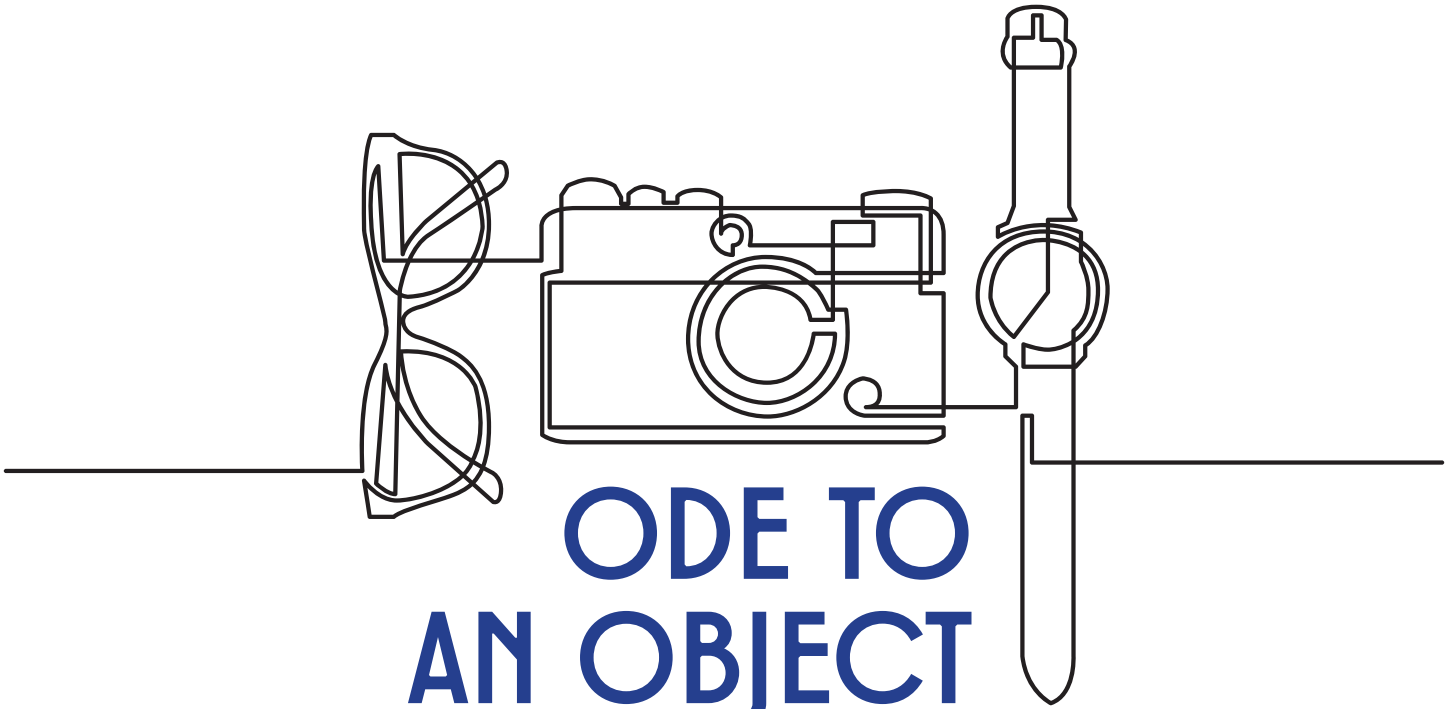


THEATER - MAKING AT HOME

GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE
EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



**ODE TO
AN OBJECT
MONOLOGUE**

NAME :

SCHOOL / ORGANIZATION :

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROJECT OVERVIEW

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| ODE TO AN OBJECT..... | 3 |
|-----------------------|---|

ACTIVITIES

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| SELECTING AN OBJECT..... | 4 |
| DESCRIBING YOUR OBJECT..... | 5 |
| DRAFTING YOUR ODE..... | 6 |
| WRITING YOUR ODE..... | 8 |
| YOUR ODE AS A MONOLOGUE..... | 9 |
| BRINGING YOUR ODE TO LIFE..... | 10 |

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| REFLECTION..... | 11 |
|-----------------|----|

| | |
|----------------|----|
| RESOURCES..... | 12 |
|----------------|----|

ODE TO AN OBJECT



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNSPLASH.

Objects can occupy a special place in our lives in different ways. They often connect us powerfully to the people, places, events, and moments we love most. When we attach emotions to inanimate things, they can serve as sources of comfort; some can inspire us through their magical or spiritual meaning. What we value most in our identity, culture, relationships, and unforgettable memories is often reflected by the objects we cherish.

In this project, you will choose a beloved object and express your praise for it in the form of an ode. You will then bring your ode to life as a monologue—an extended speech that is usually spoken by a performer in a play, film, or television program.

An ode is a poem in which a person expresses a strong feeling of love or respect for an object, individual, or idea. Odes, though written in the form of a poem, have been performed on the stage for many years. With origins in Ancient Greek Drama, odes were originally poetic pieces either sung or recited by an individual as a monologue, or by an ensemble known as a Greek chorus, often with musical accompaniment. These poems are typically written in 3 formats, Pindaric, Horatian, and Irregular.* For this project, you will work with the Irregular form, which allows for more flexibility in style and writing.

**For more information on odes and the different formats, please see our Resources page 12.*

Follow the steps and get creative! Remember, writing involves exploring what you want to say, selecting how to best express your thoughts, and revising what you have written to communicate clearly and powerfully. Give yourself space to come up with ideas, look them over, adjust, and keep going.

Though these steps have been designed to guide you, there is no wrong or right way to write. As you continue to write in the future, feel free to explore other techniques. What is most important is using your voice to tell your story. **HAVE FUN!**



We encourage you to use any of our theater warm-up videos with this packet! You can find them along with other projects here:
<https://tinyurl.com/theatermaking>

ACTIVITY

SELECTING AN OBJECT

Odes may be written in praise of many different things. For this project, you will focus on a specific object that is especially important to you.

Consider some of the following types of objects and brainstorm 3-5 specific things for each. Take some time to read through your completed lists and pick one that you resonate with the most. Though it is not necessary to physically hold the object in your hands, it will be helpful to be able to view it (or a photo of it) during your writing process.

BRAINSTORM

OBJECTS THAT YOU HAVE A POSITIVE EMOTIONAL CONNECTION TO:

EVERYDAY OBJECTS THAT YOU CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT:

**OBJECTS THAT UNEXPECTEDLY HAVE BECOME A SIGNIFICANT PART OF YOUR LIFE
DUE TO THE WORLD-WIDE PANDEMIC:**

YOUR CHOSEN OBJECT:

ACTIVITY

DESCRIBING YOUR OBJECT

Think about your object, and, if possible, spend some time with it. Hold it in your hand, while carefully looking at each of its parts. Reflect on how you use it, as well as its significance to you. Respond to the prompts below to describe your object, using as much detail as possible. Feel free to sketch as well as note your ideas.

OPTIONAL: PANTOMIME WITH OBJECTS

We invite you to explore your object through the theater technique of pantomime, in which precise and expressive movement is used to portray interactions with objects, without the objects actually being there. If possible, join Brian Allman, Geffen Playhouse Manager of Theater Education in building a theater skill and connecting to your object's features in a creative way through this video link: youtu.be/moN3IX68Pso

SKETCH YOUR OBJECT OR INCLUDE A PHOTOGRAPH OF IT HERE:

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Describe your object's physical characteristics. Consider its color, shape, size, smell, taste (if applicable), weight, decoration, and what it is made of. Focus on all five senses and write down as many descriptive adjectives that come to mind.

PURPOSE

Describe what the purpose of the object is. What is or was its original purpose? Do you use it in other ways than intended? If so, how? Does it serve an emotional purpose, such as making you feel better, safe, or grounded?

ACTIVITY

DESCRIBING YOUR OBJECT

EMOTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE & CONNECTION

Describe your object's significance to you. Consider the reasons it is special or resonates with you. What aspects of your personal identity does your object represent? What is your emotional connection to this object?

STORY

What is the "story" of your object? How did you come to have it? Is it tied to a specific person, event, place, or memory?

Now that you have explored your object in detail, go through your thoughts and circle the descriptions and connections that stand out the most to you and/or are your favorite aspects of your object. Add 1-2 more adjectives, emotions, sensory words or images to expand on each detail you have circled.

ACTIVITY

DRAFTING YOUR ODE

The Irregular Ode, which allows for more flexibility in style and writing, may still follow the typical format, which uses quatrain stanzas, or groups of 4 lines. Using a limited amount of lines and stanzas will push you to focus on the most important aspects you want to share about your object!

Keeping in mind the details you have circled and elaborated on, think about whether you would like to praise your object as a whole, or focus on a specific detail of it. Depending on your personal writing style, you have the option to make your poem rhyme or not. Use as much emotion and detail as possible to express why your object has become your muse!

STANZA 1

Line 1

Line 2

Line 3

Line 4

STANZA 2

Line 1

Line 2

Line 3

Line 4

STANZA 3

Line 1

Line 2

Line 3

Line 4

STANZA 4

Line 1

Line 2

Line 3

Line 4

WRITING YOUR ODE

Read over your draft and thoughtfully elaborate, cut, and rearrange the poetic text as needed. Finalize your ode in the lines below and do not forget to title it and give yourself credit!

TITLE:

WRITTEN BY:

ACTIVITY

YOUR ODE AS A MONOLOGUE

You will now transform your ode into a monologue—just as odes were presented in Ancient Greece. Follow the steps below to practice reciting your ode and to add new elements to support your words.

1. Go back to the previous page and take some time to read through and note the different emotions that you might use for each line when reciting your ode. Circle or highlight any words that can be said with power to emphasize their meaning.

2. Guided by the emotions and words you have identified, read your monologue at a whisper.

Note how whispering your monologue felt:

3. Consider any adjustments that would help you convey what your object means to you more strongly, then read your monologue loudly enough for another person to hear you.

Note how reading your monologue out loud felt:

4. Make any adjustments necessary for a room full of people to hear you and to clearly understand the significance of your object.

Note how reading your monologue more loudly than you may be used to speaking felt:

5. Consider what musical accompaniment (live music, instrumental song, ambient sound, or sound effects) you might want to include, to support the emotions of your monologue. Play your musical selection while reading your monologue loudly enough to be heard by a roomful of people, one more time.

Note how reading your monologue with accompaniment felt:

6. Using the emotional power you discovered, enough volume for a roomful of people to hear you, and musical accompaniment, recite your ode once more—as if to your object.

Note how it felt to celebrate your object in this way:

BRINGING YOUR ODE TO LIFE

Now that you have written and practiced reciting your Ode to an Object Monologue, here are more ways to continue working on your piece:

Challenge yourself to memorize your monologue and then perform it for another person.

Explore singing, rapping, or reciting your monologue in spoken word.

Share your written ode with someone and have them read it out loud to you.

Challenge yourself to memorize your monologue and then perform it for another person.

Record yourself performing your monologue using just sound or full video (don't forget your musical accompaniment)

Share your recording with another person or send it to the Geffen Playhouse. (Follow the submission guidelines on page 2.)

See the Resources on page (page #) for creative examples of recorded odes.

Using the same steps

Write an ode from the point of view of your chosen object to you.

Write an anti-ode to an object, in which you express how much you detest the object.

Use the link on the Resource page to learn more about traditional odes and then write an ode in the Pindaric or Hortian format.

REFLECTION

We hope that writing and performing an ode to an object has helped you see the many forms that theatre can take and how poetry can be brought to life on stage.

Take a moment and use the blank space to reflect on your writing process and how it felt to use your ode as a monologue.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CHOOSE YOUR OBJECT?

IN WHAT WAYS DID YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS MAKE YOU THINK OF YOUR OBJECT (OR OBJECTS IN GENERAL) DIFFERENTLY?

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT HOW A MONOLOGUE CAN BE STRUCTURED OR WRITTEN?

HOW DID IT FEEL TO USE POETRY TO CREATE THEATER? HOW MIGHT YOU USE OTHER ART FORMS TO CREATE THEATRICAL WORKS?

AS YOU PRACTICED RECITING YOUR ODE AS A MONOLOGUE, HOW DID IT FEEL TO GO STEP BY STEP WHILE ADJUSTING TO CREATE YOUR PERFORMANCE? WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF AS A PERFORMER?

RESOURCES

THE STORY OF DESIGN

<https://designformankind.com/2013/02/the-story-of-design/>

FOR THE LOVE OF STUFF

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/12/for-the-love-of-stuff/383592/>

POETRY THROUGH THE AGES - CLASSIC ODE

http://www.webexhibits.org/poetry/explore_classic_ode_atglance.html

POETRY 101: WHAT IS AN ODE? 3 TYPES OF ODE POEMS AND EXAMPLES

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/poetry-101-what-is-an-ode-poem-learn-about-the-3-different-types-of-ode-poems-with-examples>

QUATRAIN

<http://www.literarydevices.com/quatrain/>

ODE TO BOOKS BY BECCA

<https://youtu.be/cWh91MLrjbY>

AN ODE TO THE MOTHERS BY LO THE POET

<https://youtu.be/ye0iKeC9Y1Q>

ODE TO SPOT BY DATA IN STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION SEASON 6 EPISODE 5 'SCHISMS'

<https://youtu.be/SySZdvsFYt4>

AN ANTI-ODE TO THE CAMDEN BENCH BY ANONYMOUS

<https://youtu.be/uNTzjDIOjSY>
