE: If students are struggling with coming up with their own memories to write about, let them choose a current or historical event to write about, talking about how they feel about the event. (Their objective might be to convince someone to agree with their feelings about the event. Tactics can run all over the place!)

Step 5: Collect the worksheets and let students know they will be sharing their monologue with a partner in the next class. Consider a plan to address any sensitive materials and/or interface with counselor to support students who are writing about highly personal and/or troublesome topics.

Day 2:

Step 1: Hand students back their monologues and a final checklist/reflection. Allow students a few more minutes of writing time/editing time if they need it. While they do that, partner students up as you see fit (pre-assign, randomly assign, allow them to choose.)

SEL Self-Awareness: Say "Be honest with yourself. You all did something well. You all will find something to work on. Don't dwell on either! Recognizing both strengths and limitations helps you know what to keep and what to work on in your monologue. Remember that it is your story to tell. This is about telling your story how you want to."

Step 2: Tell students they will be reading each other's monologues aloud (either the playwright or the partner). The partner will then use the final checklist to give feedback to the playwright.

SEL Social Awareness: Say "You and your partner are sharing personal stories. Art is inherently personal. Be empathetic and kind with each other while still being honest and helpful. Sharing oneself and one's art can be very vulnerable. Let's take care of each other!"

Step 3: Let students go into their groups. Allow students time to share their pieces. Circulate and listen in (trying not to jump in unless necessary).

Step 4: Bring students back together. Ask them to share with someone who wasn't their partner what was one helpful piece of advice their partner gave. Let a few students share out what was helpful.

SEL Social Awareness: By recognizing helpful advice from someone else, you are allowing someone else's perspective to help you grow as an artist. Listening and learning is not only important for our art, but for us as humans."

Step 5: Give students time to complete their final checklist/reflection worksheet. Let them revise their monologues if they wish.

Step 6: Closing

Assessment:

Final Checklist and Reflection (attached)

Closing:

Have few volunteers read their monologues for the class. Have the class share their noticings about the monologues. Have anyone share a success or struggle they had. Collect all papers. Celebrate!

SEL Social Awareness: This is a chance for all of us to learn from each other and celebrate each other! Sharing a first or second draft of a monologue is a big thing to celebrate and takes courage. Let's take care of each other while we share!"

Please use the space below for suggestions for any adaptations or accommodations for inclusion of special needs learners.

Spread the lesson out over more days. Give monologue sentence starters (Like "When I was little, my favorite game was... One day I was play that and...." "My favorite/worst birthday was when I turned...because....")

Allow students to work in pairs or small groups to co-create a monologue. Or have one student be the actor and another the writer and have them collaborate on a piece that the actor will perform. (If you want to make it a group of three, add a director into the mix.)

Use a speech to text software or have a scribe for students who struggle with motor skills. Allow students to write in multiple languages in their pieces.

Show exemplars of monologues (<https://www.dramanotebook.com/monologue-contest/> is a good resource).

Have students rewrite an existing monologue in their own words.

Please use the space below to list any suggestions for multi-cultural inclusions.

The monologues should come from the students and be about them, so all monologues should include all of the cultures of your classroom and represent the students. If students are struggling, encourage them to write a monologue about how they feel about a current event or historical topic (also a great way to bridge to the history class!)

How does this lesson's content model inclusivity and honor diversity?

This lesson has students writing personal monologues, so the monologues should represent the full spectrum of your class. Monologues could also be a personal reaction to a current event or a historical moment (think Black Lives Matter or immigration policy or the Americans with Disabilities Act) to provide students the opportunity to research and respond to events that are specific to a group, but ultimately affect everyone.

Works Cited:

<https://www.dramanotebook.com/monologue-contest/>

Name: _____ Date: _____

Monologue Writing Worksheet (Worksheet One)

By the end of class, you will need to have written a monologue and answered these questions. You can do them in any order (Worksheet first, then monologue. OR Monologue first, then worksheet. OR a mix of answering questions and writing monologue) as long as both the worksheet and monologue are completed at the end of the period.

1. What memory did you choose to write a monologue about?

2. Why did you choose that memory?

3. When did the event happen?

4. Where are you in this monologue? (Where does the monologue take place?)

5. What are some sensory details you remember about the event? (What did it smell like? What could you see and hear? Could you taste anything or have a taste in your mouth? Could you feel anything?)

6. Who is the audience of the monologue? (Is the character talking to themselves, to a specific person or persons, to the audience, etc.?) How do you know?

7. What do you want in the monologue? (What is your objective (or objectives?))

8. Why is it important for you to get what you want? (What is at stake?)

9. How are you trying to get what you want? (What are your tactics?)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Monologue Writing Checklist and Final Reflection

Use this checklist to give your partner feedback. After you've received your feedback and made any changes you want to your monologue, complete this checklist and the two questions after.

	Yes! Absolutely!	Sort of, but I need a little more work.	I need more time and maybe some help to get it there.
My monologue has a beginning, middle, and end.			
It is clear to whom the character in my monologue is speaking.			
The audience/reader knows what is at stake for my character.			
The character in my monologue has a clear objective.			
The character in my monologue use multiple tactics to try and achieve their objective.			
I included sensory details in my monologue.			
After seeing/reading my monologue, anyone would be able to say what my memory was about.			

1. What part of your monologue did you feel you did most successfully? Explain.

2. What part of your monologue do you want to keep working on? Explain.
