

# MONOLOGUES

## DEFINITION

A monologue is an uninterrupted speech presented by a single **character**, either to express internal thoughts aloud, or to directly address another character.

Interior monologues- The character expresses private thoughts out loud.

Dramatic monologues- The character is speaking to another character or to the audience.

## PURPOSE

Monologues allow the character to reveal an experience, deep thoughts, hopes, dreams, or plans without being interrupted by another character.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WRITING

- Keep it short. Monologues usually run two to three minutes.
- Take the listener on some sort of a journey-start strong with something that grabs attention and sets the tone and ends solidly – the way you want the character to be remembered.
- Think about who is speaking.
  - Who is he/she?
  - What does he/she want?
  - How does he/she behave while speaking?
  - How do you want the audience to relate (or not relate) to the speaker?

All people have within them several emotional changes at any given time. Have the monologue move through several emotions before the end.

**For example:** The character may start out angry and move toward resolving the anger. The character may have a funny experience to share, but there may be some regret or amazement as they speak through it.

Try to have the monologue move through a few different emotions while still staying true to the story or the experience.

# THE TEN-MINUTE-OR-LESS PLAY

## **These are the things to consider at first:**

- How will you quickly orient your audience to the world of your play?
- How will you establish when and where we are located?
- Who are these people? Why are they doing and saying those things?
- What do they want?
- Where is this story going?
- What do you want the audience to notice, to think, to feel as you guide them through the journey of your play?
- And while the lights fade at the end of your play, what impact do you hope to have made on the audience? What do you want them to remember?

**A play, of any length, consists of basic elements:  
Plot, characters, thought, sound, action, spectacle.**

### **A) PLOT:**

This is “what happens.” It is the basic story you are telling.

### **B) CHARACTERS:**

- Their names, the way they look, their ages, their health, their personality traits. The way they speak, move.
- Where are they from? Do they have an accent, either from a particular region of the USA or from another country.
- How do they walk, gesture. Are they shy? Frightened? Bold? Self-assured? Provide enough information in the cast list to help the actor playing the part to portray the character accurately.

### **C) THOUGHT:**

- What subtle ideas or messages are you trying to express through the story and the characters?
- Are the messages important to you and to the story?
- Are they too obvious or are they ideas that the audiences can infer through the dialogue and action without being “hit over the head”?

### **D) MUSIC:**

This is the “music” of the language...

- How the words create emotions and personality and energy?
- Do the characters talk rapidly, slowly, stuttering, with “attitude,” with force? How fast?
- How do your words create the mood you want?

### **E) ACTION/ARC**

A play builds. Here's the GENERAL pattern:

- Introduction
- First complication (or problem or crisis)
- Rising complications (or problems or crises)
- High point–the climax–can't get any more important!
- Falling action
- Ending (denouncement)–how the final picture is presented

### **F) SPECTACLE**

This is what the audience gets to see with their own eyes:

- The set, costumes, lights, setting (time of day, season of the year, locale), and the way the characters appear.
- Have the stage directions allow the director and actors to know what you want and what the audience will see.

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**Enjoy your writing challenges and Good Luck!!!!**

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### **For texts:**

- A More Perfect 10 – Gary Garrison
- The Playwright's Workbook-Claude Van Itallie
- Playwrights Teach Playwriting- Joan Herrington & Crystal Brian
- People Who Led to My Plays- Adrienne Kennedy

**for Video examples: YouTube, Google, etc.**