

KATS Musical 2027

“The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee”

Audition Pack

Audition dates: Tuesday 29th September and Thursday 1st October 2026

Dodbrooke Hall, Church Street, Kingsbridge – 7.30 to 9.30pm

Directed by: Nate and Sarah Fox

Synopsis:

An eclectic group of six mid-pubescents vie for the spelling championship of a lifetime. While candidly disclosing hilarious and touching stories from their home lives, the contestants spell their way through a series of words, hoping never to hear the soul-crushing, life un-affirming *ding* of the bell that signals the end of their Bee. Six spellers enter. One speller leaves a champion. At least the losers get a juice box. The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee is a delightful hive of comedic genius and a fast-past audience favourite.

Director's notes:

Although you may not have heard of this show, we assure you that it's good!

We want to encourage everyone to come and audition, but please be aware that due to the smaller cast size, not everyone who auditions will get a role.

During rehearsals we will spending time working with the cast to develop their character and help to bring them to life. This musical is driven by the stories of the spellers and throughout the musical we learn more about them and how the pressure of the Bee has shaped their childhood.

There is an element of audience participation, members of the audience are invited on stage to take part in the Bee, so their will be time dedicated at every rehearsal to work on improv skills and support the actors with this. But don't let this put you off – the show is designed around this, and you will not be expected to go too far 'off script' (unless you really want to). The role for the audience member is quite limited, and they will be prompted with a small script handed to them as they go on stage. All members of the audience will exit the Bee before the end of the first act. The 9 principals will be on stage throughout the musical, so we would require them at every rehearsal.

Although the original show didn't have a chorus, we will add one to our production, if we have enough people. Due to the nature of the show, we can only accommodate a small chorus of around 5 to 7. They will be joining in with the singing and dancing and cameo roles.

Principals:

Chip Tolentino – Vocal range: top B4/bottom C3

An athletic, social, boy scout and champion of the 24th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, he returns to defend his title, but he finds puberty hitting at an inopportune moment.

Logainne Schwartzandgrubeniére (Schwartz) – Vocal range: top G5/bottom G3

Logainne is the youngest and most politically aware speller, often making comments about current political figures. She is driven by internal and external pressure, but above all by a desire to win to make her two fathers proud. She is somewhat of a nerf freak, speaks with a lisp and will be back next year.

Leaf Conebear (can be played by male or female) Vocal range: top A4/bottom A2

The second runner-up in his district, Leaf gets into the competition by default and finds everything about the Bee incredibly amusing. He is home-schooled and comes from a large family of former hippies. He spells words correctly while in a trance.

William Barfee – Vocal range: top Bb4/ bottom C3

A Putnam County Spelling Bee finalist last year, he was eliminated because of an allergic reaction to peanuts and is back for vindication. His famous "Magic Foot" method of spelling has boosted him to spelling glory. He has a bullying personality but develops a crush on Olive.

Marcy Park – Vocal range: top Eb5/bottom A3

The ultimate over-achiever, Marcy has never been given another option. She comes from a family where excellence is expected and so simply produced. She assumes God, too, expects perfection. She sees herself as a mass of problems but she keeps them to herself. Having moved often because of her parent's work, she knows she can beat local competition. Her many talents include piano, dance, martial arts, baton twirling and/or whatever special gifts the performer playing Marcy possesses.

Olive Ostrovsky – Vocal range: top F#5/bottom A3

A young newcomer to competitive spelling. Her mother is in an ashram in India, and her father is working late as usual, but he is trying to come sometime during the Bee. Having found comfort in its words and vastness, Olive made friends with her dictionary at a very young age, helping her to make it to the competition. She starts enormously shy and shyly blossoms.

Rona Lisa Peretti – Vocal range: top E5/bottom C4

The number-one Estate Agent in Putnam County and a former Putnam County Spelling Bee champion herself. Rona is the returning moderator of the competition. She is a sweet woman who loves children, but she can be very stern when it comes to dealing with Vice Principal Panch and his feelings for her. Her enthusiasm for the competition is unflagging and drives it forward.

Douglas Panch

The Vice Principal. Frustrated with his life, he finds the drive of the young spellers alien to him. After five years absence from the Bee, Panch returns as judge. There was an incident at the 20th annual Bee, but he claims to be in a ‘better place’ now. He is infatuated with Rona Lisa Peretti, but she does not return his affections.

Mitch Mahoney (Can be male or female)

The official Comfort Counsellor. This is his first day in education and he is out of his comfort zone at the Bee. They have no idea how to offer comfort but hands out juice boxes to losing students and eventually finds themselves wishing they could find a way to make the kids feel better.

Cameo Roles

The following roles are traditionally played by the performers in the main cast. We are keen to have these parts played by additional performers as they offer good opportunities for those who would enjoy a less involved role but would still like to be part of the production. However, be aware that these are small roles with only a few lines each.

Carl Dad (could be mum – same sex couple)

Schwarzy’s main trainer, the more intense and competitive of Schwarzy’s parents

Dan Dad (could be mum – same sex couple)

The more laid back and ineffectual of Schwarzy’s parents.

Jesus Christ

Deity invoked by a speller in need.

Olive’s Dad

A fantasy version of Olive’s dad coming to the Bee from work. Only sings in “I Love You”

Olive’s mum

A fantasy version of Olive’s mum at her Ashram in India. Only sings in “I Love you”

Leaf's mum and dad

Leaf's unsupportive parents who have little faith in them - Only a few lines

Audition Monologues:

Chip Tolentino

(Caught up in his fantasy about Leaf's sister who he has seen in the audience)

CHIP: Marigold.... Marigold Coneybear

That's a really lovely sweater, Marigold....

PANCH: Chip. Chip. Chip!

CHIP: Sorry – is it my turn to spell?

PANCH: Yes.

CHIP: Um, can you maybe skip me now and ask me two in a row later?

PANCH: Why would you want to do that?

CHIP: I'd rather not say.

PANCH: You can either take your turn now or forfeit.

CHIP: No? Okay, I'll take my turn now.

PANCH: TITTUP

CHIP: What?!

PANCH: It means “lively movement or behaviour” or “to move restlessly.” It refers to the sound of horses hooves – tittup, tittup, tittup

CHIP: Tittup. T....I

(reluctantly, but he knows it)

T....U – Oh wait. Two t's. You heard both right? Backing up, T-I-T-T-U-P. Tittup.

(Ding!)

No, but, I wasn't sure if you heard both t's. I obviously know how to spell it....That's not fair. I got it right. I can't get out on a word I spelled right. Miss Peretti, can I have one more chance? Please?

Leaf Coneybear

(Starts in fantasy – Leaf remembering how he got his place in the Bee)

LEAF: Phone? For me? Thanks! I got it! *(picks up the receiver)*

Hello? Leaf speaking. Uh huh. Uh huh. Uh huh.

You're kidding? I'm gonna represent the Basin in the Bee? Wow, I can't believe it. *(hangs up)*

Mom, Dad, Marigold, Brook, Pinecone, Raisin, Landscape, Paul...You're not going to believe this!

They just called and said the person who came in first has to go to the bat mitzvah, and the person who came in second has to attend the bat mitzvah, so they want me to do it!

RONA: CAPYBARA

LEAF: What?

RONA: Your word is Capybara.

LEAF: Is that a word?

RONA: That's a word, yes. Are you ready to spell the word, Mr Coneybear?

LEAF: No, but it was fun to come here. *(To family in the audience)* Hi guys – my whole family's here which is really...*(trance suddenly takes him)* C-A-P-Y-B-A-R-A. Capybara.

Schwarzy (Logainne) and Dads.

Scene #1

PANCH: CYSTITIS

SCHWARZY: Thithtitith? I think I studied this with my dads.

CARL DAD: Good. Cystitis.

SCHWARZY: S.

CARL DAD: No. Think.

SCHWARZY: C –

CARL DAD: Good.

SCHWARZY: I.

CARL DAD: No Logainne, are you concentrating?

SCHWARZY: Yes.

DAN DAD: Maybe time for a break?

Scene #2

CARL DAD: Thanks Sweetie, I'll take it from here. Can we have a little privacy please?
(He shoos Olive away) Breathe, Logainne. Your'e okay, buck up.

(As he pours a can of coke on the floor)

Oh, that's no good.

DAN DAD: No.no, let that dry.

CARL DAD:The foot, we have to disable the foot.

SCHWARZY: What foot?

DAN DAD: The magic foot.

SCHWARZY: Wouldn't that be wrong?

CARL DAD: Do you want to win?

SCHWARZY: Yes, but I believe in ethical conduct.

DAN DAD: And isn't having a magic foot an unfair advantage?

SCHWARZY: I don't have a magical foot.

CARL DAD: Or a mother?

SCHWARZY: (to Olive) You're lucky your parents are in India.

Marcy Park

MARCY: Camouflage.

Dear Jesus, can't you come up with a word harder than that?

JESUS: Of course I can, my child.

MARCY: Jesus?

JESUS: Marcy?

MARCY: Hi

JESUS: Hi

MARCY: How are you?

JESUS: I'm good. Is that your prayer, Marcy, for a more difficult word?

MARCY: Well, yeah it was. But now you're here, can I ask for something better?

JESUS: I'm here for you now Marcy.

MARCY: Jesus...I was wondering what would happen if I didn't win today?

JESUS: What do you think would happen?

MARCY: I don't know, but what I mean is, would you be disappointed if I lost?

JESUS: Of course not – but Marcy? I also won't be disappointed with you if you win.

MARCY: You're saying it's up to me then?

JESUS: Yes, and also, this isn't the kind of thing I care very much about.

MARCY: Camouflage. C-A-M...O-U

F-L...A...J

Z!! ...H!!! Camaflajzh!

William Barfee

PANCH: Mr Barfee

BARFEE: It's Barfee

RONA: Mr Barfee has a rare mucous membrane disorder.

PANCH: LUGUBRIOUS

BARFEE: Yes, of course. Lugubrious. Meaning extremely sad and droopy. A topic I am all too familiar with.

RONA: Okay watch this technique – He calls it the magic foot and he's the only one I've ever seen use it. He spells it out on the floor so he can get a visual and then speaks it out loud. Incredible.

BARFEE: Lugubrious. (spells word using his foot)

L-U-G-U- Lugu!

B-R-I-O-U-S – Lugubrious

PANCH: That is correct.

BARFEE: I know.

Olive and William

OLIVE: Sorry about that – Wiliam, right? I'm Olive.

BARFEE: I know your name. Look, I do not need pity from a person named after a vegetable.

OLIVE: It's a fruit.

BARFEE: Well, it's a disgusting fruit, and I can't keep them down.

OLIVE: Oh.

BARFEE: I guess it's okay for a name though.

OLIVE: Did you know that if you switch the first two vowels in Olive, it becomes I Love?

BARFEE: Did you know if you switch the first two vowels in William, it becomes William.

OLIVE: Yeah, but if you switch the next two – then it's Will Aim.

BARFEE: Are these really the kind of things you think about?

OLIVE: Umm, yeah.

BARFEE: Okay.

I'm more of a science guy myself.

OLIVE: Well you're also a great speller.

BARFEE: Yeah, thanks. *(to himself as Olive leaves)* "Olive." "I Love" – that's so stupid.

ENSEMBLE SCENE:

PANCH: Miss Ostrosvsky

RONA: Miss Ostrosvsky's mother is currently in India on a 9 month spiritual quest.

PANCH: FLAGELLATE

OLIVE: Flagellate – um – that's a verb right?

PANCH: Yes.

OLIVE: May I have a definition?

PANCH: I need to ask you to speak clearly into the microphone.

OLIVE: Sorry.

RONA: Don't be sorry, just turn and face us.

(Olive starts to walk towards the judging table)

PANCH and RONA: No, not towards us, turn that way. *(Olive ends up confused)*

RONA: You know this girl needs to learn how to stand like a champion. *(Rona approaches Olive and puts her in the right place).*

Shoulders back. Chin up. Hair away from your face. Very good.

It's a hard age for girls *(as Olive slumps again).*

LEAF: I fell.

RONA: And boys.

With this difference. Ask a child in a spelling bee if they expect to win, and boys and girls are trained to respond differently. The correct response for boys is:

BARFEE: I'm taking it all. You're all going down.

RONA: While the correct response from girls is:

SCHWARZY: Honestly, I think there's a good chance I would do okay, but it's unlikely I'd win the whole thing, I'm a good speller, but I'm not a truly great speller, and though I have trained hard there's so much luck involved.

RONA: Although in my experience the girls are sometimes thinking:

SCHWARZY: I'm taking it all. You're all going down, suckas!

RONA: While the boys are sometimes thinking:

BARFEE: I really don't know – am I good enough, or not?

OLIVE: I'm thinking about does flagellate have one ell or two – and also about how if you take the “w” of answer and the “h” in ghost and the extra “a” in aardvark and the “t” in listen, you could keep saying “what” but nobody would hear, cause the whole word would be silent.

RONA: You still need to speak up, Miss Ostrovsky.

OLIVE: FLAGELLATE. F-L-A-G-E-L....L...A-T-E.

Flagellate.

PANCH: Very good on the volume. And correct.

CHIP: Leaf, that girl in the second row, with the fuzzy sweater? Is that your sister?

LEAF: Yeah, that's Marigold.

Mitch Mahoney

PANCH: To introduce today's comfort counsellor – Oh! On his very first day in education, Mitchell Mahoney.

RONA: Mitch Mahoney has recently got out of prison.

MITCH: I'll take any job. Let's spell!

MITCH: What kind of weird ass sport is this! You can't comfort these kids. They don't know yet that the good don't always win, so there's nothing you can say to cheer them up when they lose. I want to tell them disappointment doesn't last, but what I've seen, disappointment lasts like hell. I want to tell them words don't matter, but from what I've

seen, words can get you killed. I wanna get in their faces and say TOUGH IT UP! You little weirdos. Do you know how much worse it gets out there? You're meant to be gentle with kids these days. I don't know? Is it working? I don't have kids. I don't understand kids. My girlfriend wanted them, but she left me when I got arrested. Nobody gave me no juice box. You got this kid. Let's go.

Audition Song

Please familiarise yourself with the opening number of the show – “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee”

The Broadway Cast Recording is available on Apple Music and Spotify.

Useful information

- **We will not be using American accents for our show.**
- **Rehearsals will start on Tuesday 13th October and will continue every Tuesday and Thursday from October to March with a break for Christmas.**
- **Show dates are March 17th to March 20th 2027 at Malborough Village Hall.**
- **You can watch the current Broadway show on You Tube using the following link <https://youtu.be/VqscI9YhFSo>**

If you are interested in auditioning or have any questions you can email Nate or Sarah on:

mrfantasticfox@yahoo.co.uk

sarahfox@btinternet.com

It would be helpful to know if you plan to come to auditions but drop-ins are welcome too!