

Name _____

Date _____

Soliloquy

In a **drama**, a soliloquy is a speech given by a character alone on a stage. It is different from a monologue, which is a speech that is often directed to another character. In soliloquies, characters seem to be thinking aloud, revealing thoughts, feelings, and plans. It is almost as if the characters are talking to themselves.

Read the following play excerpt and answer the questions.

The Secret Heart

Marcus stood alone on the empty basketball court after everyone had left practice. The gymnasium lights dimmed as he bounced the ball slowly, looking up at the hoop.

"Everyone thinks I'm so confident," he said to himself, unaware that anyone could hear him. "If only they knew how scared I feel before every game. Dad expects me to get that scholarship, Coach keeps talking about my 'natural talent,' and my friends think basketball comes easy to me."

He threw the ball at the hoop and missed. Retrieving it, he continued, "Sometimes I just want to quit and join the science club instead. Nobody knows I stay up reading astronomy books when I should be sleeping. The stars don't judge you or expect you to be perfect. They just

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shine, night after night, no matter who's watching." Marcus sighed deeply. "But how can I let everyone down? They've all invested so much in me becoming this basketball star. Tomorrow's championship game... I guess I'll play my best and keep my real dreams hidden away, like always."

He made one final perfect shot, then walked slowly toward the locker room, unaware his coach had heard everything from the doorway.

1. What literary device is Marcus using when he speaks his thoughts aloud while alone?

2. How does this passage reveal the character's inner conflict?

3. What is the purpose of using this literary technique in the story?

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Soliloquy - Answer Key

1. What literary device is Marcus using when he speaks his thoughts aloud while alone?

Marcus is using a soliloquy - speaking his thoughts aloud while alone, revealing his inner thoughts directly to the audience.

2. How does this passage reveal the character's inner conflict?

The passage shows Marcus's conflict between his public image as a confident basketball player and his private interest in astronomy. He struggles between meeting others' expectations and pursuing his true passion.

3. What is the purpose of using this literary technique in the story?

The soliloquy gives readers direct access to Marcus's hidden thoughts and feelings. It reveals his internal struggle and creates dramatic irony, as the audience knows something about Marcus that other characters don't.