

Formative 4: Oral History to Monologue Practice

Directions: For this formative, you will be practicing the skill of adapting an oral history to a dramatic monologue. Utilizing the transcript and audio excerpts from the Baltimore Neighborhoods Heritage Project’s (BNHP) interview with Inez Carrington Royster, work together as a class to write a 100-200 word monologue.

Oral History Links:

- [University of Baltimore Archives Space: Inez Carrington Royster](#)
- [Inez Carrington Royster Interview Transcript \[.pdf\]](#)
- [Inez Carrington Royster Interview Audio](#)

The selected sections for this assignment start at 9:40 and 23:45, respectively.

Oral History Excerpt 1:

Butler: What did you do during the week for recreation or fun?

Mrs. Royster: Nothing but just play.

Butler: Did you play close to where you lived?

Mrs. Royster: Yeah. Children played together from house to house, you know, like that.

Butler: You were very close with your family? You were the oldest child?

Mrs. Royster: Yeah, I was. Yes.

Butler: Did this cause you to have extra responsibilities?

Mrs. Royster: Yes, it did, because I was the oldest. Yes, indeed.

Butler: What did you have to do? Did you have to more or less take care of the children while your parents worked?

Mrs. Royster: That’s right. Take care of the children best I could for a little girl growing up. Let me see, I – [indiscernible] and two younger ones. I took care of all of them.

Butler: You say that you took care of who? I didn’t hear you, Ms. Royster.

Mrs. Royster: I took care of my oldest brother. He – well, Momma had to go out to work, you know. Because he was the oldest son he thought he was the boss, but she said I – so he had to help me, you know. He had to help. He wasn’t much help because he was a boy.

Butler: So he didn’t help much?

Mrs. Royster: No.

Butler: Were you responsible for doing household chores?

Mrs. Royster: Yeah. Yes, indeed. Yes indeed, rocking the baby in the old-fashioned cradle.

Butler: You had to take care of the babies?

Mrs. Royster: Yeah.

Butler: As they grew up?

Mrs. Royster: As they grew up.

Butler: And the boy - the oldest boy, what was his name, Ms. Royster?

Mrs. Royster: [Harley] Carrington.

Butler: He wasn’t much help, huh? What was he doing?

Mrs. Royster: No, he wasn't much help, either. He liked bossing.

Butler: What was he doing?

Mrs. Royster: Playing.

Butler: Playing?

Mrs. Royster: Yeah. Just playing, uh huh. He called me this morning.

Butler: Last time we talked you told me about some parties that you had gone to. Some parties that you had. Right.

Mrs. Royster: Uh huh. Well, it really wasn't much like you call them parties now.

Your Monologue:

Please write the monologue your class developed based on the interview excerpt above in the space provided below.

Oral History Excerpt 2:

(Mrs. Royster is speaking about the 1920's in Virginia, where she was raised.)

Mrs. Royster: Going to school. I ain't got but one sister no way, but Ethel and [Harley] finished school. And Lester, he didn't finish ... Well people then, you know, they stopped their children for - to do different kind of work - jobs, you know. Like - well, if Momma going to wash today she wants you to bring that water up and everything and it just kept you away from school maybe that day. Or maybe two days you might have to do something else. So, you know they did just like they wanted in other words... [it] came up later though that we had to go to school. It was later that they had to send their children to school. The whites continued, but the coloreds didn't... white[s] did, never stopped. But they had better conveniences than what we had, you see, for to keep that child in school. We had to stop to do this and do that, you know, which the parents should have been doing - after later years, then they had to do it right on just the same because they made a change in the schools... And so therefore - well, at that time then I was growing older and older and so I had to work... for my stepfather. He got to a place that he couldn't work and my brother and I had to take over. And so we did farm work.

Butler: Farm work?

Mrs. Royster: Yeah.

Butler: How old were you then?

Mrs. Royster: Twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty- nine. Twenty-eight, when I got married.

Butler: Twenty-eight when you got married?

Mrs. Royster: Uh huh. I was twenty-two years old.

Butler: Twenty-two years old when you first got married?

Mrs. Royster: Uh huh.

Butler: When did you meet your husband? How'd that come about?

Mrs. Royster: Oh, my Lord. We went to this party, I told you, and I don't know. They had cake and all this stuff, you know, and turning bottles, ice cream, all that kind of thing. That's how I met him.

Butler: Turning bottles? What was that?

Mrs. Royster: You'd take a bottle and put it on the floor, then you'd put your finger in the mouth of the bottle, you know, and turn it around and whichever girl it comes to, that's your girlfriend.

Butler: Oh. Oh.

Mrs. Royster: Yeah. Like that. So.

Butler: What'd you have to do? Did you have to do anything to it? I mean -

Mrs. Royster: He had to turn it. I didn't. The boy turned it.

Butler: I see.

Mrs. Royster: I didn't.

Butler: And if it pointed at you, what happened?

Mrs. Royster: Well, I didn't - the bottle never did come to me because I got out of it. I was busy talking to some other girl or some other boy, you know. I wasn't interested in turning bottles. I just looked at them. I wasn't interested in that.

Butler: Did you ever play that game?

Mrs. Royster: No. Nuh uh.

Butler: The reason I asked is because when I was younger, and I'm thirty-two. When I was younger we'd also played the game similar, but a kiss was exchanged on the end at our parties. And I was wondering if your game was similar to that.

Mrs. Royster: Uh huh.

Butler: Right? The boy would spin it and point it at a girl; a kiss was exchanged. Was your game was similar to that?

Mrs. Royster: Yes.

Butler: Did you –

Mrs. Royster: She was his girl whether he wanted her or not.

Butler: At least for that party.

Mrs. Royster: Yeah. For the party. Yeah, you know, just for the party. Yeah. But I was – I'd just look at them. I mean, you know, I'd stand back, you know. All of these in a circle around, you know. See who the bottle mouth was going to, you know, like that. And so I wouldn't get in a circle. [Indiscernible].

Butler: Is this the party you met your husband at?

Mrs. Royster: Yeah, it was the same one I met him at. Yeah, we just laughed and talked and [indiscernible]. This was in – Saturday night, so we all had to go to church Sunday. We all went to Sunday School. Come back to this - my stepfather's relatives. We had dinner. So he came down and had dinner with us too, you know, [indiscernible] talking, you know, like people do, you know.

Butler: Right. Mrs. Royster: And then I went home that afternoon and another boy carried me home in a Model-T, you know - carried me home, you know. [Indiscernible] there wasn't no hard surface then, you know, just dusty roads.

Butler: Oh, there wasn't no hard surface then? Right.

Mrs. Royster: Just a dusty road, you know, and the dust was behind us. And the car went [indiscernible]. Butler: Did everybody usually meet their boyfriends at parties? Was this the way of courting went on among your age group?

Mrs. Royster: No. Just different parties and different things. You see, they was courting anyway. And so - not a party specially, you know, they –

Your Monologue:

Please write the monologue your class developed based on the interview excerpt above in the space provided below.
