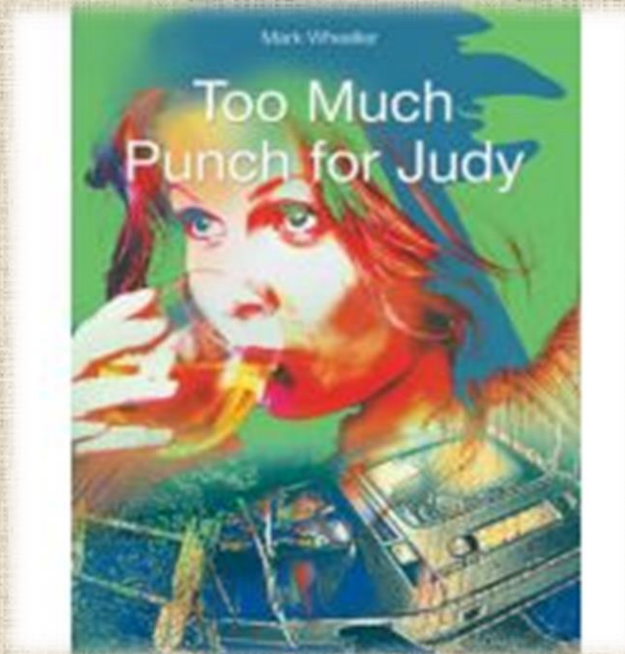


Too Much Punch for Judy

By Mark Wheeler



It is the **most performed** short play to the late-teens age group in the UK. Mark Wheeler's award winning drink drive documentary drama pulls no punches as it tells the harrowing tale of a young woman who kills her sister in an alcohol-related road accident.





Too Much Punch for Judy tells the **true story** of an incident which happened on **May 20th 1983**. Using only the words of those involved or closely affected, the play explores the problems surrounding the death of Joanna when her sister was at the wheel in a drink-drive incident.



The play looks at the sister's relationship with each other and their mother. It then concentrates on the actual crash and immediate aftermath, mainly through the eyes of the first witness at the scene. PC Chris Caten, in real life a good friend of the family, then has to break news of Joanna's death to her mother and Judy in turn, before the mother and daughter are left to deal with their loss.



Marking the Moment is a dramatic technique used to highlight a key moment in a scene or improvisation. This can be done in a number of different ways: for example through a freeze-frame, narration or thought-tracking. It has a similar effect to using a **spotlight** to focus attention on one area of the stage particular moment during a performance.

The Club

Jo & Judy – Like two warriors they approach us

Jo – that one's mine!

Judy – Good luck to you , I replay as I hear

Jo & Judy – their crappy chat up line

Bob & Nob – Hello gorgeous ... and what's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?

Jo & Judy – Avoiding plonkers like you!

Nob – How can they resist us?

Bob – with this piece de resistance

Nob & Nob – Hey look at you two with your curves and us with no brakes.

Judy & Jo – Flattery will get you everywhere

Nob – Just what we hoped!

Bob & nob – Darlin do you want a drink?

Jo – Judy what do you think?

Judy – I think they're plonkers

Judy & Jo – But mines a white wine

Judy – A bottle of white wine

Jo – Each!

Judy- No strings attached

All- Drink

Bob – Drink

Judy – Drink

Nob – Drink

Jo – Drink

All – Brahms and Liszt ... we're totally pissed.

Jo – A bottle of wine and I'm still standing

Jo & Jo – Oy you two ... stop touching us up

Bob & Nob – we did several times!

Judy – Part two of our evening ... a change of gear ... a good time
drink ... calling death to appear.

Jo – Come on Judy we'd better get out before we're thrown out

Judy – Wouldn't it be better if I drove?

Bob & Nob – Ignorance

Jo – No it's my car, it's my responsibility

Bob & Nob – Ignorance

Judy – But I haven't had as much to drink as you. I'll only be a little bit over the limit

Bob & Nob – Ignorance

Jo – Ok then (throws keys) You drive

Judy – It was just another night on the piss ... but it wasn't ... if anyone questioned it, everyone'd just say

Bob & Nob – Oh them two ...don't worry about them ..they'll be alright .. They're always pissed!

Judy – You get so sure of yourself, so clever well, not clever... you just don't think, cos you do it all the time. It only takes one person to point it out to you and you might not do it. Imagine if I see two people, drunk, who are going to drive home and I went over and told them what had happened to me last time I did it ... they'd get a cab wouldn't they?

Script Analysis

1 – How does the script help the audience understand where they characters are?

2 – At what point in the script is the fatal decision made?

3 – If you were performing this script how could you ‘Mark the Moment’ in order to make it clear to the audience what is happening?

4 – What character skills/physical theatre skills could you use to show the differences in characters. Gender specific and stereotypes.

5 – How could you use the lights to emphasise specific moments in the scene?

Thought Track

Individuals are invited to speak their thoughts or feelings aloud - just a few sentences. This can be done by clapping once during a scene to freeze the action. The actors freeze except the thought tracker and they address the audience revealing their inner feelings. To un pause the scene, the actor claps again and the action continues.

Consider the motivations of Judy. Why does she want to drive? Is Jo too quick to give in? Why not get a taxi home?

Bob wants to go to the hospital. Nob wants to get a kebab and go home. Consider why Bob wants to help Judy? Why is Bob unconcerned?

Write a thought track for each character.
Consider the information from the previous
slide.

- Jo
- Judy
- Bob
- Nob

Judy's Monologue

The accident happened on the 20th May 1983. Resigned ... I think that's the word. I'm resigned to the fact that it has happened.

If you go through life with a big guilt complex afterwards, you just end up hurting everyone else as well as yourself. 'cos you get bitter and wound up. Nothing I can do is going to change it, ever. I wouldn't have harmed Joanna, my sister, not on purpose, so I don't feel guilty about killing her ... because it was An accident.

You get so sure of yourself, so clever, well not clever ... you just don't think, 'cos you do it all the time. It only takes one person to point it out to you and you might not do it.

Before it happens you think ... 'oh I won't get caught' I would probably never have got stopped and breathalysed. I'm having to pay for my mistake in a different way. I still think about it every day. It may just be a one second thought through my mind ... like.... 'Why did I ever do that?' but I did ... didn't I And that's all there is to it.

At first I kept thinking the phone was going to ring and it's going to be Joanna, and she's going to say 'Oh what a sick joke' I used to think they'll be a knock at the door and things like that. You think of anything except facing the truth of what's happened. I thought for about six months I just could accept it.

I remember thinking that the next morning it would turn out to have been a nightmare. I'd be at home in my bed and I'd think ... 'what a horrible nightmare that was' but it wasn't obviously ... I was just in a kind of daze.

I actually did have a nightmare not long ago about it. All I can remember is that I turned round and saw Joanna sitting in the car ... really horrible ... munched up and she turned to face me and said 'look what you have done to my face' That really freaked me out, because for the first time it made me wonder ... would she have forgiven me if she survived. Well would you?

Jo's Monologue

- You've just read Judy's monologue.
- What if Judy's sister survived?
- How would she feel?
- Who would she blame?
- What would she say?

Write a monologue as the character of Jo, Judy's sister if she survived the crash.

The following slides with help guide you through monologue writing.

Follow the steps if you need help or you are struggling with structure and ideas.

Determine the purpose of the monologue

The purpose could be

- a story,
- a secret,
- an answer to an question, or
- an emotional release by a character

Decide who will be addressed in the monologue

It may be addressed to a

- specific character in the play,
- to the speaker themselves, or
- may be to the audience



Start the monologue with a hook (Sample Comedic Monologue)

I suppose, in the end, my recent alienation is my fault.

It still stings, though. Stings when I wake up, stings when I'm in the shower, stings when the wind whips at my face on my long, cold trek to work.

Use your character's voice and language

If I find out that you're contacting her in any other way,
I'm gonna find you and whoop your good for nothing
wannabe street boy ass!

-----"My Princesa" monologue by *Antonia Rodriguez*

Allow your character to reflect on the past and the present

CHRISTY: Up to the day I killed my father, there wasn't a person in Ireland knew the kind I was, and I there drinking, waking, eating, sleeping, a quiet, simple poor fellow with no man giving me heed. And I after toiling, moiling, digging, dodging from the dawn till dusk with never a sight of joy or sport saving only when I'd be abroad in the dark night poaching rabbits on hills, for I was a devil to poach.

-----*John Millington Synge's "The Playboy of the Western World"*

Include a moment of discovery

CHRISTY: Up to the day I killed my father, there wasn't a person in Ireland knew the kind I was, and I there drinking, waking, eating, sleeping, a quiet, simple poor fellow with no man giving me heed. . . . It was a bitter life he led me till I did up a Tuesday and halve his skull.

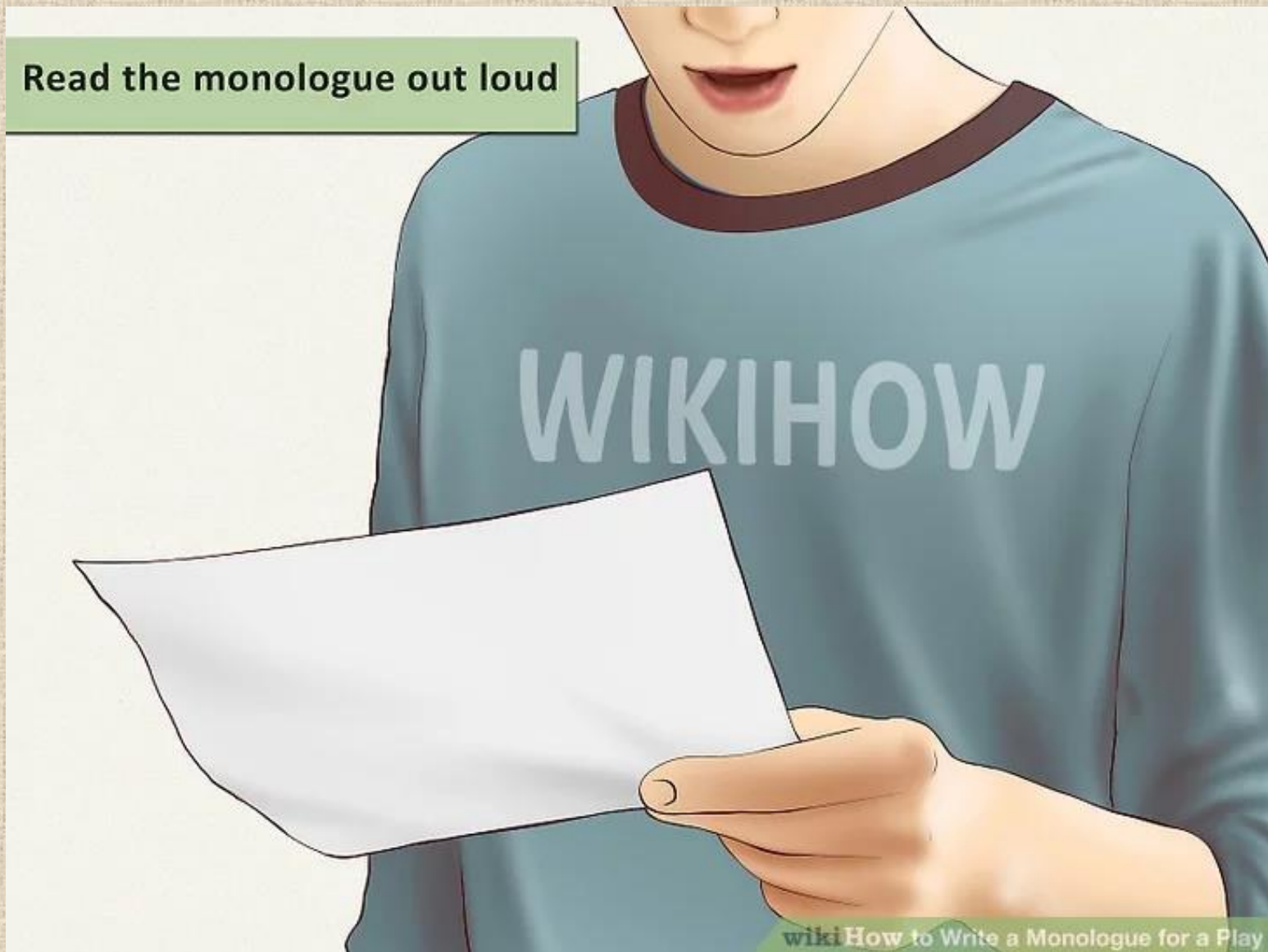
-----*John Millington Synge's "The Playboy of the Western World"*

Have a button ending

You were unattainable, but through the vision of you I was made to realize how hopeless it was to rise above the conditions of my birth.

-----*August Strindberg's "Miss Julie"*

Read the monologue out loud



Note moments where the monologue is confusing. Simplify these areas so the monologue is easy to follow for the listener.