



HEIDELBERG THEATRE COMPANY

AUDITIONS

THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE

Music and lyrics by William Finn

Book by Rachel Sheinkin

Conceived by Rebecca Feldman

Director: Tim Scott

Musical Director: John Clancy

Choreographer: Jenny Vincent-Green

AUDITION DATES:

- Sunday 27 July 2025 from 10.00am to 12.30pm
- Monday 28 July 2025 from 7.00pm to 10:00pm
- Call-backs (if needed): Wednesday 30 July at 7.00pm
- Reserve day: Friday 1 August (7.00pm)

SEASON DATES:

14 – 29 November 2025

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Evenings at 8.00 pm: 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28 & 29 Nov

Matinees at 2.00 pm: 15, 16, 22 & 23 Nov

Note: The first **two** Saturdays, November 15 & 22, have two performances: at 2:00 pm and at 8:00 pm

THE STORY:

Set in a US school gym, in the fictional Putnam County, six teenage contestants, played by grown-up actors, compete for the title of local Spelling Bee Champion. As the competition progresses, each is given the opportunity to tell something of their background and story, through song.

In the early scenes of the show, the six contestants are joined onstage by four audience volunteers who are gradually eliminated, along with most of the main six. In the end, there can only be one winner. Or can there...?

While this is essentially a musical comedy, it is very important that the characters all take themselves seriously: they are not playing farce. Each has a serious story to tell and a particular reason for being there. The comedy arises out of their innate seriousness and desire to make sense of their lives and what matters to them as the competition proceeds.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:

Please note: ALL Cast members will need to be able to sing, solo and ensemble, and perform simple dance movements

AGE RANGE: Because all six teenage contestants are played by grown-up actors, the only age limitation is that the actors not be teenage! They also turn into their adult selves for their individual epilogues

The Contestants:

- **Chip Tolentino:** the reigning champion, used to success without trying too hard, but not finding things so easy lately
- **Logainne Schwartz and Grubbeniere ("Schwartz"):** one of the younger participants, driven by desire to please her two Dads; has practiced hard for this; slight lisp
- **Leaf Coneybear:** part of a large family, all home-schooled; quirky and unusual, possibly ADHD but enjoying every moment of his unexpected opportunity
- **William Barfée:** loud and very competitive ("I know"); he's here to prove himself after being forced to withdraw the previous year because of an allergic reaction
- **Marcy Park:** multi-talented over-achiever, her family expects and assumes excellence, so plenty of pressure
- **Olive Ostrovsky:** an only child with often absent parents, she really enjoys reading the dictionary; very shy to begin with; desperate to find her father in the audience (but he's typically running late)

The Adults:

- **Rona Lisa Perretti** (playing mid/late 30s): won the Bee 22 years ago; now long-time host, responsible for the smooth running of the competition

*Please note: the actor playing **Rona** needs to be comfortable with some ad-libbing as she deals with the audience volunteers on stage*
- **Vice Principal Douglas Panch** (30s/40s): late substitute word pronouncer, keen to do well and impress Rona but doesn't really get why everyone takes it so seriously
- **Mitch Mahoney** (30s/40s): an unlikely "comfort counsellor" with a bouncer's physique and rough demeanour; doing this is part of his community service requirement

Ensemble Roles

- **Schwartz's fathers:**
Carl Dad (can be doubled with Leaf), intense and competitive; and
Dan Dad (can be doubled with Mitch), more laid-back and ineffectual (both 30s/early 40s)
- **Leaf's Mom, Dad & siblings:** they regularly put him down as the least gifted of the family
- **Olive's Mom** (can be doubled with Rona): only realised in Olive's fantasy version, she lives on an Ashram in India
- **Olive's Dad** (can be doubled with Mitch): also a projection of her imagination
- There is also the possibility of some additional ensemble actors to join in the big numbers

Audition Details:

- Location: 36 Turnham Ave. Rosanna, Vic (opposite Rosanna Railway Station)
- Accents: standard American accents, but not too broad;
- All actors will need to be able to sing and dance
- To register for an audition, please email the director (timascott56@gmail.com). In your email, nominate the day that you wish to attend (27 July or 28 July as per 'Audition Dates' section above) and the part/s that you are interested in auditioning for.
- Audition format will be Group auditions. They will include a short singing audition (no need to prepare anything) and an acting/movement audition. You will be asked to read one or more scenes from the play and practise some simple dance movements. The scenes will be provided at the audition. Be prepared to stay for a full duration of the audition session.
- Each accepted applicant will be emailed an audition form to complete. It would be helpful if the completed form is emailed back prior to the audition
- We request each auditionee include a named, recent photo (passport-size is ideal) in the email with your audition form, or when you attend the audition.
- For queries, including arranging for a perusal copy of the script, contact the Director: timascott56@gmail.com.

OTHER INFO

- Read-through of play with all cast: *tbc*
- Rehearsals:
 - Sundays in Aug/early Sep: 10am on 10, 17, 24, 31 Aug; 7, 14, Sep (mainly singing and dance/movement)
 - From Sun 21 Sep: every Sunday at 2pm, Wed & Thur eves at 7.30pm
 - Sitzprobe with band: *tbc*
 - Production Week: Sun 9 Nov (Tech, time *tbc*); 7pm Mon 10 Nov (Dress 1) and 7pm Tues 11 Nov (Final Dress). Preview Night Thur 13 Nov at 8pm.