

Literature class: The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

Iowa core: Use a variety of strategies and skills to comprehend and interpret complex literature.

During the reading of the novel students will be given a character from the story to consider. Students will work in groups of two or three. Each group will collaboratively write a dramatic monologue (suggested length: 25-35 lines) for the character they are analyzing. One person from each group will present the monologue to the class. **A typed copy of the monologue will be handed in.** Several examples of dramatic monologues will be shown the class so students have a better idea of the expectation.

Consider these questions:

- What three or four carefully selected adjectives best describe the character's dominant personality traits?
- What two or three questions would you like to ask this character that would help you to better understand the individual?
- What two or three objects or symbols do you associate with this character?

These questions should be answered on paper but will not necessarily be included in the monologue. Each answer should include evidence and justification in the form of a page, a quote, etc. These questions and evidence will be typed and handed in along with the monologue.

A dramatic monologue is a type of poem (generally free verse, in a very conversational tone) that is voiced by a single speaker to a quiet listener or to the reader. Although the speaker addresses a specific topic, in the process, the individual reveals a great deal about her/himself.

Each monologue should:

- Meet the definition of a dramatic monologue
- Accurately and appropriately represent the character in a voice that seems authentic to the individual
- Reflect a knowledge of the character and his/her role in the novel
- Reveal some previously unknown facet of the character's life (the audience should gain a deeper understanding of the character's psychology)

Some of the BIG ideas we have discussed are:

Character, Family, Displacement, Justice, Depression, Economy, and the biggest idea of all, **ADVERSITY** – How do people handle it?