

## **Monologue Tips:**

### **Classical vs Contemporary Monologues:**

“Classical” monologues are speeches taken from plays that go as far back as ancient Greek theatre, and as far forward as the end of the nineteenth century.

Contemporary monologues are speeches taken from plays that go as far back as the beginning of the twentieth century, and as far forward as the present moment.

### **Active Monologues vs. Narrative Monologues**

There are generally two kinds of monologues that writers can utilize, active and narrative.

#### **Active Monologues:**

An *active monologue* is one that has the character using it as a way to take action or achieve a goal — whether it’s to change someone’s mind, convince them of something, or to communicate a specific point of view that the character has. The monologue and action are happening in real time.

#### **Active Monologue - Examples:**

Hidden Figures:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNK8FCFpmm4&t=127s>

The Goonies:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=117&v=6NEKzLiXfuc&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=117&v=6NEKzLiXfuc&feature=emb_logo)

Field of Dreams:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t\\_lp6pKODD4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_lp6pKODD4)

#### **Narrative Monologues:**

A *narrative monologue* usually entails a character telling a story, often in past tense. These monologues often use such a story as an analogy to the actual conflict

and situation within the script's events, or as a way to explain how a character came to be the way they are or will be.

### **Narrative Monologue - Example:**

Zootopia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dSIPI47X3E>

Shawshank Redemption:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRB10GPBm4o>

## **Tips on choosing a monologue and how to break it down:**

### **Choosing a monologue:**

- Pick a monologue in your age range and casting. It will be very hard to connect to the material if the character is years older than you and whoever is watching the monologue could be taken out of the performance if the material is too mature for your age range
- Make sure it has drive with some kind of arc and a beginning middle and end
- Monologues from published plays are a safe choice
- When choosing a monologue, ask yourself how you relate to the character and story. How do you connect to the material

### **Breaking down a monologue:**

- If possible, read the play from where the monologue came from. This will help you understand the character, moment before and story better.
- Monologues can be a trap and sometimes intimidating because it's such a large chunk of text. It helps to break down the monologue into smaller pieces to help memorize it and help you understand what the character is really saying and feeling in each section.
- Some questions to ask:
  - What has happened just before this moment? This gives us our character's reason to speak.

- Who are they speaking to? This gives us a sense of the stakes – what does the character have to lose with this person, and what do they have to gain?
- What does my character want from the person they're speaking to? You might hear this called an 'objective.'
- Mark your BEATS (shifts) - Every time there is a change in dynamic, emotion, or purpose, there is a change in BEAT. Deciding where the BEATS are in your monologue is an important step in deciding how you will perform your monologue.