



The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
MONOLOGUE LESSON PLANS



Week 4: Unpacking the Monologue's Center

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

• **What's On for Week 4 and Why?**

This week focuses completely on performance. Activities continue to deepen the students' work with the monologues and build their confidence in presenting their monologues in front of others.

- Students will:
 - Complete a "backpack recitation," an exercise based on Royal Shakespeare Society's Director of Voice, Cicely Berry's displacement strategies.
 - Recite their entire monologue.
 - Achieve a more authentic manner of delivery.
 - Practice their introduction to the monologue.

• **Which Standards Are Highlighted?**

Common Core English Language Arts:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-12. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 10
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-12. 4 & 5

NCCAS National Theatre Education:

- NCCAS.NSTE.9-12.2 & 4

• **What Will You Need?**

- An open workspace (that can comfortably accommodate the whole class)
- Student backpacks (Each student should bring their backpack to class.)
- *Monologue Scoring Rubric* (a copy for each student)
- *Judges' Evaluation Form* (a copy for each student)

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

Note: First collect homework from Week 3 (each student's *Become Your Character* exercise).

Class Activity:

1. Students complete a "backpack recitation" :
 - a. Students spread out throughout the workspace (with their backpack and a copy of their text).
 - b. Each student quickly empties the contents of their backpack.
 - c. While they thoughtfully and carefully return these contents to their backpack, they recite their complete monologue. They may use their copy of the text for reference. (Note: Having the students focus on a physical activity while reciting their monologue can help them achieve a more authentic manner of delivery.)
2. Once all students have completed this activity, they form a class circle and discuss their responses to this exercise together. Ask them: What did they notice about their presentations? Were their changes to their delivery? What do these differences indicate about how to present their selections?



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Group Activity:

3. Divide up into smaller circles. Students share the beginning, middle and end sections of their monologues with each other. One at a time, each student should read their summary sentences for the beginning, middle and end sections of their monologue. Then they recite the entire monologue from memory.

Note: Again if the class is small enough, do the recitations one at a time with everyone standing in the same circle.

Class Activity:

4. Return to the class circle structure. Have the students (one at a time) practice their introductions to the monologue. (Example: "Hello. My name is _____, and I will be performing _____). Then they should pause to step into character, and then immediately present the first few lines of the monologues.
5. Pass out copies of the *Monologue Scoring Rubric* and the *Judges' Evaluation Form*.

- **How Did It Go?**

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

1. Did each student thoughtfully complete the *Become Your Character* exercise?
2. Did each student participate in the "backpack recitation"?
3. Did each student participate in the class discussion about the "backpack recitation"?
4. Did the class as a whole come to conclusions about how this exercise affected their delivery?
5. Did each student have their monologue completely memorized?

- **What's for Homework?**

Ask the students to complete the following assignments for next week:

1. Review the *Monologue Scoring Rubric* and the *Judges' Evaluation Form*.
2. Prepare to perform their complete monologues for each other next week.
3. Prepare to both give and receive feedback (based on the criteria on the *Judges' Evaluation Form*).