

SHAKE FEST STUDIO

Choosing the focus for your Monologue



What to consider and questions to ask

Please note: The content here should be considered a guide only and is not designed to box you in – only to get you thinking. At the end of the day we want you to stay creative and go with your gut instincts!

Shakespeare wrote at least 37 plays, so how can you choose between them when picking the focus for your Shake Fest Monologue? Use this worksheet the help you find a choice you are passionate about!

What are your strengths?

No matter which category you are participating in, it's important to play to your strengths. So write them here! Better at comedic performances or dramatic ones? What is your personality and temperament as an actor? _____

The goal here is to find a character that compliments these strengths (and if you want challenges you to take new risks as an actor). Once you have filled this out go on a hunt to find that character type or find a character you love and put a spin on them that shows off your talents!

What themes and issues resonate with you?

One awesome thing about Shakespeare is that he wrote about the human condition – that's one of the reasons why he is still celebrated today. Write a list of the things that resonate with you in your life today, so you can see if anything matches up to an existing storyline or theme in a Shakespeare Play, or the experience of one of the characters. When on your search, don't forget to strip back the fancy names and kingdoms so you can focus on the relationships and problems between the characters.

Examples: Unbridled ambition? Head to Macbeth. Friendship betrayal? Julius Caesar could be for you. Dealing with a love triangle? Check out loads of Shakespearean comedies like Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Nights Dream.

What are the moments of intrigue for your audience your character goes through?

After you have found a play and a character that you resonate with and plays to your strengths, consider your audience. What are the moments in the play are interesting for your audience watch? It could be...

- A monologue where your character makes a decision
- A moment of realisation for your character
- A moment of triumph or defeat
- Them convincing another character to do/not do something

These are not the only options, but something to get you started. Great monologues can be found from characters in a moment alone as well as talking to other characters. Remember you can cut the monologue down so that your character can arrive at these moments of intrigue within the time limit. You can also cut out small bits of other characters texts to turn a scene where your character dominates into a monologue – just make sure you aren't cutting pieces out that are essential for the understanding of the scene.

Write your potential monologues for your character here:
