



Announcing Open Auditions for our October production of William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin's

The 25th Annual Putnam County **SPELLING BEE**

Director – Michael Mensching ★ Musical Director – Val Lord
Choreographer – Melissa Lacijan

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: **When:** Sunday & Monday – August 1st & 2nd
: **Time:** 6:30p.m. to 8:30p.m.
: **Where:** NYS Park Administration Building (on the back side of the theater) enter via the door on the same
: porch as the stage door – on the side of the building
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Welcome to the Bee!

To Spelling Bee Contestants: (actors 20's to 30's) We are pleased that you are considering entering the Bee. For contestants we are looking for **adults** that can easily look and play the parts of children ages 8-14. **All ethnicities are encouraged to audition.** Please prepare 16 bars from an up tempo or comedic song (most preferably one from the show) and prepare a one minute joke or story that will be told in the persona of the character you most wish to play. Please be prepared for a simple movement audition. *** What we are looking for are talented performers that can stand out in a crowd. Remember, these are Spelling Bee kids; they are not conformists. Part of the humor of these contestants is that they are adult actors in these roles.

To Spelling Bee Administrators (roles of Rona, Panch, Mitch): Please prepare either a song from the show or a ballad that is appropriate for your character (We might suggest a song from A New Brain which is another Finn piece if you can't find one from this show) Vice Principal Panch does not sing a lot, so most anything is fine. For these three characters, we would like a one minute fictitious history of your character. Start with your character description and go from there.

Character Breakdown - Characters include but are not limited to the following:

Chip Tolentino: TENOR (to high B) The reigning spelling champion of Putnam County, relatively athletic and social, he expects things to come easily to him. Lately though, he's been going through some weird changes, and things are slipping out of his control.

William Barfée: TENOR (to high B flat)has a host of health problems and a lot to prove. Loud and combative as a defensive posture, he is the fat kid who becomes a bully to avoid being picked on. His parents are divorced, his father remarried to a much younger woman; and William does not expect kindness from anyone but his mother. So friendship takes him by surprise. Still, he's noticed on the spelling circuit for his remarkable technique—spelling words out on the floor with his foot. Taken out of competition last year because of an ill-timed allergic reaction, he's here for vindication. The journey he doesn't expect is one of coming to care about someone else—when he sees outside his own needs for perhaps the first time, it shakes him fundamentally.

Olive Ostrovsky: MEZZO (B to F sharp)A word lover, Olive has a fairly quiet life. An only child with often-absent parents, Olive spends a lot of her time alone. She fills some of that time reading the dictionary—the

words bring her comfort, as does the idea of the vastness of the world the book contains. During the first half of the bee, she often peers into the audience to see if her father, who is delayed at work, has made it yet. She starts enormously shy, and shyly blossoms.

Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre: MEZZO (C to D) Younger than most bee participants, she is driven by internal and external pressure—but above all by a desire to win to make her two fathers (from whom she takes her combined last name) proud. She lisps, is a little uncomfortable in her body, has some tics, but still manages to strike a strong presence with her political awareness and keen sense of justice. Having drilled words for hours a day, she is aware of everything that passes in this room.

Leaf Coneybear: TENOR (A to G) A second alternate, he never expected to compete here today. Home-schooled with his many siblings, everything about this public bee is an adventure for him, from meeting the other kids to showing off his homemade clothing, to each moment of unexpected attention. He may have severe Attention Deficit Disorder but delights in his own wandering focus. Leaf doesn't expect to win – or even to spell one word correctly – but he finds absolutely everything incredibly amusing. His mother has made him wear his protective helmet to the bee.

Marcy Park: MEZZO (B to E) The ultimate over-achiever, Marcy has never been given another option. She comes from a family where excellence is expected and so simply produced. A parochial school student, 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 parents' work, she knows she can beat the local competition. Her many talents include piano, dance, martial arts, baton twirling, and/or other special gifts.

Rona Lisa Peretti: MEZZO (C# to A Flat), Age 30-40 The #1 realtor in Putnam County, a former Putnam County Spelling Bee Champ (at the 3rd annual Bee) and long-time spelling bee moderator. From her perspective, she keeps the bee running smoothly, upholds protocol, and conveys crucial information to the audience. Her interest in the competition is unflagging and drives it forward. She thinks of this as a complex cerebral sporting event, and she wants the audience to understand ever twist and turn. If anything, in her life in general, she has to minimize the importance of this event to her, embarrassed that her own championship moment remains such a highlight. A little concerned when the substitute word pronouncer arrives, she knows she has to step up her game to make the day a success.

Vice Principal Douglas Panch: BARITONE, Age 40-55 This Vice Principal of Lake Hemingway Dos Passos Junior High, is frustrated with his life. He fell into education, less out of love than a general ability uncoupled to a particular passion. The drive of the young spellers is alien to him. He never found anything that important. Stuck in his current job, endlessly awaiting a promotion that isn't coming, he was not happy to get the call this morning that he was needed to substitute; but he starts the bee eager to do well, to redeem himself for past mistakes, and to impress the local hostess, Rona Lisa, who impressed him long ago.

Mitch Mahoney: TENOR (E to A), Age 25-35 with a bouncer's physique and demeanor, Mitch appears an odd choice to be the bee's "comfort counselor," but it's part of his community service assignment. The outsider, who in a way gets to inhabit the audience perspective, he wonders about the wisdom of putting the kids through this at all. He has no idea how to offer comfort, but does increasingly find himself wishing he could find a way to make the kids feel better about losing, and perhaps place misspelling in wider perspective.

F.Y.I.

Prior to the auditions scripts are available at
The Saratoga Springs Public Library Reference Desk

PRODUCTION DATES: Weekends, October 15 - 31

REHEARSALS: Will begin late August with a full schedule beginning September 7th

For further information please call Home Made Theater at (518) 587-4427