

# A Guide to Dramatic Interp (DI)

Use the following standards when selecting a piece:

1. Do you identify with the main character, theme, conflict?
2. Does the main character fit your personality? [voice, face, physical]?
3. Do we genuinely like the main character(s)? Do we care about their conflict?
4. Does the language of the play engage you as a reader?
5. Is there a wide variety of levels which build to the climax? [shape]
6. Does the ending leave us with a strong resolution?

## Cutting your Selection: Cha Cha Cha Method

1. “CHUNK” it:
  - find the various selections of your piece
  - give brief plot synopsis of the play
  - name each section [one to two words only]
2. “CHUCK” it:
  - throw out sections that you don’t like
  - don’t worry about sections which may be important to the plot
  - at this point, you may realize that you don’t like the piece as much as you thought you did.
3. “CHOOSE” it:

These are the four most vital minutes of your piece:

  - a. Climax
    - choose this section first
    - include the building of intensity
    - there should be no breathing in the audience
    - approximately one to two minutes
  - b. Resolution
    - the message of your piece should be here
    - this section should give us hope
    - there should be an incredible last line
    - it should be less than one minute
  - c. Teaser
    - this section should get our attention to set the mood
    - we should be introduced to the main character(s)
    - it should be less than one minute
  - d. Introduction
    - should mention the theme or message [a quotation is good]
    - should describe the relationship between the characters
    - should tell all the important information
4. “CHUM” it:
  - this section is the rising action which builds to the conflict

- it should lead into the climax smoothly, be aware of its “shape”
  - this section should make us like the main character
  - include humor, if possible
  - create audience identification
  - each piece of rising action should be approximately the same length
  - each piece of rising action should be at a different “emotional level” and keeps us engaged with variety
5. “CHIP” it
- these are “trimming cuts” or the cutting of specific lines and words
  - this step should help to maintain the balance of each section
  - this is the most difficult step, it is a painful step, it must be done soon – before you get attached to the material which will get cut eventually
  - this step is a last resort, you should be down to at least 10 minutes before “chipping”
6. “CHECK” it
- Time it!
  - It is better to be short than long [you can always add]
  - Use time to determine the “shape” of your cutting – find a balance
7. “CHEAT” it
- Hopefully, you will not need this step
  - BUT, it is the adding of lines and brief sections to either. Make your cutting make sense OR make your cutting flow better

## CHARACTER CHARTS

*“Interpretation is a series of CHOICES...most of them wrong.”*

*-- Pam Cady Wycoff*

### 1. Vocal character:

#### Primary Goals →

- to give contrast and variety [don’t play it safe. RISK.]
- to make choices for each character [know the range or extremes]
- Make them believe you

#### Vocal choices →

- rate. Characteristics and traits, but do not rush
- volume. Adjust to the room
- quality or tone. Resonant, nasal, breathy, husky, worble, accents
- articulation. Exaggerated, crisp, loose, mushy

### 2. Physical Character:

#### Primary Goals →

- to make the audience see and believe
- to use the total body
- Make them believe you

Body Positions – Knees  
[tension]

Torso/Shoulders  
[heart]

Neck/Head  
[thinking]

Two characters cannot have the same body levels.

### 3. Character charts

- these are a series of choices, which may be wrong
- use the charts for consistency and reference during practice
- you can ALWAYS change the chart