

## EMILY'S MONOLOGUE FROM "OUR TOWN"

**AGES:** Middle School, High School

### DESCRIPTION

Three easy steps

1. I begin the class by having one student perform Emily's monologue or by showing the video clip.
2. I then pass out this work sheet and an index card to each student. They can only use the space on the index card to write their own goodbye speech.
3. They then have to perform it for the class. It is amazing to see the emotions that this exercise produces.

### ***Our Town:*** *Written Responses to Emily's "Farewell, Earth!" Monologue*

Before returning to her grave on the hill, Emily emotes, "Good-bye Grover's Corners.... Good-bye to clocks ticking... and Mama's sunflower. And food and coffee. And new ironed dresses and hot baths... and sleeping and waking up. Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you!" Emily's impassioned speech is a response to her realization that she had not been aware of the wonder of life as she lived it. "I didn't realize...all that was going on and we never noticed?"

Now it is your turn to write a monologue...well, actually two...reacting to Emily's "Take me back to my grave" speech. In your first monologue, you should follow Wilder's style and Emily's pattern and list several things that humans would miss about the earth. This soliloquy should praise what you would miss most about life. For example:

*"Good-bye Pleasant View...Mom and Dad. Good-bye tickling breezes and soft lips. New blue jeans and flickering candles and energy and exhaustion. Good-bye, my car...CD player and CDs. Good-bye bright blue interior and bucket seats. And the turbo engines. And the starting up every morning and the shutting off at night. Oh earth, you're too wonderful for anyone to realize you."*

In the second version of your monologue, you will incorporate *irony*. Again, follow Wilder's style and Emily's pattern, but list several things that humans would not miss about the earth. For example:

*"Good-bye, world hunger, violence, hate, racism. Good-bye, war, nuclear arms, police brutality. Good-bye to killers and robbers..." etc, etc*

Or, on a less serious note...

*“Good-bye long lines at the crowded supermarket. Good-bye soggy Cheerios, and people who don’t brush their teeth. Good-bye to homework and in-school suspension. And getting dressed up and going to dances and worrying about dates. Good-bye accidents caused by icy roads. Good-bye world! Good-bye to numb feet in the winter. Good-bye to paper cuts and broken bones. It’s all gone now! See ya, responsibility and pressure! Ha, Ha! What a world! Good-bye spiders, snakes, cold showers, and rebellious siblings. Good-bye mosquito bites, bad weather, and all of the lectures my parents gave me. Good-bye all the stomach aches and the nervousness! Good-bye zits, headaches, and being short. Good-bye cold hands and feet during hunting season. Good-bye to political commercials and geometry, drippy noses and sub-zero temperatures. Good-bye, bad hair days and lawn mowers. Good-bye speed limits and broken hearts—I wish I could take you with me.”*