

Character Descriptions for Newsies

NOTE: Some doubling or tripling of roles may or may not occur.

Principal Characters

Jack Kelly (M) - the charismatic leader of the Manhattan newsies; an orphaned dreamer and artist who yearns to get out of the crowded streets of NYC and make a better life for himself out West; fiercely protective of his best friend, Crutchie, and strongly loyal, Jack isn't afraid to use his voice to attain better conditions for the working kids of NYC.

Katherine Plumber (F) - an ambitious young reporter who works hard to make a name for herself as a legitimate journalist in a time when women aren't taken seriously; quick, funny, and resourceful; while she generally has no time for cocky, streetwise young men, she makes an exception for Jack Kelly; though she only has a brief dance solo in "King of New York,"

Crutchie (M/F) - dedicated newsie with a bum leg that's painful, but helps sell more papers; though he walks with the assistance of a crutch, Crutchie doesn't let it define him; Crutchie is the heart of the resistance; though his movement will suggest his bum leg, he should still be included in the dance numbers; good movement is essential.

Davey (M) - Les's straight-laced, bright big brother starts selling newspapers to help his family earn a living, but becomes swept up in the fervor of the strike; a leader in his own right who is learning to use his voice to uplift others, Davey is the brains of the resistance.

Les (M) - Davey's cheeky younger brother is inspired by the freedom of the newsies and loves their independent lifestyle; Les is an intuitive, precocious salesboy and a pint-sized charmer;

Joseph Pulitzer (M) - pompous businessman through and through owns the World and is concerned solely with the bottom line. Katherine's no-nonsense father, Pulitzer doesn't sympathize with the strikers, but he does eventually – and grudgingly – respect Jack.

Medda Larkin (F) - female performing artist at the turn of the century; big-voiced vaudevillian singer and star of The Bowery; an astute entertainer with great comic delivery, she's a good friend to Jack and stands firmly behind the newsies in their fight for justice.

Featured Characters

Spot Conlon (M/F) - proud leader of the Brooklyn newsies, boasts an intimidating reputation and a short singing solo in "Brooklyn's Here."

Setiz (M/F) - editor, advises Pulitzer, but ultimately admires the kids' newspaper.

Bunsen (M/F) - editor, advises Pulitzer, but ultimately admires the kids' newspaper.

Hannah (F) - Pulitzer's practical and insightful secretary.

Wiesel (M) - or "Weasel," runs the distribution window for the World, and knows most of the newsies by name; assisted by the intimidating Delancey brothers, who keep order by any means necessary, Wiesel is Pulitzer's disgruntled paper-pusher.

Oscar Delancey (M) - tough brothers who work at the distribution window for the World, taking the side of the publishers in the strike and are known to use their fists to make a point.

Morris Delancey (M) – tough brothers who work at the distribution window for the World, taking the side of the publishers in the strike and are known to use their fists to make a point.

Snyder (M/F) – crooked and sinister warden of The Refuge, a horrible orphanage, who is concerned only with catching enough kids to keep the government checks coming.

Nunzio (M) - Pulitzer's barber.

Governor Teddy Roosevelt (M) – well-respected lifelong public servant, inspires Jack to stand up to Pulitzer.

Mr. Jacobi (M/F) – allows the newsies to congregate in his restaurant to plan their strike.

Darcy (M/F) – upper-class kid of a publisher who sides with the newsies;

Bill (M) – son of William Randolph Hearst who joins the newsies' cause.

Ensemble Roles

Bowery Beauties (F), Goons (M), Guard (M/F), Mayor (M), Nuns (F), Photographer (M/F), Policemen (M), Scabs (M/F), Stage Manager (M/F), Woman (F), etc.