

WORKING ON A MONOLOGUE worksheet by Massimo Marinoni ©

- 1.0 Read the play it comes from in its entirety *several* times. Find out what the style and theme of the play are.
- 2.0 Fill in a “*Character Questionnaire*” sheet for information on Character.
- 3.0 Fill in “*Working on a Scene*” sheet which answers part of the 7 questions, and obviously answer any remaining ones. Work out your own programming. And optional “*7 step morph*” if familiar with it.
- 4.0 Make sure you are clear and familiar with the Intentions/Target/needs/objective of your character in the speech.
- 5.0 **PRACTICAL EXERCISES:**
- 5.1 **Speed and Slow Motion runs & Repetition.**
Speak the text as fast as humanly possible without losing diction.
Speak the text as slowly as possible allowing new thoughts to come in.
Speak each word 3 times with different inflections from beginning to end of speech; it will open up a new world of possibilities.
- 5.2 **Gibberish**
Speak the speech in your own made up language. And/or try doing it in different languages you must not already speak (EG: Arabic, Chinese, Italian etc.) Use open vowels sounds.
- 5.3 **Paraphrase**
Paraphrase the text in your own words. Do it several times, varying it slightly every time to expand on different points.
- 5.4 **Expand/Continue**
Stop and start your text at different intervals. *Expand* on command, i.e. paraphrase and elaborate a certain: line, concept, or mini beat; explaining using different words, similes, and imagery to prove and clarify any point/s in the speech. Then *Continue* with the text as it is. Then *Expand* again after at will. Then *Continue* on with the speech as it is written.
- 5.5 **Changing circumstances.**
EG: on the bus, on the toilet, while cooking, working out, talking to a child etc. Both real and imaginary. Even if thought irrelevant to the speech’ circumstances. Often getting it wrong, highlights the actor to the right path.
- 5.6 **Independent activity.**
Find an independent physical activity to fully engage yourself with, whilst doing the speech. EG: putting make up on, hanging the washing, working out, etc. That may or may not be appropriate to the character/situation, but that will help finding new insights and stop you over thinking.
- 5.7 **Expressionistic Movement**
Physicalise the speech as if it were a piece of expressionistic modern movement/mime piece.
Physicalising: emotions, sensations, intentions etc. No words spoken. But plenty of breath.
- 5.8 **Emotional and/or Sensual “As If..” PREPARATION.**
Find the required emotional state of your character before he/she speaks. Either using the characters’ previous circumstances, or using a “sense memory” of a parallel equivalent in your own life experiences. Or experiment with different pieces of music to rev you up, as music can evoke specific thoughts/emotions/moods.
- 5.9 **“Bits” (Beats) workout**
After beating the text, just start a movement, any movement that may come to you, and repeat it exactly over and over again then start speaking your first beat of text. After, start another movement, without thinking what or why, and repeat it exactly over and over again then start speaking your second beat of text. Continue until the end of speech. Repeat it using different movements from the first time you did it. A variation is the “Shaking”, where you stop and shake for a few seconds before continuing with the next “bit” beat/section of text.
- 5.10 **Character Thoughts**
Work out by speaking aloud and scripting what your character is thinking before and during the speech. What comes before the speech is dictated by: your inner characteristic, your intention/target, by your previous circumstances and constitutes the process by which you arrive at your “*Platform Thought*” (a short thought/expletive which immediately precedes your first line). What precedes every “Bit” during the speech is also dictated by your inner characteristic and/or intention/target that leads to a “Platform Thought”. *Your Inner monologue voiced*. It can be linked to “Shaking”, where you shake in between beats but whilst shaking, you also voice your character’s thoughts that relate to the reason why you are changing tactics/characteristics/activities and propels you onto the next beat/section of text.
- 5.11 **Psychological Gesture**
Find a gesture, a frozen pose, like that of a statue. By physicalising the intention/target, you worked out in the speech. Once you found the gesture required, freeze and hold it for 10 seconds, sense it, then launch into the speech. Repeat finding a new gesture (in turns) for the Inner Characteristic; and then another time using the outer Characteristic displayed in the speech. Each you’re your subconscious will drum up a different preparation that will launch you into the speech each time with a different energy. This can also be repeated each time there is a change of tactics/characteristics/activities with a new gesture that will propel you onto the next beat/section of text. These can be done either silently or while voicing character thoughts that relate to your inner state/characteristic.
- 5.12 **Road Test**
“Slip” parts (beats) or whole speech, paraphrasing slightly if needed, into a “real” everyday conversation with real people in a real situation. A very cathartic and revelatory experience.