

## DUO INTERPRETATION: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

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### A Brief Introduction

Before we get into all the fun stuff, remember the rules for duo:

- The speech has to be within the 10 minute time limit (shoot for 9-10 min)
- The script has to be from a published source
- No eye contact with your partner, no touching

### Holy Smokes! Where do we start?!

The first thing you have to do is pick your partner. Note how all the titles say 'we'... Duo depends entirely on cooperation. Give this some thought! You're going to be spending the entire year with this person... The two of you will walk, talk, and breathe together. (Figuratively of course. That would be *kind of* weird if you really did.) Simply put, avoid picking a duo partner just because they're your friend. There are a few things to consider in a partner:

- Can the two of you work through disagreements, and not feel bitter afterwards?
- Do you trust this person?
- Can both of you dedicate enough time to practice, and work hard while you're at it?
- Is there chemistry between you two?

If you answered yes to all four, then the two of you are ready to move on to the next step... Choosing a script!

### How do we choose a script?

Picking your script is probably the most important part of the process. Again, there are some key things to consider.

- **What suits you? (Besides your suit)**  
Consider your own acting ability and your own interests. If you look younger than you are, then maybe a good choice would be to pick a script with a little kid as a character. Even though interpretation is about becoming someone else, looking like your character really helps. The most important thing is to stay true to your piece, so pick a script with characters you know you can play well. The dynamic between the characters is also very important—this is why scripts

centering on two main characters tend to do well. Judges want to emotionally connect to your piece, and seeing interaction and chemistry take place helps.

Speaking of main characters, make sure your protagonist(s) is/are likeable. Again, this helps your judge connect emotionally to you.

- **Is this script available in a published format?**

What I mean by this is that your script cannot be from an anonymous online source. It has to be from a published source that you can buy. Although our speech room has a lot of scripts you can Xerox, if you have your heart set on a particular piece, *Samuel French* in Los Angeles is a great place to buy published play scripts.

- **Can the story be told from beginning to end in around 10 minutes?**

In addition to this, can you act out the story in a concise manner? A book that may be interesting in reading may end up being confusing when acted out by two people.

Cutting the script can also be a crazy process, but there is another guide on how to do this on the speech page. In addition to the guide, I am always available to help you. ☺

- **Is the script appropriate?**

There is a fine line between raunchy/gutsy humor and something that is just plain taboo. Just use your discretion – what would your parents think of your script?

When you've picked your script and finished cutting it, we can move on to choreography.

## Choreography...? Um, but we can't dance!

Silly monkeys. Choreography in duo refers to the movement of your piece—how your characters interact with each other and the space around them. Choreography depends entirely on the piece, but here are a few important things to remember and consider:

- **Create your environment**

You won't get far if all your characters do is stand around and do nothing. Look at your script—are they at school? A hospital? Think of what objects exist in these places in real life, and integrate them.

- **Transitions**

With so much material to condense into ten minutes, there will be gaps in some parts of your script. To bridge them, you can use what are called “transitions” — sound effects and movements to indicate you're moving to the next scene. You will learn how to do these by watching duos, so look at the Facebook page or Weebly page for videos, and note when you see them.

- **Singing and Dancing**

Alright. So this is very popular in our league, and you may be tempted to put in beatboxing or music or dancing into your script. HOWEVER, you should remember to only implement these if they are appropriate and enhance the overall feel of your piece.

## Is that it?

There's only so much that can be taught via text—because duo is such a hands-on event, you'll be learning a lot through experience. Get ready to be a part of the best event ever—it's going to be a blast!