Prose to Stage: Mina at the Dock

Compare how a prose scene and a live performance use different techniques to portray a decision.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 1 - Read the Prose Scene

Classroom simulation - original prose and staged adaptation by Worksheet Author, 2026.
This is a fictional scene created for practice.

Read. Underline one sentence in which the narrator tells what Mina thinks or feels. Circle one line Mina says aloud.

Mina at the Dock

Low clouds pressed over the lake as Mina stood in a small rowboat tied beside the dock. A library book rested under her jacket, wrapped in a grocery bag. She had promised to return it before the rain began.

"Mina, turn back," Jo called from the dock. "We can bring it tomorrow."

Mina looked at the dark water, then at the library across the lake. The building looked far away through the clouds. For a moment, she wondered whether keeping a promise was worth getting soaked.

"I promised," Mina said. Her arms ached from carrying the book to the dock, but she tightened her grip on the boat's rope. "Then help me row," she called to Jo.

Jo stepped into the boat. Together, they untied the rope and pushed away from the dock as the first drops tapped the water.

1. Who tells this prose scene: a narrator, or Mina speaking as “I”? How can you tell? Use one detail from the scene.

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Part 2 - Watch and Compare the Live Version

Keep Part 1 nearby. Your teacher will choose two readers. Watch the live performance. If you are a reader, perform the bracketed actions and the spoken lines. Do not add new lines. Voice choices may differ from one performance to another.

Live staged version: “Mina at the Dock”

[Place two chairs side by side, facing the audience. Mina sits in the left chair. Jo stands one step behind the chairs.]

MINA: [Makes one slow rowing motion.] The rain is coming, but I promised to return this book.

JO: Mina, turn back. We can bring it tomorrow.

[Mina looks toward the audience and pauses for three seconds.]

MINA: I promised.

JO: A promise can wait until the rain stops.

MINA: [Stands and holds an imaginary book close.] Then help me row.

[Jo sits in the right chair. Both make two rowing motions, then freeze.]

Record details you actually read or observed. A voice observation may be different in another group.

Technique	Prose detail or narration	Live performance observation	Effect on Mina's decision
Pacing			
Gesture			
Voice			
Staging			

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Part 3 - Explain the Effect

3. Write a comparison of the prose scene and the live performance. Make a claim about how they portray Mina's decision differently. Use at least two techniques from your organizer and specific evidence from both versions.

Remember: In the prose, a narrator can reveal Mina's private thoughts. In the performance, actors and staging must show ideas through what the audience can see and hear.

Quick check: Did you name two techniques, describe evidence from both versions, and explain an effect on the portrayal of Mina?

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Answer Key - Reading and Comparison

1. Point of view: The prose is told by a third-person narrator, not by Mina speaking as “I.” The narrator refers to Mina as “Mina” and “she” and reports her private thought: “she wondered whether keeping a promise was worth getting soaked.” Mina does speak in quoted dialogue, including “I promised,” but that does not make her the narrator. Accept equivalent evidence and explanation.

2. Organizer: Responses must reflect the actual class performance. Do not require one fixed voice observation. Strong entries may include:

Technique	Acceptable comparison and effect
Pacing	The prose moves through several narrated moments; the script requires a three-second pause and a final freeze. The pause can make Mina's choice seem more deliberate or uncertain.
Gesture	The prose describes Mina tightening her grip on the boat's rope; actors visibly row, stand, and hold the imaginary book. Physical action can make her effort more immediate.
Voice	In prose, readers imagine the sound of dialogue. In performance, listeners hear an actor's volume, pace, tone, and pauses. A student must describe what was actually heard and connect it to an effect.
Staging	Two chairs represent a boat; Jo begins behind Mina and later joins her. The audience sees Mina first alone, then supported, which can emphasize her decision and Jo's change.

For all four rows, accept other accurate prose evidence and observed performance details. A student may note that prose uses a narrator's words to describe gesture or setting, while the staged version uses bodies, space, props, and sound directly.

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Teaching Notes and Writing Key

Materials: One copy of all three student pages per student; two ordinary chairs; pencils; a teacher clipboard or roster. Supplied materials are the original prose, performance script, directions, and organizer. No outside source or device is needed.

Exact setup: Before class, place two chairs side by side at the front, facing the class, with one step of open space behind them. Give every student Parts 1 and 2 before the performance. Select two readers for Mina and Jo, or assign them in advance. The remaining students are observers. Readers use only the script and bracketed movements.

Teaching script: Say: “First, read the prose silently. Underline one place where the narrator tells Mina's thoughts or feelings. Circle a line Mina says aloud.” After reading, say: “A narrator tells this prose scene in third person. Mina is a character who speaks in some lines.” Then say: “Now you will experience the same situation as a live staged version. Readers, use the actions in brackets and do not add lines. You may choose a natural voice. Observers, record what you actually see and hear.” After the performance, say: “Compare techniques, not just events. Explain how pacing, gesture, voice, or staging changes the portrayal.”

Observation method: During the performance and writing, use a roster with four checks: experienced both versions, identifies narrator versus character speech, records at least one accurate live observation, and uses two techniques in the final response. Confer briefly with students missing a check; reread the relevant line or replay the script if needed.

3. Constructed-response rubric: 4 - clear comparison claim; accurate evidence from prose and performance; explains effects of at least two techniques. 3 - clear claim and accurate evidence from both versions; explains one technique well and names or partly explains another. 2 - some comparison or evidence, but limited explanation, one version missing, or only one technique. 1 - retells the scene or gives unsupported statements. Sample 4-level response: “The prose makes Mina's decision seem private because the narrator tells that she wonders whether the promise is worth getting soaked. In the performance, the three-second pause makes the audience watch her decide. The actor holding the imaginary book and the two chairs make the promise and the boat visible. A voice that sounds firm can make Mina seem determined, while the prose lets readers imagine her voice.”

Source credit: All student text is original fictional classroom material by Worksheet Author, 2026; no external sources were used or evaluated.