AMDA
College of the Performing Arts
NEW YORK CITY • LOS ANGELES

How To Select A Monologue

You may perform either a published monologue or an original monologue.

If you use a monologue from film or television, you must use the official script, not a transcription. The original script preserves the writer's intended punctuation, rhythm, and meaning. Transcriptions can change the language and misrepresent the character.

If you perform an original monologue, it must be fully written with clear structure. Improvised or partially improvised pieces are not allowed. Your work should show intentional choices in language, character, and storytelling.

A monologue is a long speech by one person that reveals a character's thoughts or feelings. Choose a character close to your age, read the full play, and understand the scene, vocabulary, and emotional journey. Be prepared to answer questions about the work.

AMDA welcomes all backgrounds. You do not need to consider your ethnicity, body type, gender, or sexual preference when choosing material.

Select

- Age-appropriate characters
- Contrasting styles or tones
- Monologues from published plays or films
- Pieces you feel connected to

Avoid

- Material you don't fully understand
- Sexual content or excessive profanity
- Stories about violence, addiction, or abuse
- Unsourced internet material

NOTE: Your personal favorites may not be the material that best serves you.

Still Looking For Monologues?

Below is a list of plays and roles that we have found lend themselves to an audition environment. You are not required to use any of these monologues at your audition, nor does this list represent any preference AMDA has for a particular genre or time period. If you've found something not on this list that you love, we urge you to use what best fits your talents.

However, if you're still searching, the works below are a great place to start looking. Really Really by Paul Downs Colaizzo (various) Once A Catholic by Mary O'Malley (various) In addition to these suggestions, research more works of contemporary playwrights with roles for young people: Annie Baker, August Wilson, David Henry Hwang, Julia Cho, Branden Jacob-Jenkins, Eric Bogosian, Kenneth Lonergan, Samuel D. Hunter, Theresa Rebeck, Wendy Wasserstein, Quiara Alegría Hudes, Nick Payne, Suzan-Lori Parks, David Auburn, Nilo Cruz, Lynn Nottage.

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Female Presenting

- For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide by Ntozake Shange (various)
- The Laramie Project by Moisés Kaufman and Members of the Tectonic Theatre Company (Various)
- Be Aggressive by Annie Weisman (various)
- 5 Women Wearing the Same Dress by Alan Ball (various)
- Smoking Lesson by Julia Jordan (various)
- Independence by Lee Blessing (Sherry)
- A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry (Beneatha)
- The Miss Firecracker Contest by Beth Henley (Carnelle, Tessy)
- Ruined by Lynn Nottage (Josephine, Sophie, Salima)
- Maids of Honor by Joan Casademont Anna in the Tropics by Nilo Cruz Doppelganger by Jo J. Adamson (Model)
- Street Stories by Paula Cizmar (Elise)
- Epiphany by Heidi Decker (Woman)
- Tsunami by Christina De Lancie (Dodie)
- Zombie Grrls from the Crypt by Linda Eisenstein (Goth woman)
- Animal Dreams by Jennifer Maisel (Natalie)
- Flying by Carol K Mack (Kay)
- Southernmost Tip by Janet Neipris (Georgia)
- The Interview by Jill Morley (Laura)
- Tripp by Erin Cressida Wilson (intern)
- A Teenager's Guide to the Universe by Judy Sheehan (Allison)
- Sunday on the Rocks, Speakeasy, Spike Heels all by Theresa Rebeck (various)
- Proof by David Auburn (Catherine)
- I Ought to Be in Pictures by Neil Simon (Libby)
- Dream Girl by Elmer Rice (Georgina)
- The Crucible by Arthur Miller (Abigail)
- Our Town by Thornton Wilder (Emily)
- St. Joan by George Bernard Shaw (St. Joan)
- A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen (Nora)
- Tigers Be Still by Kim Rosenstock (various)
- 4000 Miles by Amy Herzog (various)
- The Flick by Annie Baker (various)
- Seminar by Theresa Rebeck (various)
- Suburbia by Eric Bogosian (various)
- Coastal Disturbances by Stephen Karam (various)

Classical Monologues

Please only present a classical monologue if you have extensive experience with classical text and feel a classical piece will best demonstrate your skillset and previous training. A classical monologue is not required for admission.

Shakespeare

- As You Like It (Rosalind, Phoebe)
- A Midsummer Night's Dream (Helena)
- Twelfth Night (Viola, Olivia)
- Much Ado About Nothing (Beatrice)
- Romeo and Juliet (Juliet)
- The Tempest (Miranda)
- The Merchant of Venice (Portia)
- Cymbeline (Imogene)
- Hamlet (Ophelia)

Non-Shakespeare

- All for Love by John Dryden (Cleopatra)
- The Country Wife by William Wycherley (Mrs. Pinchwife)
- Don Carlos by Thomas Otway (Duchess of Eboli)
- Sir Patient Fancy by Aphra Behn (Lady Knowell)
- The Unhappy Favorite by John Banks (Queen Elizabeth)
- The Double Dealer by William Congreve (Lady Touchwood)
- The Constant Couple by George Farquhar (Angelica)

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Male Presenting

- Broadway Bound by Neil Simon (Eugene)
- Biloxi Blues by Neil Simon (Various)
- Seven Guitars by August Wilson (Various)
- A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry (Walter)
- Six Degrees of Separation by John Guare (Paul)
- The Laramie Project by Moisés Kaufman and Members of the Tectonic Theatre Company (Various)
- This Is Our Youth by Kenneth Lonergan (Warren, Dennis)
- Lobby Hero by Kenneth Lonergan (Jeff)
- Tracers by John DiFusco et al. (Various)
- Savage in Limbo by John Patrick Shanley (Tony)
- Claptrap by Ken Friedman (Harvey)
- Conversations with My Father by Herb Gardner (Joey)
- Dinosaur Dreams by Tom Szentgyorgyi (Mark)
- The Extra Man by Richard Greenberg (Jess)
- I Hate Hamlet by Paul Rudnick (Andrew)
- The Innocents' Crusade by Keith Reddin (Bill)
- Last Call Forever by Leonard Melfi (Chubby)
- My Side of the Story by Bryan Goluboff (Aaron)
- Out the Window by Neal Bell (Jake)
- Two Trains Running by August Wilson (Sterling)
- The Matchmaker by Thornton Wilder (Cornelius)
- Amadeus by Peter Shaffer (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)
- Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller (Biff, Happy)
- All My Sons by Arthur Miller (Chris, George)
- Picnic by William Inge (Hal)
- The Elephant Man by Bernard Pomerance (John Merrick)
- The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams (Tom, Jim)
- Tigers Be Still by Kim Rosenstock (Various)
- 4000 Miles by Amy Herzog (Various)
- The Flick by Annie Baker (Various)
- Seminar by Theresa Rebeck (Various)
- Suburbia by Eric Bogosian (Various)
- Coastal Disturbances by Stephen Karam (Various)
- Really Really by Paul Downs Colaizzo (Various)

Classical Monologues

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Shakespeare

- Romeo and Juliet (Romeo, Mercutio)
- King Lear (Edmund, Edgar)
- Hamlet (Hamlet, Laertes)
- Henry IV, Part I (Prince Hal, Hotspur)
- Love's Labour's Lost (Berowne)
- Much Ado About Nothing (Benedick)
- A Midsummer Night's Dream (Lysander, Demetrius, Puck, Bottom)
- Twelfth Night (Orsino, Sebastian, Malvolio)
- As You Like It (Orlando)

Non-Shakespeare

- Libation Bearers by Aeschylus (Orestes)
- Oedipus the King by Sophocles (Messenger)
- Tamburlaine the Great by Christopher Marlowe (Tamburlaine)
- The Tragedy of Edward II by Christopher Marlowe (Edward)
- The White Devil by John Webster (Flamineo)
- The Duchess of Malfi by John Webster (Bosola)
- Marriage à la Mode by John Dryden (Rhodophil)
- The Country Wife by William Wycherley (Horner)

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How To Select A Song

AMDA's student body is diverse, and as an institution, we believe performers do not need to consider their ethnicity, skin color, body type, sexual orientation, or gender when selecting material for placement and scholarship auditions. Choose a song you know extremely well and feel comfortable performing.

AMDA wants you to feel at ease in the audition room, so select a piece that allows you to sing confidently rather than one that causes stress or strain. Your selection should be 60 to 90 seconds, or 32 bars, not including the piano introduction. It is often easiest to begin at the start and choose a natural stopping point, though you may also begin in the middle and sing through the end. Focus on selecting the portion of the song that best highlights your voice and strengths.

If you are auditioning at one of our regional or international auditions and need a piano accompaniment track, you may use Pianotrax for a professional backing track: https://www.pianotrax.com/.

Select

- Songs that show the most secure parts of your vocal range
- Songs that show your acting ability
- Songs with lyrics that you understand and for which you feel a personal connection

Avoid

- Long narrative songs
- "Signature" songs of star performers
- Songs with difficult piano accompaniments or songs that take the focus off the singer and place it on the accompanist

Popular Shows

- Aida
- Ain't Misbehavin'
- Allegiance
- Bye Bye Birdie
- Cabin in the Sky
- Drat! The Cat!
- Fame
- Finian's Rainbow
- Guys and Dolls
- Hairspray
- Kinky Boots
- Nine
- Pippin
- The Wiz
- Working
- Showboat (avoid Ol' Man River)
- The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
- The Wedding Singer
- You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown
- Once On This Island
- Little Shop of Horrors

OTHER GREAT OPTIONS: Disney films or stage musicals, Shows by Irving Berlin, Shows by George & Ira Gershwin, Shows by Alan Jay Lerner & Frederick Loewe, Shows by Richard Rodgers & Lorenz Hart, Shows by Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein, Shows with music by Harold Arlen

Still Looking for Songs?

For your convenience, we've listed numerous shows with songs that have been successful for students in the past. Keep in mind there are hundreds of other great shows from the early 1900s until 2019 with songs that may be perfect for your audition. This list does not represent any preference by AMDA for a particular genre or time period.

If you've found something from a show that is not on this list, something that you love, we urge you to use what best fits your talents. However, if you're still searching, the works these are a great place to start looking, or to expand your repertoire.

NOTE: Your personal favorites may not be the material that best serves you.

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How to Find the Right Material

Finding audition material doesn't start with Google — it starts with what already excites you. The strongest choices come from curiosity, not pressure.

Start Where You're Already Inspired

- Have a favorite actor? Explore the roles they've played and the plays those characters come from.
- Love a certain style of show? Research the playwright or composer and explore more of their work.
- Love a song from Wicked but don't want to sing Wicked? Look up the composer and discover other songs they've written. This helps you find material that fits you without doing what everyone else is doing.

The goal is not to find the "perfect" piece — it's to find the right fit for you.

Make the Search Part of the Process

The key is this: make the search fun.

Finding material isn't a chore — it's part of the work. The more curious you are, the more personal and specific your auditions become.

Free Online Resources

- Daily Actor – A large collection of contemporary monologues searchable by genre, tone, length, and style.
- Freedrama.net – Free short and long monologues pulled from published plays and public-domain works.
- Monologue Blogger – Curated monologues from published plays designed specifically for audition use.
- StageMilk Practice Monologues – Original, copyright-free monologues with tips and context for actors

Curated Databases

- The Monologue Database – A paid, professionally curated resource with filters by length, style, and character type. Helpful if you want a focused, audition-ready shortlist.
- Theatre Trip – Links monologues directly to their source plays, musicals, and classical texts.
- StageAgent Monologues – A searchable database with character context and video examples to support preparation.

Sign up for an AMDA audition today:
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