

Dramatic Monologue: Grades 7-8

Please note: If you would like to recommend additional monologues, please submit your recommendations to Mrs. Lyons at alyons@aca-cc.org no later than **December 8th, 2017**. Additional selections will be added to this document upon approval. Recommended works should be of similar length to the selections already provided.

Contents

Contents	1
All the World's a Stage	2
William Shakespeare	2
Excerpt from Into the Woods	3
Stephen Sondheim	3
The Story of My Life	8
Helen Keller	8
Tears Of The Sea	10
Unknown	10
Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, Jefferson Smith	14
Sidney Buchman	14
Henry V	15
William Shakespeare	15
Hamlet	16
William Shakespeare	16
Excerpt from The Lord of the Rings Screenplay (Gollum)	17
Adapted from the works of J.R.R. Tolkien	17

All the World's a Stage

William Shakespeare

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Excerpt from *Into the Woods*

Stephen Sondheim

In the past, when your mother was with child, she developed an unusual appetite. She took one look at my beautiful garden and told your father what she wanted more than anything in the world was . . .

Greens, greens, and nothing but greens:
Parsley, pepper, cabbages and cel'ry
Asparagus and watercress and
Fiddleferns and lettuce –

He said, "All right,"
But it wasn't, quite,
'Cause I caught him in the autumn
In my garden one night!
He was robbing me, harassing me
Rooting through my rutabaga,
Raiding my arugula and ripping up the rampion
(My Champion!! My Favorite!!)
I should have laid a spell on him
Right there,
Could have turned him into stone
Or dog or a chair
But I let him have the rampion –
I'd lots to spare.
In return, however,
I said, "Fair is fair:
You can let me have the baby
That your wife will bear.

And we'll call it square."

I thought I had been more than reasonable. But how was I to know what your father had also hidden in his pocket? Do you know what it was? It was Beans. Beans.

The special Beans.
I let him go,
I didn't know
He'd stole my beans!
I was watching him crawl
Back over the wall –!

And then Bang! Crash!
And the lightening Flash!

And – Well, that’s another story,
Never mind –
Anyway, at last
The big day came
And I made my claim.
“Oh, don’t take away the baby,”
They shrieked and screeched,
But I did, and I hid her
Where she’ll never be reached.
And you father cried,
And your mother died,
When for extra measure –
I said, “Sorry:
I’m still not mollified.”

And I laid a little spell on them –
You too, Son!

That you fam’ly tree would
Always be a barren one . . .
So there’s no more fuss
And there’s no more scenes
And my garden thrives –
You should see my nectarines

But I’m telling you the same
I tell kings and queens:
Don’t ever never ever
Mess around with my greens!
Especially my beans!

The Princess Leia Diaries: The Lost Years

Margaret Finnegan

Ok. Confession: sometimes I fantasize that I'm adopted. I mean, I like my parents and everything. They like rule the whole planet, and that's cool. But they just don't get me. Like yesterday: The Akbars were over for dinner, and my dad and Mr. Akbar were all, "In the days of the republic, blah, blah, blah, boring, boring, boring..." I look across the table and the Akbar's kid -- this boy, Duke, who's my age and has these giganto fish lips and eyeballs the size of probe droids -- has his face in his plate. He's sucking back about a pound of linguine and clams. The noodles are all running down his chin. Total grodo.

I'm all, "Use the fork, Duke!"

The table goes silent and everybody stares at me -- like I'm the disgusting one.

Then my dad says, "Not everyone can use the fork, you know." And he kind of points with his eyes to Duke's arm. Only then do I notice that all the Akbars have these little fin things instead of hands.

I mean -- duh -- someone could have told me. I can't notice everything. It's like my parents think they're all perfect and I'm this total rebel.

(Pause)

Besides, fork or no fork, that Duke kid is a total Nerf Herder.
(Loud sigh)

Anyway...I mean use a straw or something. No one wants to see your face in linguine.
(Pause)

Well...I guess I should go. My parents are making me take this Combat Survival for Princesses class. Totally lame. Like I'll ever need that.

The Story of My Life

Helen Keller

Excerpt from Chapter IV

The most important day I remember in all my life is the one on which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrasts between the two lives which it connects. It was the third of March, 1887, three months before I was seven years old.

On the afternoon of that eventful day, I stood on the porch, dumb, expectant. I guessed vaguely from my mother's signs and from the hurrying to and fro in the house that something unusual was about to happen, so I went to the door and waited on the steps. The afternoon sun penetrated the mass of honeysuckle that covered the porch, and fell on my upturned face. My fingers lingered almost unconsciously on the familiar leaves and blossoms which had just come forth to greet the sweet southern spring. I did not know what the future held of marvel or surprise for me. Anger and bitterness had preyed upon me continually for weeks and a deep languor had succeeded this passionate struggle.

Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding-line, and you waited with beating heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding-line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbor was. "Light! Give me light!" was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

I felt approaching footsteps. I stretched out my hand as I supposed to my mother. Some one took it, and I was caught up and held close in the arms of her who had come to reveal all things to me, and, more than all things else, to love me.

The morning after my teacher came she led me into her room and gave me a doll. The little blind children at the Perkins Institution had sent it and Laura Bridgman had dressed it; but I did not know this until afterward. When I had played with it a little while, Miss Sullivan slowly spelled into my hand the word "d-o-l-l." I was at once interested in this finger play and tried to imitate it. When I finally succeeded in making the letters correctly I was flushed with childish pleasure and pride. Running downstairs to my mother I held up my hand and made the letters for doll. I did not know that I was spelling a word or even that words existed; I was simply making my fingers go in monkey-like imitation. In the days that followed I learned to spell in this uncomprehending way a great many words, among them pin, hat, cup and a few verb like sit, stand, and walk. But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name.

One day, while I was playing with my new doll, Miss Sullivan put my big rag doll into my lap also, spelled "d-o-l-l" and tried to make me understand that "d-o-l-l" applied to both. Earlier in the day we had a tussle over the words "m-u-g" and "w-a-t-e-r." Miss Sullivan had tried to

impress it upon me that "m-u-g" is mug and that "w-a-t-e-r" is water, but I persisted in confounding the two.

In despair she had dropped the subject for the time, only to renew it the first opportunity. I came impatient at her repeated attempts and, seizing the new doll, I dashed it upon the floor. I was keenly delighted when I felt the fragments of the broken doll at my feet. Neither sorrow nor regret followed my passionate outburst. I had not loved the doll. In the still, dark world in which I lived there was no strong sentiment or tenderness. I felt my teacher sweep the fragments to one side of the hearth, and I had a sense of satisfaction that the cause of my discomfort was removed. She brought me my hat, and I knew I was going out into the warm sunshine. This thought, if a wordless sensation may be called a thought, made me hop and skip with pleasure.

We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten—a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I know then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living words awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me. On entering the door I remembered the doll I had broken. I felt my way to the hearth and picked up the pieces. I tried vainly to put them together. Then my eyes filled with tears; for I realized what I had done, and for the first time I felt repentance and sorrow.

I learned a great many new words that day. I do not remember what they all were; but I do know that mother, father, sister, teacher were among them—words that were to make the world blossom for me "like Aaron's rod, with flowers." It would have been difficult to find a happier child than I was as I lay in my crib at the close of that eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought me, and for the first time longed for a new day to come.

Tears Of The Sea

Unknown

Zabhani and I were sitting in the only shady spot in Zaila. Behind the old Sudanese chief a white shack squatted in the broiling sun, and beside it sat ten or twelve black men resting. Beyond lay the Gulf of Eden, and on its turquoise surface small sailing vessels were slowly moving and here and there a native boat, manned like an ancient Phoenician galley.

“But Zabhani, no matter what you do, it is not enough. My father told me that in all Zaila there is not a better man than you, but no matter how good you are, it is not enough; And no matter how bad you are, it is not too bad. Life in heaven with God can only be had by believing in His son, Jesus Christ. Salvation is God's gift, and cannot be obtained by working for it.”
Zabhani spoke: “That is what your father used to say, my daughter, but I do not comprehend. So I shall go on doing the best I know how, and the Ruler of ages and of eternity will reward me when I leave this life.”

He seemed hopeless! How often I had heard that answer! And yet, this was my third and last day in Zaila. I had sailed down from Hodeida, at my father's request, for the purpose of leading Zabhani to Christ. Some years before, my father had been of service to the old man; and though the latter had shown his unending gratitude in many ways, always, when my father spoke of the Lord Jesus, the answer would be the same: “I shall go on doing the best I know how. . .”

I had failed again, and in despair, my eyes wandered back to the row of black men sitting asleep in the sun. Such men! Some blind, some deaf; all misshapen figures. Months of pearl-diving in the depths of the Gulf had done this.

Zabhani told me that a pearler's life is short. Beginning as a muscular, healthy youth, he always ends up deformed, blind, deaf, either prematurely old or prematurely dead. Going out from Zaila by boat, the divers sometimes work directly from the larger boat, but usually they put off two-by-two from the boat in dugouts. While one paddles, the other looks for oyster banks. When he sees a likely coral shelf, he places an iron clamp on his nose, takes a copper claw in his hand, and dives down, down into the clear water, sometimes staying down one and a half to two minutes. Then up out of the water pops his head. He throws his find into the dugout, climbs in himself, and then the other dives. So they go on all day.

Dangers of all kinds lurk in the water. An oyster may catch a finger, a giant three-foot clam may close on a foot, and only the alert diver who knows how to use a knife quickly and accurately escapes drowning. Sometimes the waters are shark-infested, and the divers signal from boat to boat, and the work is over for the day. Occasionally a boy stays too long under water, and when he reaches the surface, only hasty restorative measures can save him.

My reverie was broken by Zabhani. “Do you like this pearl, my daughter?” And he held out to me a pearl of matchless beauty. Of a rare greenish-black variety, it was indescribably perfect. In size and shape it was like a great teardrop. Infinitesimal undulations in its surface seemed only to enhance its luster.

I whispered, “This is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen”

“It is yours, my daughter.”

“But, oh, Zabhani, I cannot buy such a pearl!”

“No, you cannot buy such a pearl . . . Take it, my daughter; it is yours.”

“But, Zabhani, I cannot . . .”

Zabhani took my hand and, placing the great pearl in my palm, he said softly, “My son, Anhani, was a pearl diver. One day he was in a dugout with a Somali boy. The Somali dived and his foot

was caught by a giant clam. Anhani, diving in to save his friend, loosed him from the clam with a quick thrust of his curved knife. The two reached the surface just in time. The Somali was exhausted as the air struck his lungs, and Anhani pushed him and his catch of oysters into the dugout. But just as he reached to pull himself into the canoe, there was a flash of a white belly, a gaping of great jaws-and Anhani was snatched away, only a telltale ribbon of blood remaining in the turbulent waters, as the signal of warning fled from boat to boat.”

Tears were falling from Zabhani's eyes as this black man who had lost his son gave me this “tear of the sea.”

“So, my daughter, take it. It is yours. No money could buy this pearl. For it cost me Anhani-my son-and I could not sell his soul.”

“Zabhani! Zabhani” I almost shouted in my excitement. “Yes, Zabhani, I will receive your gift. There is nothing I can pay you for such a gift, for it is priceless to you. Thank you, Zabhani, thank you! But don't you see? That is what God has done! He has given His son, who shed His blood for you and me. There is no price you can pay for forgiveness of your sins. It is priceless. It cost God His only begotten Son. There is nothing you can do; for even the best you know is not enough. Don't you see?”

There was a moment's silence. Then those soft brown eyes looked into mine, then misted; and again great tears fell-the tears of a black man who had found Christ, and the tears of a white woman whose prayers had been answered.

Mutiny on the Bounty (1935)

Screenwriter(s): Talbot Jennings, Jules Furthman, Carey Wilson

Closing Court Statement Before Death—Midshipman/Ensign Roger Byam made a closing court statement to defend his men, after he had been sentenced to hang:

My lord, much as I desire to live, I'm not afraid to die. Since I first sailed on the *Bounty* over four years ago, I've known how men can be made to suffer worse things than death, cruelly, beyond duty, beyond necessity. Captain Bligh, you've told your story of mutiny on the *Bounty*, how men plotted against you, seized your ship, cast you adrift in an open boat, a great venture in science brought to nothing, two British ships lost. But there's another story, Captain Bligh, of ten coconuts and two cheeses. A story of a man who robbed his seamen, cursed them, flogged them, not to punish but to break their spirit. A story of greed and tyranny, and of anger against it, of what it cost.

One man, my lord, would not endure such tyranny. That's why you hounded him. That's why you hate him, hate his friends. And that's why you're beaten. Fletcher Christian's still free. Christian lost, too, my lord. God knows he's judged himself more harshly than you could judge him. I say to his father, 'He was my friend. No finer man ever lived.' I don't try to justify his crime, his mutiny, but I condemn the tyranny that drove him to it. I don't speak here for myself alone or for these men you condemn. I speak in their names, in Fletcher Christian's name, for all men at sea. These men don't ask for comfort. They don't ask for safety. If they could speak to you they'd say, 'Let us choose to do our duty willingly, not the choice of a slave, but the choice of free Englishmen.' They ask only (for) the freedom that England expects for every man. If one man among you believe that - *one man* - he could command the fleets of England. He could sweep the seas for England. If he called his men to their duty not by flaying their backs, but by lifting their hearts, their... That's all.

The Blind Side (2009)

Screenwriter(s): John Lee Hancock

(Crowd cheering in distance) There's a moment of orderly silence before a football play begins. Players are in position, linemen are frozen, and anything is possible. (TV announcer: Almost Indian-summer weather here in mid-November.) Then, like a traffic accident, stuff begins to randomly collide. From the snap of the ball to the snap of the first bone is closer to four seconds than five. (TV announcer: First and 10, Riggins flea-flicker back to Theismann. Theismann's in a lot of trouble.)

(Tape Rewinds) One Mississippi. Joe Theismann, the Redskins' quarterback, takes the snap and hands off to his running back. (TV announcer) Two Mississippi. It's a trick play, a flea-flicker, and the running back tosses the ball back to the quarterback. (TV announcer) Three Mississippi. Up to now, the play's been defined by what the quarterback sees. It's about to be defined by what he doesn't. Four Mississippi. Lawrence Taylor is the best defensive player in the NFL, and has been from the time he stepped onto the field as a rookie. (TV announcer: And it was Lawrence Taylor who slammed Theismann to the ground at the 42-yard line. The blitz was on.) He will also change the game of football as we know it. (TV announcer: And we'll look at it with the reverse angle one more time. And I suggest if your stomach is weak, you just don't watch.)
Legendary quarterback Joe Theismann never played another down of football.

Now, y'all would guess that, more often than not, the highest paid player on an NFL team is a quarterback, and you'd be right. But what you probably don't know is, that more often than not, the second highest paid player is, thanks to Lawrence Taylor, a left tackle. Because, as every housewife knows, the first check you write is for the mortgage, but the second is for the insurance. And the left tackle's job is to protect the quarterback from what he can't see coming. To protect his blind side. The ideal left tackle is big, but a lot of people are big. He's wide in the butt and massive in the thighs. He has long arms, giant hands and feet as quick as a hiccup. This is a rare and expensive combination the need for which can be traced to that Monday night game and Lawrence Taylor. For on that day, he not only altered Joe Theismann's life, but mine as well.

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, Jefferson Smith

Sidney Buchman

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights – that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness; that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the People to alter or to abolish. I always get a great kick outta that part of the Declaration of Independence. Now, you're not gonna have a country that can make these kind of rules work, if you haven't got men that have learned to tell human rights from a punch in the nose. It's a funny thing about men, you know. They all start life being boys. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if some of these Senators were boys once. And that's why it seemed like a pretty good idea to me to get boys out of crowded cities and stuffy basements for a couple of months out of the year and build their bodies and minds for a man-sized job, because those boys are gonna be behind these desks some of these days. And it seemed like a pretty good idea, getting boys from all over the country, boys of all nationalities and ways of living — getting them together. Let them find out what makes different people tick the way they do. Because I wouldn't give you two cents for all your fancy rules if, behind them, they didn't have a little bit of plain, ordinary, everyday kindness and a little lookin' out for the other fella, too. That's pretty important, all that. It's just the blood and bone and sinew of this democracy that some great men handed down to the human race, that's all! But of course, if you've got to build a dam where that boys' camp oughta be, to get some graft to pay off some political army or something, well that's a different thing. Aw no! If you think I'm going back there and tell those boys in my state and say: 'Look, now fellas, forget about it. Forget all this stuff I've been tellin' you about this land you live in — it's a lot of hoey. This isn't your country. It belongs to a lot of James Taylors.' Aw no! Not me! And anybody here that thinks I'm gonna do that, they've got another thing comin'. That's all right. I just wanted to find out whether you still had faces. I'm sorry, gentlemen. I-I know I'm being disrespectful to this honorable body, I know that. I- A guy like me should never be allowed to get in here in the first place. I know that! And I hate to stand here and try your patience like this, but either I'm dead right or I'm crazy.

Henry V

William Shakespeare

What's he that wishes so?
My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair cousin:
If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.
By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires:
But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive.
No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England:
God's peace! I would not lose so great an honour
As one man more, methinks, would share from me
For the best hope I have. O, do not wish one more!
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,
That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart; his passport shall be made
And crowns for convoy put into his purse:
We would not die in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to die with us.
This day is called the feast of Crispian:
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian:'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day: then shall our names
Familiar in his mouth as household words
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remember'd;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;

For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

Hamlet

William Shakespeare

To be, or not to be- that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die- to sleep-
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die- to sleep.
To sleep- perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub!
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would these fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death-
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns- puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.- Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia!- Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins rememb'ed.

Excerpt from The Lord of the Rings Screenplay (Gollum)

Adapted from the works of J.R.R. Tolkien

GOLLUM:	We wants it. We needs it. Must have the precious. They stole it from us. Sneaky little Hobbitses. Wicked. Tricky. False.
SMEAGOL:	No. Not master.
GOLLUM:	Yes, precious. False. They will cheat you, hurt you, lie!
SMEAGOL:	Master's my friend.
GOLLUM:	You don't have any friends. Nobody likes you.
SMEAGOL:	(with his hands over his ears) Not listening. I'm not listening.
GOLLUM:	You're a liar and a thief.
SMEAGOL:	(shaking his head) No.
GOLLUM:	Murderer.
SMEAGOL:	Go away.
GOLLUM:	(mockingly) Go away? (laughs)
SMEAGOL:	I hate you. I hate you.
GOLLUM:	Where would you be without me? Gollum. Gollum. I saved us. It was me. We survived because of me.
SMEAGOL:	Not anymore.
GOLLUM:	(shocked) What did you say?
SMEAGOL:	Master looks after us now. We don't need you.
GOLLUM:	What?
SMEAGOL:	Leave now.....and never come back.
GOLLUM:	No.

SMEAGOL:	Leave now and never come back.
Gollum growls and bears his teeth	
SMEAGOL:	Leave now and never come back!
There is silence and no response from Gollum	
SMEAGOL:	We told him to go away. And away he goes, precious. (he jumps and leaps about) Gone! Gone! Gone! Smeagol is free!