



The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
MONOLOGUE LESSON PLANS



Week 2: Taking the Monologue Out for a Walk

NOTE: This lesson will take 1 x 50 minute class period.

• **What's On for Week 2 and Why?**

This week students continue to research the monologue and begin the physical work of putting the monologue up on its feet. This type of close study helps each student explore the thought process/meaning behind the monologue and start making their chosen monologue their own.

- Students will:
 - Explore physically presenting their monologues;
 - Recite the beginning third of their monologues for each other;
 - Explore the specific scenes from which their monologues comes;
 - Sharpen their focus and understanding of their monologue.

• **Which Standards Are Highlighted?**

Common Core English Language Arts:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-12.1, 5, 6 & 10
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-12. 3, 4 & 5

• NCCAS.NSTE.9-12.2

NCCAS National Theatre Education:

• **What Will You Need?**

- An open workspace (that can comfortably accommodate the whole class);
- *Instructions for Students* (Students should already have this handout from Week 1.)

• **What Will You and Your Students Do?**

Note: First collect homework from Week 1 (each student's 200-words or less summary of the play).

Warm Up:

1. Play a few warm-up games with the students (those which ideally warm-up up their bodies and voices and allow them to relax). Check online for theatre games and tongue twisters you can use.

Class Activity:

2. Students complete a "punctuation walk," an activity developed by the Royal Shakespeare Company's Voice Director, Cicely Berry:
 - a. Ask the students to spread out throughout the workspace (with a copy of their text in hand).
 - b. All at once, have them read their entire monologue aloud while walking around the workspace.
 - c. At every mark of punctuation, they should stop, change directions, and then continue reading and walking.
 - d. Once all students are finished, bring them together in a circle and process the activity. Keep the students standing, so that their energy doesn't dissipate. Ask them: How many of them needed to frequently change direction? How many were able to walk in one direction for an extended amount of time? What happened to the pace of their reading and walking? What might these differences indicate about the frame of mind of the character?



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Group Activity:

3. Divide up into smaller circles. Students share the beginnings of their monologues with each other. One at a time, each student reads their summary sentence of the opening section of their monologue (homework from Week 1). Then they recite that first section of the monologue from memory.

Notes: If the class is small enough, you can also do the recitations one at a time with everyone standing in the same circle. During this first effort at memorization, be encouraging. Some students will be excited and ready to show their work. Others will be nervous, and some will have avoided the work. Always be clear, efficient, and supportive. Keep the recitations moving, and the students focused (especially if nervous laughter begins to bubble up). Prompt them as needed. At the conclusion of the recitations, let the students know that a level of risk-taking (which is different for each student) is important and worthwhile. Students who are unprepared will be aware that they have let themselves down and missed an important opportunity; comments in this situation generally are not necessary.

- **How Did It Go?**

To assess this lesson plan in your classroom, ask yourself:

1. Did each student thoughtfully complete a 200-word summary of the monologue's play?
2. Did each student participate in the physical exercises, especially the "punctuation walk"?
3. Did each student participate in the class discussion about the "punctuation walk"?
4. Did they as a class make connections between text and their movements in this exercise?
5. Did each student write a clear summary sentence for the beginning third of their monologue?
6. Did each student present the beginning of their monologue for their peers?

- **What's for Homework?**

Ask each student to complete the following assignments for next week:

1. Continue to read the play (especially the specific scene that includes their monologue).
2. Continue the *Become Your Character* exercise.
Note: This need not be completed until Week 4.
3. Write a 100-words or less summary paragraph (in their own words) of the monologue's scene.
4. Answer the questions in the exercise entitled: *Be a Textual Investigator* (found on Page 2 of the *Instructions for Students* handout). Write the answers to these questions on one of their copies of their monologue.
5. Continue working on fully understanding the monologue's text (focusing on the middle section).
 - a. Write a one sentence summary (in their own words) of the middle third of the monologue.
Place this sentence summary in the margin of their working copy of the text.
 - b. Continue memorizing the monologue (especially the middle third of the text).