

How to Choose a One Act Play

By Jeff Bengford

There are sooo many great one acts - too many to read myself.

So I don't.

Here's what we do for our spring one act festival:

- Day 1: Each Drama class spends one full block period (95 minutes) reading catalogues (they're free to order from the different royalty companies).
- Day 2: Students pitch one acts they think sound interesting to rest of the class.
- Day 3: Each class votes and narrows down their choices to 10 shows per class. I buy those one acts (unless I already have them in my library or can find them elsewhere) and we go onto another short project while we wait for the scripts to arrive.

One week later...

- Days 4, 5, 6: I parcel the scripts out over a week so each script gets read by at least 5 different students.
- Day 7: Students interested in directing any of the read plays, conduct a reality check pitch session and the final plays & their directors are chosen for each class to vote on.

To spend this amount of time on choosing a play may seem ludicrous to some, but for me - this is the best way for students to own the material - the plays are theirs!