

Dramatic Monologue

(persona poem)

- poem that reveals “a soul in action” through the speech of one character in a pivotal situation
- a character (often historical or fictional)—not the poet—addresses one or more listeners who remain silent
- persona: poet assumes another identity, essentially wearing a mask
- specific audience is implied but does not speak
- through monologue, speaker reveals crucial information about himself, other characters, and the situation
- monologue provides indirect clues that readers must piece together
- as a one-sided dialogue, without overt analysis or commentary, dramatic monologue emphasizes subjectivity requiring interpretation from reader
- often focuses on a pivotal event or situation in the persona’s life
- does not follow a particular rhyme scheme or metrical pattern