

# Arts Assessment For Learning

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THEATRE — 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

## HOW TO & TIPS: MONOLOGUE CREATION

- When developing a monologue with students, it was helpful to have them turn and talk to a partner in character about the moment in their characters life before attempting to put it on paper.
- Before having the students attempt to fill out the assessment sheet I showed a sample self-assessment form that I had filled out for myself, we discussed it as a class then the students filled out theirs.
- When introducing the peer-assessment sheet it is important for students to understand that it is a document used to help improve performance, and to help focus their rehearsals. I modeled how to fill it out. If you do not model it they might use it to offer their opinion based on their own personal choice, rather than what the actor/author intended.
- I introduced the rubric to the students before their last rehearsal and they each had a copy to refer to when practicing at home. I felt this left them open to create and explore choices, they had other tools along the way to keep them on track, the rubric was more of a summative tool for me.

**UNIT:** Monologue Creation, where students will create a character starting from physicality and voice, and then they get to choose a moment in the characters life to write a monologue for. The final performance will be to present the monologue to the class including blocking, characterization, and memorization.

### 1. Pre-Assessment:

- As a pre-assessment, I had students work in pairs to assess their ability level. In addition, this gave me a sense of how they felt getting up in front of the class. The scenes were short 15 lines, 2 person scenes that had changes in emotion and were centered on a specific situation.
- I compiled a list of strengths and weaknesses that I would address during the unit.
- Partners helped each other understand the scene before reading in front of the class. I allowed the partners 5 minutes to discuss the scene before acting it out.

### 2. Physicality:

- We began developing characters by using physicality first, which was a weakness I discovered during the pre-assessment process. We did a whole

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group warm-up entitled “Body Part Walk”, students use different body parts to lead them around the room, as they do this I call out different body parts to try.

- During this you can ask questions such as “what did John’s body position remind you of?” “What kind of person would walk that way?” “What might that person be feeling?” These questions help the students understand how physicality helps develop a character.
- Students work in pairs to create 3 walks that can be developed into a character, they discuss what body part to use, what situation the walk might fit, and what emotion might attach itself to that body position.
- Students perform walks for each other and participate in verbal peer feedback. When engaging in peer feedback, it is important to establish a protocol. I introduced “I like... I wish...” by modeling with one group how to use it. I reminded students that their likes and wishes needed to be specific and related to the activity. For example, “I like how your walk showed feeling, I believed that you felt sad, but I wish that your second walk used a specific body part, as I couldn’t tell what you were leading with.”
- Students then used the peer feedback to revise their performance on the spot and try it again.
- I introduced the performance rubric and talked about the criteria for a 4.
- Students chose a walk to develop into a character.

### 3. Character Development:

- Students participate in a theatre game called “May I please have some chocolate”. Students use a variety of vocal techniques including volume, pitch, tone, and accents to state the phrase and respond. In the response, “No, you may not” students copy the person before them and change their voice when it’s their turn to ask the question.
- Students combined a vocal choice with their walk, and had to write a detailed character description called a “Who am I?” We included things like name, age, job, hobbies, location, and an unusual fact.
- Students worked with partners to discuss their choices and give each other verbal feedback using the “I like... I wish... protocol.

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## 4. Monologues:

- Students listened to samples of different monologues and brainstormed a list of things the monologues had in common (it's characteristics).
- Students used the unusual fact about their character to develop a monologue about that moment in the characters life. The monologue had to include: the character's point of view, emotion that suited the situation, and strong opening and closing. *(Note: when developing a monologue with students, it was helpful to have them turn and talk to a partner in character about their moment before attempting to put it on paper.)*
- Students filled out a self-assessment sheet as a baseline for their performance. *(Note: I showed a sample self-assessment form that I had filled out for myself, we discussed it as a class before students filled out theirs.)*
- Once the pieces were published, students worked with partners during the rehearsal process. They used peer assessment sheets to focus their rehearsals and progress. The students chose 4 elements to work on at the beginning of the rehearsal session and their partner would give them feedback on their goals. Prior to the next rehearsal the students would refer back to the criteria from the week before and modified their goals if needed. *(Note: When introducing the peer-assessment sheet it is important for students to understand that it is a document used to help improve performance, and to help focus their rehearsals. I modeled how to fill it out.)*
- After 2 weeks of rehearsal students performed their monologues (memorized) for the class, and were filmed. Students did a final self-evaluation form based on the film. To track their progress they looked back at the original sheet to see the differences in their opinions.
- Students were graded using a monologue performance rubric. *(Note: I introduced the rubric to the students before their last rehearsal and they each had a copy to refer to when practicing at home.)*