

When selecting a speech, all candidates should feel free to choose any of the speeches. We would always recommend that candidates select speeches which best demonstrate their strengths and abilities, choose characters with whom they feel a real connection. Please speak in your own voice (do not use an accent other than your own).

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf

by Ntozake Shange

LADY IN RED

One thing I don't need
is any more apologies
I got sorry greetin' me at my front door
you can keep yours.
I don't know what to do wit em
I'm gonna haveta throw some away
I can't get to the clothes in my closet
for alla the sorries.
I'm gonna tack a sign to my door
leave a message by the phone
'if you called to say your sorry call somebody else! I don't use em anymore'

You were always inconsistent
doin' somethin & then bein sorry
beatin' my heart to death!
Talkin' bout you sorry well,
I will not call,
I'm not goin' to be nice,
I will raise my voice,
& scream & holler
& break things & race the engine
& tell all your secrets about yourself to your face & I won't be sorry for none of it

I LOVED YOU ON PURPOSE,I WAS OPEN ON PURPOSE! I still crave
vulnerability & close talk
& I'm not even sorry bout you bein sorry!
you can carry all the guilt & grime ya wanna

just dont give it to me!
I can't use another sorry

Romeo & Juliet

By William Shakespeare Act 2, Scene 1

Juliet / RJ 2.1

Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke; but farewell, compliment.
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay',
And I will take thy word; yet if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully;
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse, and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light.
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true-love passion. Therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discoverèd.

Hamlet

By William Shakespeare Act 2, Scene 2

HAMLET

I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercise; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory. This most excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a god! The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals. And yet to me what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me, no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Sonnet 116

By William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Sonnet 18

By William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to Time thou grow'st.
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Romeo & Juliet

By William Shakespeare Act 2, Scene 2

ROMEO

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady, O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

Henry V

By William Shakespeare Act 1, Scene 2

KING HENRY

We are glad the Dauphin is so pleasant with us;
His present and your pains we thank you for:
When we have match'd our rackets to these balls,
We will, in France, by God's grace, play a set
Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.
Tell him he hath made a match with such a wrangler
That all the courts of France will be disturb'd
With chaces. And we understand him well,
How he comes o'er us with our wilder days,
Not measuring what use we made of them.
We never valued this poor seat of England;
And therefore, living hence, did give ourself
To barbarous licence; as 'tis ever common
That men are merriest when they are from home.
But tell the Dauphin I will keep my state,
Be like a king and show my sail of greatness
When I do rouse me in my throne of France:

Henry VI Part I

By William Shakespeare Act 5, Scene 4

JOAN LA PUCELLE

First, let me tell you whom you have condemn'd:
Not me begotten of a shepherd swain,
But issued from the progeny of kings;
Virtuous and holy; chosen from above,
By inspiration of celestial grace,
To work exceeding miracles on earth.
I never had to do with wicked spirits:
But you, that are polluted with your lusts,
Stain'd with the guiltless blood of innocents,
Corrupt and tainted with a thousand vices,
Because you want the grace that others have,
You judge it straight a thing impossible
To compass wonders but by help of devils.
No, misconceived! Joan of Arc hath been
A virgin from her tender infancy,
Chaste and immaculate in very thought;
Whose maiden blood, thus rigorously effused,
Will cry for vengeance at the gates of heaven.

Wild Honey

By Michael Frayn (after Anton Chekhov)

ANNA PETROVNA

How can you say that? How can you lie to me, on such a night as this, beneath such a sky? Tell your lies in autumn, if you must, in the gloom and the mud, but not now, not here. You're being watched! Look up, you absurd man! A thousand eyes, all shining with indignation! You must be good and true, just as all this is good and true. Don't break this silence with your little words! There's no man in the world I could ever love as I love you.

All right – if you really hate it all so much I'll go away again. Is that what you want? I'll go away, and everything will be just as it was before. Yes...? (she laughs) Idiot! Take it! Snatch it! Seize it! What more do you want? Smoke it to the end, like a cigarette – pinch it out – tread it under your heel. Be human! You funny creature! A woman loves you – a woman you love – fine summer weather. What could be simpler than that? You don't realize how hard life is for me. And yet life is what I long for. We're surrounded by life. We must live, too, Misha! Leave all the problems for tomorrow. Tonight, on this night of nights, we'll simply live!

Brand New Ancients

by Kae Tempest

See - all that we have here is all that we've always had.

We have jealousy
and tenderness and curses and gifts.
But the plight of a people who have forgotten their myths and imagine that
somehow now is all that there is
is a sorry plight,
all isolation and worry -
but the life in your veins
it is godly, heroic.
You were born for greatness;
believe it. Know it.
Take it from the tears of the poets.

There's always been heroes
and there's always been villains
and the stakes may have changed
but really there's no difference.
There's always been greed and heartbreak and ambition and bravery and love and
trespass and contrition - we're the same beings that began, still living
in all of our fury and foulness and friction,
everyday odysseys, dreams and decisions . . .
The stories are there if you listen.

The stories are here, the stories are you, and your fear
and your hope is as old
as the language of smoke, the language of blood, the language of languishing love.

Angélique

By Lorena Gale

ANGÉLIQUE

How long can I wait? Each minute brings me closer to a living death. And I'm alive. I am alive!

His touches burn, sear, scorch, igniting fire deep inside where pain and ice had been. And I feel... heat, life, force power, Black and strong.

She envies that. Cold, passionless, bitch! Just like her bastard husband. Both sucking. Sucking life. Denying life.

No! I am not a chair, a sack of grain or a calf to be fattened and sold for slaughter! I am alive. And loved. And I can't wait...any longer.

Antigone

By Jean Anouilh

ANTIGONE

I do know what I am talking about! It is you who have lost your way and don't know what to say. I am too far away from you now, talking to you from a kingdom you can't get into, with your quick tongue and your hollow heart. [Laughs.] I laugh, Creon, because I see suddenly what a transparent hypocrite you are. Creon, the family man! Creon, the contented sitter on benches, in the evening, in his garden! Creon, desecrating the dead while he tries to fob me off with platitudes about happiness! I spit on your happiness! I spit on your idea of life-that life that must go on, come what may. You are all like dogs that lick everything they smell. You with your promise of a humdrum happiness-provided a person doesn't ask too much of life. I want everything of life, I do; and I want it now! I want it total, complete: otherwise I reject it! If life must be a thing of fear and lying and compromise; if life cannot be free, gallant, incorruptible-then, Creon, I choose death!

King John

By William Shakespeare Act 3, Scene 4

CONSTANCE

I am not mad: this hair I tear is mine;
My name is Constance; I was Geoffrey's wife,
Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost.
I am not mad, I would to God I were,
For then 'tis like I should forget myself.
O, if I could, what grief should I forget!
Preach some philosophy to make me mad,
And thou shalt be canònized, Cardinal.
For, being not mad, but sensible of grief,
My reasonable part produces reason
How I may be delivered of these woes,
And teaches me to kill or hang myself.
If I were mad I should forget my son,
Or madly think a babe of clouts were he.
I am not mad. Too well, too well I feel
The different plague of each calamity

Welcome to Thebes

by Moira Buffini

EURYDICE

I only fought because there had to be an opposition We could not let the violence
go on

Could not have another Policies

So I found myself-

It's literally like that

Found myself with others

Acting to oppose

Speaking

Words issuing from out my mouth

In torrents

A solace from the pain

I never dreamt that politics would be my path

I've always hated them

Hated standing there at Creon's side

Watching the ebb and flow of power from man to man The little games of
consequence

Experiments with human lives.

Politics is what I've always fought against.

But now I've won

I'm feeling sick

I've promised them pipe dreams, Ismene

Snow in Midsummer

By Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig

DOU YI

Mother Cai, don't cry

Don't get angry or curse the sky

Maybe Dou Yi is not fit for this time.

My mother read me a story about a loyal official framed for murder.

As he howled a Heaven before his execution

Frost flew from the sky even though it was May.

If we still live on a planet that hates injustice

Snow will fall from the clouds and shield my remains.

May that snow be the last water that falls on New Harmony until

Justice is brought to Dou Yi.

Officers –

Do you see the white flag flapping overhead?

If I am innocent

Not a drop of hot blood will spill onto the green earth or stain my clothes No
matter how many bullets pierce this flesh.

My blood will fly towards the Blue Sky and

Stain the white flag flying above us.

This has happened before when wrongs were suffered by honest women. Now it
will happen here

Where the good suffer poverty and a short life

And the wicked live long and make lots of money.

Because officials are heartless and choose to

Close their eyes and fill their pockets

Cock

By Mike Bartlett

W

Oh come on. Mad? The Situation? Don't patronize me John. Following you? We have the same route to work, we always saw each other, you messed me around. thought we have something and you go back to him. I'm angry John, I'm really fucking angry. I'm not following you, we just can't stop looking at each other.

I mean I think here's still something

But you went back to him, I hope you're happy.

The problem is we can't stop looking.

I think you are really really scared.

Something happened when we slept together I could see what happened in your head that night, what you let yourself think for a moment that maybe it was okay, maybe it was allowed, and as I said before I'm just very honest and I have a feeling it's only a matter of time before the things that've been nudged out of place in your head find a new , a new pattern and realise that, John, you can do what you like.

It's okay.

Rochdale

By David Yee

ATHENA

Do you have any idea where you are? Because you're not in Canada right now. You're not in Toronto the Good right now. You're not even on Bloor street no more, son. You're in motherfucking **Rochdale**. You're in the heart of the counter-culture.

And to my friend over there, the counter-culture means a lot of things. Means community. Means sticking up for one another. Means having one another's backs. Means railing against the system and, my brother, while I know you and I are different, we were made by the *same system*. It broke you like it broke me, and that's why we're here.

The counter-culture believes in peace. The counter-culture believes in protest. The counter-culture believes in the value of a *life*. What do *you* believe in?

See, the discussion I was having with my friend over there, that you so rudely interrupted, was about – among other things – the value of self-defense. My friend believes strongly in Dr. King's petitions of peace through non-violent protest. I'm not so convinced. I think love can solve almost any problem, yes. And while love might convince you not to shoot me, love will not *protect* me if I get shot. Do you understand the difference there?

Henry IV, part 1

By William Shakespeare Act 3, Scene 2

PRINCE HAL

Do not think so; you shall not find it so:
And God forgive them that so much have sway'd Your majesty's good thoughts
away from me!

I will redeem all this on Percy's head
And in the closing of some glorious day
Be bold to tell you that I am your son;
When I will wear a garment all of blood
And stain my favours in a bloody mask,
Which, wash'd away, shall scour my shame with it: And that shall be the day,
whene'er it lights,

That this same child of honour and renown,
This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight,
And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.

For every honour sitting on his helm,
Would they were multitudes, and on my head
My shames redoubled! for the time will come, That I shall make this northern
youth exchange His glorious deeds for my indignities.

The Unnatural and Accidental Women

By Marie Clements

REBECCA

The Unnatural and Accidental Women by Marie Clements REBECCA: I'm dancing in Pigeon Square. It's not a dream, it's a memory. I'm four years old, and I don't have to ask why they call it Pigeon Square. There's pigeon shit everywhere. At four a genius ... I know. A row of old men are sitting like stumps ... smoking, laughing, tilting their heads back in a chuckle or a slug of rum. They are talking to the Character--my dad. He's playing the harmonica. I'm pretending I'm a dancer. We don't know who's pretending more. Me, or him. But my feet are hitting the squares like I know what I'm doing, and he's hitting all the notes they can hear. They take their pennies out and splash them down around my dancing feet. The coppers fall ... it is the most beautiful sound you can imagine, because you see I am very special, and talented, and the "poor bastards," as my father would say, are happy, clapping. I bow. My dad takes my hand. We say goodbye. Some of them touch, remember a daughter, some smile and wave a mitt, not a glove ... and one reaches his glove to surround my braid. My dad--the Character--takes his hand and says to the man in the clearest loggia "I could kill you": "Enough." The man lets go of my braid. My father, in the clearest "I love you," squishes my shoulder in a hug and says, "It's time to get the chain for the power saw. It should be fixed by now."

Measure for Measure

By William Shakespeare Act 4, Scene 2

ISABELLA

To whom should I complain? Did I tell this,
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths,
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,
Either of condemnation or approval;
Bidding the law make court'sy to their will:
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:
Though he hath fallen by prompture of the blood,
Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour.
That, had he twenty heads to tender down
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,
Before his sister should her body stoop
To such abhorr'd pollution.
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die:
More than our brother is our chastity.
I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest.

All My Sons

By Arthur Miller

CHRIS

It take a little time to toss that off. Because they weren't just men. For instance, one time it'd been raining several days and this kid came to me, and gave me his last pair of dry socks. Put them in my pocket. That's only a little thing... but... That's the kind of guys I had. They didn't die... They killed themselves for each other. I mean that exactly. A little more selfish and they'd've been here today. And I got an idea ...watching them go

down. Everything was being destroyed, see, but it seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of... responsibility. Man for man. You understand me? To show that, to bring that onto the earth again like some kind of a monument and everyone would feel it standing there, behind him, and it would make a difference to him. (pause) And then I came home and it was incredible. I... there was no meaning in it here. The whole thing to them was a kind of a ... bus accident. I went to work with Dad, and that rat-race again. I felt... what you said... ashamed somehow. Because nobody was changed at all.

Two Gentlemen of Verona

By William Shakespeare Act 1, Scene 2

JULIA

[She tears the letter and drops the pieces]

O hateful hands, to tear such loving words;
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey
And kill the bees that yield it with your stings.

I'll kiss each several paper for amends.

[She picks up some pieces of paper]

Look, here is writ 'Kind Julia' - unkind Julia!

As in revenge of thy ingratitude

I throw thy name against the bruising stones,

Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.

And here is writ 'Love-wounded Proteus'.

Poor wounded name: my bosom as a bed

Shall lodge thee till thy wound be throughly healed,

And thus I search it with a sovereign kiss.

But twice or thrice was Proteus written down—

Be calm, good wind, blow not a word away

Till I have found each letter in the letter

Except mine own name. That, some whirlwind bear

Unto a ragged, fearful, hanging rock

And throw it thence into the raging sea.

Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ:

Poor forlorn Proteus', 'Passionate Proteus,

To the sweet Julia' —that I'll tear away.

And yet I will not, sith so prettily

He couples it to his complaining names.

Thus will I fold them, one upon another.

Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

Henry the VI Part III

By William Shakespeare Act 1, Scene 4

MARGARET

What! was it you that would be England's king?
Was't you that revelled in our parliament,
And made a preachment of your high descent?
Where are your mess of sons to back you now?
The wanton Edward, and the lusty George?
And where's that valiant crook-back prodigy,
Dicky your boy, that with his grumbling voice
Was wont to cheer his dad in mutinies?
Or, with the rest, where is your darling Rutland?
Look, York, I stained this napkin with the blood
That valiant Clifford, with his rapier's point,
Made issue from the bosom of the boy;
And, if thine eyes can water for his death,
I give thee this to dry thy cheeks withal.
Alas, poor York; but that I hate thee deadly,
I should lament thy miserable state.
I prithee, grieve, to make me merry, York.
What, hath thy fiery heart so parched thine entrails
That not a tear can fall for Rutland's death?
Why art thou patient, man? Thou shouldst be mad;
And I, to make thee mad, do mock thee thus.
Stamp, rave, and fret, that I may sing and dance.