

TOPPERS ADULT SHOW AUDITION PACKET

AUDITION FORM: <https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/8qGkmPQV6L>

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Seminar by Theresa Rebeck

Directed by Peyton Pellerin (Ages 18+)

Auditions: November 12

Callbacks: November 13

Rehearsals:

- Monday, December 8 from 5:30-7:30pm (Read Through/Introductions/Conduct)
- Tuesday, December 9 from 5:30-7:30pm (Table Work)
- Wednesday, December 10 from 5:30-7:30pm (Table Work)
- Monday, December 15 from 5:30-7:30pm (Blocking)
- Tuesday, December 16 from 5:30-7:30pm (Blocking)
- Wednesday December 17 from 5:30-7:30pm (Blocking)
- Thursday, December 18 from 5:30-7:30 (Blocking)
- HOLIDAY BREAK (OFF BOOK UPON RETURN)
- Tuesday, January 6 5:30-7:30 (Review Blocking)
- Wednesday, January 7 5:30-7:30 (Blocking)
- Thursday, January 8 5:30-7:30 (Blocking)
- Tuesday, January 13 5:30-7:30 (Blocking)
- Wednesday, January 14 5:30-7:30 (Run Act One)
- Thursday, January 15 5:30-7:30 (Run Act Two)
- Tuesday, January 20 5:30-7:30 (Review Blocking)
- Wednesday, January 21 5:30-7:30 (Run Act One)
- Thursday, January 22 5:30-7:30 (Run Act Two)
- Tuesday, January 27 5:30-7:30 (Review Blocking)
- Wednesday, January 28 5:30-7:30 (Run Act One)
- Thursday, January 29 5:30-7:30 (Run Act Two)
- Tuesday, February 3 5:30-7:30 (Scene Work)
- Wednesday, February 4 5:30-7:30 (Run Act One)
- Thursday, February 5 5:30-7:30 (Run Act Two)
- Tuesday, February 10 5:30-8:30 (Designer Run)
- Wednesday, February 11 5:30-8:30 (Work Act One)
- Thursday, February 12 5:30-8:30 (Work Act Two)
- Sunday, February 15 3-7pm (Tech)

- Monday, February 16 5-9pm (Dress Rehearsal)
- Tuesday, February 17 5-9pm (Dress Rehearsal)
- Wednesday, February 18 5-9pm (Dress Rehearsal)
- Thursday, February 19 5-9pm (Dress Rehearsal)

Week One Performances:

- Friday, February 21 @ 7pm
- Saturday, February 22 @ 6pm
- Sunday, February 23 @ 2pm

Pick-Up Rehearsal

- Wednesday, February 26th 5:30-7:30pm

Week Two Performances:

- Friday, February 27 @ 7pm
- Saturday, February 28 @ 6pm
- Sunday, March 1 @ 2pm

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Directed by Rachael Harper (Ages 18+)

Auditions: November 12

Callbacks: November 13

Rehearsals:

- Monday, December 8 from 6-9pm (Read Through)
- Tuesday, December 9 from 6-9pm (Music Slots)
- Wednesday, December 10 from 6-9pm (Music Slots)
- Monday, December 15 from 6-9pm (Music Slots)
- Tuesday, December 16 from 6-9pm (Music Slots)
- Wednesday December 17 from 6-9pm (Music Slots)
- Thursday, December 18 from 6-9pm (Sing Through)
- HOLIDAY BREAK (MUSIC OFF BOOK UPON RETURN)
- Tuesday, January 6 6-9pm (Blocking/Table Work/Workshop)
- Wednesday, January 7 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Thursday, January 8 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Tuesday, January 13 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Wednesday, January 14 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Thursday, January 15 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Tuesday, January 20 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Wednesday, January 21 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Thursday, January 22 6-8pm (Run Act One)
- Tuesday, January 27 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Wednesday, January 28 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Thursday, January 29 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Tuesday, February 3 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Wednesday, February 4 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Thursday, February 5 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Tuesday, February 10 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Wednesday, February 11 6-8pm (Blocking/Choreo)
- Thursday, February 12 6-8pm (Run Act Two)
- Tuesday, February 17 6-8pm (Choreo/Music Review)
- Wednesday, February 18 6-8pm (Run Act One)
- Thursday, February 19 6-8pm (Run Act Two)
- Tuesday, February 25 6-8pm (Choreo/Music Review)
- Wednesday, February 26 6-8pm (Run Act One)
- Thursday, February 27 6-8pm (Run Act Two)
- Monday, March 2 6-9pm (Run Act One and Clean)
- Tuesday, March 3 6-9pm (Run Act Two and Clean)
- Wednesday, March 4 6-9pm (Designer Run Act One)

- Thursday, March 5 6-9pm (Designer Run Act Two)
- Friday, March 6 6-9pm (Music/Choreo Review)
- Sunday, March 8 1-7pm (Tech)
- Monday, March 9 5-9pm (Dress Rehearsal)
- Tuesday, March 10 5-9pm (Dress Rehearsal)
- Wednesday, March 11 5-9pm (Dress Rehearsal)

Week One Performances:

- Thursday, March 12 @ 7pm
- Friday, March 13 @ 7pm
- Saturday, March 14 @ 6pm
- Sunday, March 15 @ 2pm

Pick-Up Rehearsal:

- Tuesday, March 17 6-9pm

Second Weekend of Performances:

- Thursday, March 19 @ 7pm
- Friday, March 20 @ 7pm
- Saturday, March 21 @ 6pm
- Sunday, March 22 @ 2pm

Scene two

Lights up on Leonard, fifty, fierce and brilliant.

LEONARD

You got to understand that this is a totally irrelevant dream state you're hibernating in up here. It's irrelevant. I mean I was just in Moldova, doing research for this, thing and I are cabbage with a Chechnyan psychopath. Then I'm in Dubai with a bunch of Shiites and Sunnis, people wanting to kill each other. I almost got into a fist fight with this Russian prostitute who was of a totally indeterminate gender, don't get me started on that story, anyway the fact is I was stoned out of my mind. It was fucked up, all of it, but it was relevant. The world we live in? It no longer exists! Last year I was in Rwanda. I was hanging out with this guy, he's a genocide survivor, his arms are gone, chopped off, he can't do anything anymore except beg for whatever pitance, half a bowl of rice some fucking UN peacekeeper throws him every other day, the rest of the time he just lies in the mud unless someone like me comes along and helps him get drunk. So I spend like three hours with this guy, listening to him tell his fucking story and finally he gets really quiet and he says, you know, he says listen man. I got HIV. I'm going to die. And I'm like forget it, I'm overwhelmed I go, why are you telling me all this? Why am I the receptacle of this incredible fucking story, man? And he says: Because you are a writer. You must write this. It must be told.

(a beat)

How did I get off on this. What were we talking about?

MARTIN

Um, Kate had a story...

LEONARD

Right! Kate's story! Where is it?

MARTIN

It's in your hand.

Leonard finds it in his hand.

LEONARD

Yeah. Right. So what were we talking about?

KATE

The first sentence.

LEONARD

(reading)

Oh yeah, Christ, I remember now. Oh, Christ. "When truth is acknowledged universally it is also universally disdained." I mean what the fuck, I can't even—

KATE

That's not the whole sentence.

LEONARD

(abrupt)

Yeah I see that I see the semi-colon, I understand that that means there's only a partial stop and that more is coming but I'm not sure I want to continue. Okay? I'm not even making it through your first sentence. So why don't you tell me what you're doing because it's not exactly drawing me in here.

KATE

What am I—

LEONARD

What are you, yes, what are you doing?

KATE

(stumbling)

I'm it's a referencing of Jane Austen the first sentence of Pride and Prejudice, it's kind of a sardonic commentary

LEONARD

What's so fucking sardonic about it?

KATE

It's the narrator she's

LEONARD

I don't give a shit about the narrator. If I can't get past the first five words how the fuck am I supposed to find out enough about the narrator to care about him?

KATE

It's not a him, it's a her.

LEONARD

Well see that would be my point. If I can't even tell what gender your narrator is, then you haven't really done your job have you?

KATE

(defending herself)

How if you don't go past the first five words how can you tell?

LEONARD

Listen to me. Don't defend yourself. If you're defending yourself you're not listening. I do know who your narrator is. She's an over-educated completely inexperienced sexually inadequate girl who has rich parents who give her everything and who has nothing to say, so she sits around and thinks about Jane Austen all the time. I don't give a shit about that person. This is what I'm saying. I don't have to go past the first five words because I already know enough and I don't give a shit.

IZZY

I liked it.

LEONARD

No you didn't.

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IZZY

I did. I thought she was sort of doing this thing with sexual irony. Like the lack of sex was sort of like a come on.

DOUGLAS

I like it too. I think it's intelligent and thoughtful. Well done.

MARTIN

I like it too.

LEONARD

Guys! This is very sweet you're all adorable. But don't kid yourselves. You're all going to be nice to her now because her story tanked. But you're not in this together. And trust me, you wouldn't think the story was so great if it really were any good. If it were really good? You'd fucking hate it. Writers in their natural state are about as civilized as feral cats. All this 'well done' bullshit means you're not being honest and if you're not honest who gives a shit what you're writing. Who's up next.

He tosses Kate's story to the floor and looks around. There is a big old pause.

LEONARD

See you next week. Cowards.

He goes. They all sit there, silent for a moment.

IZZY

Oh god I can't believe how late it is! I have to go! My mom is in the hospital.

DOUGLAS

Wow that's a drag Izzy. You need a ride?

MARTIN

You drove to the upper west side?

KATE

How would he know, he didn't read more than six words!

MARTIN

He's not talking about you, he's talking about the story.

KATE

A story he hasn't read.

MARTIN

He read the first page. I mean, we all sat here right, and watched him read the first page.

KATE

Big fucking deal! What is your point Martin?

MARTIN

I don't have a point! I just mean that's all we get right. Everybody says it. If you don't get them on the first page, that's all you get.

KATE

So it's my fault! That I stood here and got completely humiliated by that asshole?

She disappears into the apartment, yelling back. Martin waits.

KATE

(off)

Everybody acted like, they all said he's ROUGH but he's A GREAT TEACHER BUT I DON'T SEE WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT JUST BEING ABUSED. THAT'S NOT TEACHING THAT'S JUST BEING A SHITHEAD. IF I WANT SOMEONE TO TELL ME I'M WASTING MY TIME I CAN JUST TALK TO MY MOTHER. EVERYONE THINKS ITS SO COOL AND FUN TO BE MEAN TO ARTISTS BUT IF WE WEREN'T HERE THERE WOULD BE NOTHING BUT ANARCHY AND

IMMORALITY AND CHAOS. WE ARE THE SOUL OF THE CULTURE AND PEOPLE CAN JUST FUCKING BE NICE TO US ONCE IN A WHILE.

She reappears, carrying bags of chips and diet soda and ice cream. She sits down and starts to eat.

MARTIN

What are you doing?

KATE

I'm depressed and I'm trying to make myself feel better is that all right with you?

MARTIN

Don't be depressed.

KATE

My story got creamed. I'm depressed. I'm a depressed feral cat.

MARTIN

If you think he's stupid what do you care if he didn't like your story?

KATE

I didn't think he was stupid until he was stupid to me today.

MARTIN

So if he liked your story that would make him not stupid?

KATE

Yes! If he liked my story that would make him smart. Okay? Okay?

MARTIN

Just wanted to be sure.

KATE

~~Yes, it would be lame, coming from you but it didn't come from you, it came from Frank Conroy. You know who else likes that story? Tobias Wolf. He read it when I took that summer writing class and he said it had some nice things in it.~~

MARTIN

Kate do you even hear yourself? You know how long you've been working on that story? Six years—

KATE

That's right, SIX YEARS.

MARTIN

Why have you been writing the same story for six years?

KATE

Because it's a good story! It's a really good story. When I was at Bennington—

MARTIN

Jesus, was there ever a time when you weren't at Bennington? You exist in an alternate universe called 'Bennington.'

KATE

I learned a lot there, Martin.

MARTIN

What you learned was how to write one lousy story in six years.

A silence.

MARTIN

That's not, I didn't mean the story was lousy.

KATE

Fuck you you did too.

MARTIN

Well why are you writing the same story for six years?

KATE

Because people kept telling me it was good but that it needed more work!

MARTIN

Well then Leonard just did you a big favor, didn't he?

A beat.

KATE

Meaning?

MARTIN

Now you can write something else.

A beat.

KATE

You know, this is my apartment, so I can't walk out. Could you walk out please?

MARTIN

No no, don't do that. Come on, don't do that.

KATE

(overlap)

I want to do that. Get out of my apartment. Get out. Go. Get out.

MARTIN

No no no

KATE

I mean it, Martin--Martin--

MARTIN

Come on, listen to me. Listen.

He takes her hands. She looks away.

MARTIN

I have to tell you something.

She looks up at him. He holds her hand.

KATE

What?

MARTIN

I'm getting kicked out of my apartment because I'm a little late on the rent. Can I stay here? I mean, you got like nine extra bedrooms. And it's free! Who knew it was free? I can stay, right?

She looks at him.

Blackout.

Scene Three

Leonard is taking off his jacket and scarf, looking at the others, who are sitting dutifully around him.

LEONARD

So who's got something, who are we starting with today?

There is silence. No one moves. Leonard laughs.

LEONARD

Come on children we don't have all night. What are we here for? Am I a fucking writer, or am I a fucking piece of shit coward? Am I trying to construct a living breathing cosmos with language or am I just scratching on the wall of a cave? Am I feral cat or am I a useless goldfish in a bowl that would be better off someone flushed it down the toilet? Which is what's going to happen to it anyway.

Izzy twitches, nervous.

IZZY

(blurring)

I have something. I have a story. I didn't know if Douglas and Martin had something, I was thinking maybe they would want to go, or maybe Kate has something else—

KATE

No.

IZZY

Okay, well, I do have something.

(handing it over)

I haven't been working on it very long. I just started it. About a week a few days ago.

LEONARD

Yeah I can tell.

crushing on—

MARTIN

I'm not crushing on Izzy—

KATE

It doesn't matter if you are or not because she has other fish to fry, doesn't she, she's not afraid to show off her writing, and she's going to get it published too because Izzy is not afraid of doing whatever she has to and right now she is off having sex with our hideous and disgusting teacher.

MARTIN

Izzy is not having sex with Leonard. That would be completely unethical.

KATE

Which is why of course it would never happen.

*He opens another bottle. There is a knock at the door.
Kate answers it.*

Hi Douglas, what are you doing here?

He barges in and sits. Martin stares at him.

DOUGLAS

She's having sex with him! It's completely unethical. I mean, I wouldn't care, it's not like I'm a prude god knows.

MARTIN

Izzy's not having sex with Leonard.

DOUGLAS

They went home together!

MARTIN

You don't know that!

DOUGLAS

Martin. We left the apartment and went to that shitty bar across the street to have a drink. After three glasses of wine each, he looked her in the face and said, you want to come back to my place? And she said sure. And they left. Together.

MARTIN

That doesn't mean she slept with him.

DOUGLAS

They were making out on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant! Right in front of me. The table is here. The plate glass window is here. And they start making out right here. If the window hadn't been there, they would have been in my lap. He was feeling her up right in front of me.

MARTIN

Come on.

DOUGLAS

Do you think I'd make something like that up?

MARTIN

Well what was she doing?

DOUGLAS

She was participating!

MARTIN

That is so unethical. For Leonard to take advantage of her like that.

KATE

You are insane.

MARTIN

You don't think it's unethical.

KATE

I think that Izzy is going to get her story published in the New York Times. It's what I think.

DOUGLAS

You can't get your work published by sleeping with your fiction teacher, Kate.

KATE

I'm sorry what did you say?

DOUGLAS

I just don't think that Izzy is naive enough to think that sleeping with Leonard will help her career.

KATE

Naive? You think it's 'naive' of her to think something like that?

DOUGLAS

I think I know a little bit more about it than you do.

KATE

Oh that was helpful.

DOUGLAS

I just meant.

KATE

I know what you meant. Here's what I meant: Calling a woman or a man who sleeps with a powerful guy naive, is naive.

DOUGLAS

Which is still unethical. It just makes Leonard's behavior coercive.

KATE

Coercive! Maybe it was coercive of Izzy to write two pages of a story that's all about sex and then go have drinks with her fucked up writing teacher who can't remember anybody's name because he's constantly thinking about his dick. Maybe that was the coercive part.

DOUGLAS

And maybe you're jealous.

KATE

Maybe I'm jealous? Maybe you're an idiot—

DOUGLAS

Maybe I'm an idiot? Maybe—

MARTIN

SHUT UP! Would both of you just--shut up? Please. Just shut up.

Really sad and depressed, Martin takes another bottle of beer, looks at them, tries to speak, can't, and goes.

Buzzer.

DOUGLAS

What's that?

KATE

Chinese food.

Blackout.

other people?

DOUGLAS

No. Of course not.

LEONARD

Good. Because there is something in your writing--it's hard to, it's around the tonal perfection, there's a kind of--it's a little like a whore. Oh.

DOUGLAS

The character of Stephanie?

LEONARD

No no not the character. You. The way you talk about writing is kind of stupid. Plus, the way you write is so unimaginative in the way it attacks the problem you set yourself. I mean, it's skillful, but level of his writing ambition, and that he could make a fuckload of whorish. It's like the way you play your name off, your connections, money in Hollywood. But I, I'm a fiction writer. You're a name dropper, you're a whore. And that's in the writing. It perfect, in a kind of whorish way. I don't know why you're wasting your time on fiction. I mean, you're good at it, I'm not saying you're not.

DOUGLAS

No. Oh! No.

LEONARD

It's just--if you can do this? Why not make a ton of money doing this. You're capable, you've got a few publications under your belt, famous last name, they love that shit in Hollywood. You could make a fuckload of money. Or you could spend the rest of your life writing fiction that nobody reads or respects, even if they read it. Cause you're talented, like I said, but you're never going to be great. And there are a lot of people who are never going to be great, most fiction writers just evaporate, really, but that's going to be a problem for you because of your kind of whorish attitude to the whole thing, the name dropping, and of course the name. It will in fact be particularly degrading and even humiliating to be ignored to the degree you will

be ignored. Because at the same time you'll be allowed in, because of the name. You'll be invited to cocktail parties. You'll get to go to exclusive events at the Public Library. But you will never be on a panel. Because too many people who know shit will know: It's hollow. The work is hollow. I'd think about Hollywood.

DOUGLAS

MARTIN

Yeah but... the story is excellent.

LEONARD

Yes we've all heard that you think the story is thrilling. I don't think it's thrilling. I think it's good, in a whorish way, and that that is the level of his writing ambition, and that he could make a fuckload of money in Hollywood.

DOUGLAS

But I, I'm a fiction writer.

LEONARD

You asked for the truth. That's the truth I have.

DOUGLAS

Yes. No. Thanks.

LEONARD

All right then. I got to go to Somalia tomorrow so I'll see you pussies in two weeks.

And he goes. There is a long moment of silence.

KATE

He's going to Somalia. Maybe someone will shoot him.

MARTIN

I think it's a really good story.

DOUGLAS

Fuck you. You think it's shit. At least he told me what he really thinks.

(then)

Could someone check in the hallway and make sure that he's gone? I'm not siding with anyone, this is a situation! What is the matter with you?

KATE

Sure.

She opens the door, goes out, looks down the stairs. Comes back in.

KATE

He's gone.

DOUGLAS

Good.

He goes.

KATE

Douglas, wait. Don't just go walking off, Douglas wait!

Kate goes after him, leaving the door standing open.

Martin sits on the couch, morose. Izzy turns back to him.

IZZY

You're an asshole.

MARTIN

I'm an asshole? HE'S an asshole! Not Douglas. Leonard. I think Douglas is a shit writer, but he's not an asshole. He's not actually a shit writer, either. He's a pretty good writer, who mostly writes shit.

IZZY

Which is what Leonard said.

MARTIN

Are you siding with Leonard now?

IZZY

I'm not siding with anyone, this is a situation! What is the matter with you?

MARTIN

What is the matter with ME?

IZZY

You were about to tell Douglas his story sucked—

MARTIN

I—

IZZY

You were too, and I saved you, you jerk. Douglas is hooked up and P.S. he's a good guy, you need to make him your friend. You want to keep getting rejected by Yaddo and McDowell, why don't you just keep sending blind submissions to those places like every other loser in the world.

MARTIN

Hey! Don't hold back.

IZZY

I'm not because you know what? I don't care what anyone says, we're in this together and it's a game, it's a situation, and we need each other. Douglas can help us. Leonard too.

MARTIN

Fuck Leonard. That guy is an ASSHOLE. Everybody was like 'oh he's amazing, he only takes a few students anymore, you'll learn so much.' This is what I'm learning: GIVE ME MY MONEY BACK. I can't BELIEVE I scraped together five thousand dollars for this. I can't even pay my rent.

IZZY

Maybe the reason you're not learning anything Martin is that you haven't shown him any of your work, has that occurred to you?

MARTIN

Well maybe I don't want to show him my work because all I've seen him do for my fellow writers is stomp on their hearts or call them whores or turn them into whores.

A beat.

MARTIN

Sorry.

IZZY

You mistake me, Martin, for someone who gives a shit what you think.

MARTIN

Yes. I see your point there. You, clearly, you should go ahead and do whatever you think you need to do.

IZZY

Just for the record, however, I did not sleep with Leonard.

MARTIN

It's none of my business. You're right.

IZZY

I didn't sleep with him! Don't you believe me?

MARTIN

It doesn't matter if I believe you or not, Izzy, it's none of my business.

IZZY

Are you calling me a liar now? Now I'm not just a whore, I'm a liar

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and a whore?

MARTIN

I didn't say that!

IZZY

Douglas is right. At least Leonard tells the truth.

She goes and gets her purse, to go.

MARTIN

Look, why are you mad at me? You're right! I'm pathetic, I'm a pathetic--chicken--but I just, I think that you could do a lot better than that, that-- You're so beautiful, Izzy, you're exquisite, really, just-- funny and smart and so full of life--

IZZY

Am I?

MARTIN

Well...yeah.

IZZY

You're right. Since I'm not sleeping with him, I could surely do a lot better.

MARTIN

Well, you could.

IZZY

Could I?

MARTIN

Well yeah.

She starts to move toward him.

~~MARTIN~~
Yes! A messenger from the gods, which has to be reckoned with! You're fucked!

~~KATE~~
Martin, you don't get to vote! You don't have enough money to run your own rent! You're such a huge fucking chicken about your own work, you won't even show it! If it's a fucking message then what the message? Oops! No one knows! Because you're a writer who one can read! So you don't get a vote!

A beat.

~~KATE~~
Well done, Kate! You not only pulled one over on Leonard who everyone in the room thinks is a flaming abusive BUTTHOLE, you came up with a terrific piece of writing! We know you've been feeling shitty about yourself because of the way Leonard treated you and you've been really nice to let Martin and Izzy use your apartment as a FUCKING LOVE NEST and well done well done you must be a lot better, that piece you wrote about the Cubano transvestite guy is a plagiarist. Well done.

~~(then, playing her part)~~
Thanks, thanks you guys. Thanks!

She drinks. Douglas laughs. Then he laughs some more.

~~KATE~~
Thank you, Douglas. At least somebody appreciates the effort.

~~DOUGLAS~~
No, you're right. You're absolutely right! It's no worse than what Leonard did. It's practically the exact same thing.

~~MARTIN~~
Oh yeah? On top of everything else he publishes phony memoirs!

~~DOUGLAS~~

~~Worse. I was really upset after Leonard called me a whore last week so I called my uncle to talk to him about it? And he told me Leonard's no saint.~~

~~KATE~~

~~Who thought he was a saint?~~

~~IZZY~~

~~Your uncle dished dirt on Leonard?~~

~~DOUGLAS~~

~~Yes, he did.~~

~~MARTIN~~

~~to spill it. What'd Leonard do?~~

~~DOUGLAS~~

~~(a beat)~~

~~He's a plagiarist.~~

~~IZZY~~

~~Get out.~~

~~MARTIN~~

~~You're kidding.~~

~~KATE~~

~~Are you sure?~~

~~DOUGLAS~~

~~There was some incident, it got totally hushed up. But that's why Leonard stopped publishing. This was like an ice age ago, but he did, he totally plagiarized something, it was from like a student and it wrecked his career. After those first few novels he was done. And then I don't know what happened, but eventually someone at Random House took pity on him and threw him a copy editing gig.~~

SYNOPSIS: *Spelling Bee*

In a high school gym, long time hostess, Rona Lisa Peretti, finalizes the preparations for the annual county spelling bee, reminiscing about her own spelling bee victory, many years prior. The current crop of spelling contenders arrives ("The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"). The contestants include last year's champ, Chip (a boy scout), Schwarzy (the youngest and most politically aware contestant), Coneybear (the somewhat wide-eyed offspring of hippie parents), Barfee (an allergy-plagued student), Marcy (an over-achieving Asian-American) and Olive (a tentative newcomer).

Rona also calls on four volunteers from the audience to join the competition (these are real audience members who have been selected through an interview process before the show).

It is revealed that Olive has failed to pay her \$25 entrance fee, but Rona assures her that it will be worked out later. Barfee rudely fends off Olive's attempts to befriend him. Rona introduces Vice Principal Douglas Panch, a last-minute substitute word pronouncer, and Mitch Mahoney, a menacing ex-con who is serving as "Comfort Counselor" as a part of his community service sentence. Panch, Rona and the spellers review the contest's elimination-style rules ("The Rules").

The contest begins. As the students are individually called upon, Rona provides color commentary, revealing background info about each of them. A flashback reveals that Coneybear only made in into this contest because his school's winner and first runner-up were unable to attend due to a Bar Mitzvah. He appears to have no hope of spelling words correctly, but snaps into abrupt trances, during which he performs perfectly.

Olive reflects on a lonely childhood, where her main source of companionship (and spelling excellence) was a dictionary ("My Friend the Dictionary"). The audience volunteers are also called upon to participate. Volunteers who answer incorrectly are eliminated ("Goodbye #1"). Barfee uses a bizarre "magic foot" technique to spell his words.

Rona reveals that Marcy placed high in the ranking for last year's national spelling bee, impressing all of the contestants. One of the audience volunteers is asked to spell "cow," prompting outrage from the contestants. The contest swings into high gear ("Pandemonium") as Panch requests spellings for words that vary enormously in their level of difficulty.

A flashback reveals Schwarzy, drilling for the contest with her two overbearing gay dads. Coneybear, for the second consecutive time, is asked to spell a word related to South American rodents. He confesses that his family does not consider him to be particularly intelligent ("I'm Not That Smart").

Barfee calls upon his magic foot technique to help him spell the word, "hasenpfeffer" ("Magic Foot"). By this point in the contest, all but one of the audience volunteers have probably been eliminated. Chip is eliminated after getting distracted by seeing Coneybear's attractive sister, Marigold, in the audience ("Pandemonium – Reprise"). Mitch escorts him from the stage ("Chip Goodbye").

Rona is excited by the unexpected early elimination of last year's champ ("Rona Moment #2").

The final audience volunteer is eliminated when asked to spell a ridiculously difficult word. Mitch consoles the loser ("Prayer of the Comfort Counselor").

During a snack break, Chip distributes free candy to the audience and laments the fact that his sexual arousal cost him a victory in the spelling bee ("My Unfortunate Erection"). Chip bickers with Barfee and terrorizes him with a packet of peanut M&Ms before being ejected. Olive comforts Barfee.

As the break ends and the bee resumes, Schwarzy reflects on the tremendous pressure placed on her by her dads ("Woe Is Me"). A lighting-fast blaze of spelling ensues, and Coneybear is eliminated when he fails to spell chinchilla correctly ("I'm Not That Smart – Reprise").

Rona reveals that Marcy speaks six languages. Marcy is exasperated at always being thought of as superior in every way ("I Speak Six Languages"). She is asked to spell the word, "camouflage," whereupon she rhetorically exclaims "Dear Jesus, can't you come up with a harder word than that?" Much to her astonishment, Jesus Christ immediately appears and reveals that He doesn't care who wins this contest. Marcy, relieved, deliberately misspells her word, joyfully eliminating herself.

Only Schwarzy, Olive and Barfee remain. Olive receives a phone call from her dad. Taking advantage of the pause, Schwarzy seizes the microphone and makes a political statement. One of Schwarzy's dads attempts to sabotage Barfee by pouring a can of Coke onto the stage, hoping the stickiness will immobilize Barfee's magic foot. It is implied that Olive's father is unwilling to pay her \$25 entrance fee.

Olive is given the word "chimerical," which means "wildly fanciful and highly unrealistic." This prompts her to fantasize about her neglectful parents ("The I Love You Song").

Barfee's magic foot is foiled by the spilled Coke, but he manages to spell "crepuscule" correctly anyway. Schwarzy is eliminated ("Woe is Me – Reprise"). Only two spellers remain, and Rona is breathless with excitement ("Rona Moment #3").

After a volley of correctly spelled words, Olive misspells a word ("Second, Part One") and Barfee hesitates before claiming victory, sensitive to Olive's feelings. Olive reassures him, and he claims the victory. Panch, taking pity on Olive, invents a \$25 prize for "runner up," which he produces out of his own pocket to cover Olive's entrance fee. Rona is moved by Panch's kind gesture. Olive and Barfee warmly congratulate each other.

A series of epilogues reveal the future fates of the characters and explains how their experiences during the spelling bee shaped each of their lives ("Finale").

All actors must audition with one of the monologues below. If there isn't a monologue for the part you are trying out for, just pick one from below.

RONA LISA PERETTI: (Host of the Bee)

Ladies and gentlemen, all the children you see on stage are here because of their extraordinary ability and love of language – but only one of them can go on to compete in the National Spelling Bee! And this year, to celebrate our silver anniversary, our local sponsors, the Putnam Optometrists, are offering today's winner a two hundred dollar savings bond toward his or her future education. I'd like to take this moment to ask you to please turn off all cell phones and other distracting devices, and put away cameras – sorry, no photos at the bee. I'm Rona Lisa Peretti, and I'm pleased to be back for my 9th consecutive year as your host. Unfortunately, our usual word pronouncer, Superintendent Spriggs, has fallen ill, so please join me in welcoming back Vice Principal Douglas Panch from Lake Hemingway Junior High.

LEAF CONEYBEAR MONOLOGUE: (read this like a goofball)

(picks up the phone) Hello, Leaf speaking. Uh huh. Uh huh. You're kidding! I'm going to represent the Basin in the Bee? Wow, I can't believe it. *(puts down the phone)* Mom, Dad, Marigold, Brook, Pinecone, Raisin, Landscape, Paul – you're not going to believe this! I made the county finals in the spelling bee! I know that I came in third in my regional competition, but they just called and said that the person who came in first has to go to their Bat Mitzvah and the person who came in second has to attend the Bat Mitzvah, so they want me to do it! *(To audience)* I'm not that smart. My siblings have been telling me that for years that I'm not smart. But guess what, you know what? Guess what! I think I could still win this thing!

OLIVE MONOLOGUE: (read this very innocently)

I'm thinking about does flagellate have one L 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. *(A cell phone rings.)* Oh – sorry – it's mine – it's my dad – can I answer? I know it's against the rules, but Miss Peretti, maybe you could answer to tell him I made the finals. Oh, and that I need the twenty-five dollar entrance fee! My mom couldn't make it because she's in an ashram in India. But I hope that she'll send for me soon...

WILLIAM BARFEE SCENE: (very boastfully)

PANCH Mr. Barfee.

BARFEE – It's Barfée – *(pronounce this BarFAY)*

PANCH "Lugubrious."

BARFEE Yes, of course. Lugubrious, meaning extremely sad and droopy?

PANCH More or less, yes.

BARFEE A topic I am all too familiar with. One moment please.

(BARFEE should spell out the word on the floor using his foot to create the letters as he spells.)

BARFEE Lugubrious. L-U-G-U- Lugu! B-R-I-O-U-S – Lugubrious.

PANCH That is correct.

BARFEE I know. My fake mom Sheila thinks my hobbies are weird, but my real mom Joan says this science will one day pay off. And also I will grow up to be incredibly handsome.

MITCH MAHONEY You can't comfort these damn kids. They don't yet know 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 from 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 just want to beat them up a little, so they understand that pain has degrees, and this is nothing, this is nothing, you little freaks. But that would violate my parole. So I do what I can. I give them a hug and a juice box. I'm here to give comfort.

VICE PRINCIPLE DOUGLAS PANCH

Thank you Rona, and I would like to say as to the incident 5 years ago, I'm in a much better place now. **[Ad lib note: Here, the actor reading for Panch has the option to ad lib some reference to "the incident" at his digression. As originally written, the line reads: "It's amazing what a change of diet can do for a man. Thank you." The original line would be a fine choice, but you have the option to change it]* And may I add, Ms. Peretti here is not only one of Putnam County's top realtors, she's also a former spelling champion herself. Beautiful. And now for the Pledge of Allegiance led by our comfort counselor, *(Checks writing on the palm of his hand)* Mr. Mitchell M. Mahoney

MARCY PARK Camouflage. *(to herself)* Dear Jesus, can't you come up with a harder word than that? *(responding to JESUS's voice, which she hears clearly in her head)* Jesus? Hi! How are you? Jesus ... I was wondering what would happen if I didn't win today. What I mean is, would you be disappointed with me if I lost? You're saying it's up to me *then?* *(she returns to spelling)* Camouflage. C-A-M ... O-U *(still deciding)* F-L. .. A ... J *(and as soon as she dares miss the first letter, she takes more and more joy in getting it wrong)* ... Z!!.. .. H!!! Camaflajzh!

CHIP TOLENTINO:

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?

Logainne SchwartzandGrubenniere

Doesn't anybody else here care about the rules? This bee is about as well-organized as...

Please improvise a short political speech on a current topic or use one of the ones below.

You can update or alter if you like.

Ad-Libs (examples)

From the authors: "Schwarzy's ad libs" are the most topical part of the script and must be rewritten to reference current and/or local news items. As you can see, whatever the topic, she frequently works in her two fathers. These were generally written by Sarah Saltzberg, and added to by subsequent Schwarzys.

This bee is as confusing for me as Father's Day! As the daughter of 2 gay dads, I'd like to know who scheduled Father's Day and Gay Pride weekend, within 7 days of each other?! Well anyway, to celebrate Gay Father's Pride week, which is what we call it in my family, we went to go see "Cinderella Man" - but it wasn't exactly what we were expecting.

This bee is about as misguided as the current administration! With the Patriot Act about to expire, President Bush was quoted in this week's NY Times as saying "in times of terrorism, some civil liberties must be sacrificed. But I will do my best to protect them." As a progressive, half-Jewish, mixed race child of 2 gay fathers, I really don't think he's got my civil liberties in mind.

This bee is as confusing as George Bush seeing Brokeback Mountain. Thursday night is movie night in my house, and this past Thursday my dads and I went to go see a special screening of Brokeback Mountain. My Carl-Dad said he couldn't see cowboys without thinking of George Bush, and then my Dan-Dad said he couldn't see gay cowboys without thinking of Karl Rove and George Bush. And then the man behind us said "yes, and isn't nice to see them screwing each other for a change!" We laughed...

This bee is nose-diving faster than Star Jones' career!! Star Jones' "resignation" from The View sent shockwaves through the Schwartzandgrubenierre household, until we realized - my Dan Dad would be a perfect replacement. They both lost a lot of weight doing Pilates, they both have issues with Rosie O'Donnell, and they both married gay men! So Barbara, consider this - my Dan Dad would be an asset to your show, and as my Karl Dad says, he's more of a big black queen than Star Jones will ever be!!

This bee is about as shocking as Lance Bass coming out of the closet! Former N'Sync member Lance Bass literally rocked the nation earlier this week when he proudly came out of the closet though as my dads pointed out, the highlighted hair tips have always been a little bit of a dead giveaway. Anyway, I applaud Lance for taking a stand and essentially bein' the anti-Bush poster boy-he's openly gay~ he's dating someone with a very foreign name and he wrote the song that I want to sing to President Bush when he finally leaves office-(with boy band choreography singing) - I wanna see you out that door - baby, bye bye bye!!!