

Newsies Character Breakdown

Jack Kelly

The charismatic leader of the Manhattan newsies, is an orphaned dreamer and artist who yearns to get out of the crowded streets of New York 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 New York City. Though living on the streets has given him a tough-guy exterior, Jack has a big heart and can demonstrate a sweet vulnerability – especially when it comes to bantering with a certain female reporter. Must have a great pop tenor voice and sense of physicality.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: A4

Vocal range bottom: Bb2

Crutchie

A dedicated newsie with a bum leg that's painful, but helps sell more papes. Though he walks with the assistance of a crutch, Crutchie doesn't let it define him; when in a jam, Jack Kelly's best friend relies on a goofy- sweet sense of humor and optimistic resilience. Crutchie is the heart of the resistance. Though his movement will suggest his bum leg, Crutchie should still be included in the dance numbers.

Gender: Any

Vocal range top: A4

Vocal range bottom: C3

Davey

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.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: A4

Vocal range bottom: D3

Les

Davey's cheeky younger brother, is inspired by the freedom of the newsies and loves their independent lifestyle. A precocious and natural newsie, Les is an intuitive salesboy and a pint-sized charmer. He should present as younger than the other newsies.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: Bb3

Vocal range bottom: Db3

Newsies

Including Albert, Buttons, Elmer, Finch, Henry, Ike, Jo Jo, Mike, Mush, Race, Romeo, Specs, Splasher, and Tommy Boy, are some of the hard-working kids of New York City that go on strike for a livable wage.

Gender: Male

Scabs

Three newsies who are hesitant to join the strike.

Gender: Any

Spot Conlon

The proud leader of the Brooklyn newsies, boasts an intimidating reputation and a short singing solo in “Brooklyn’s Here.”

Gender: Any

Katherine Plumber

An ambitious young reporter, works hard to make a name for herself as a legitimate journalist in a time when women aren’t taken seriously. Quick, funny, and resourcesful, she boldly captures the voice of a new generation rising in her coverage of the newsies’ strike. 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,” Katherine should have a great contemporary pop voice with a high belt – diction is key.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: F5

Vocal range bottom: A3

Darcy

The upper-class kid of a publisher who sides with the newsies. Can double as a newsie.

Gender: Any

Bill

The son of William Randolph Hearst who joins the newsies' cause. Can double as a newsie.

Gender: Male

Wiesel

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.

Gender: Male

Oscar and Morris Delancey

Tough brothers who work at the distribution window for the World, take the side of the publishers in the strike and are known to use their fists to make a point.

Gender: Male

Goons

Assist the Delanceys in roughing up the newsies at the end of Act One.

Gender: Male

Joseph Pulitzer

A 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.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: F4

Vocal range bottom: C3

Seitz

Editor, advises Pulitzer, but ultimately admires the kids' newspaper.

Gender: Any

Bunsen

Pulitzer's bookkeeper, comes up with the ideas to raise the newsies' price per paper.

Gender: Any

Hannah

Pulitzer's practical and insightful secretary.

Gender: Female

Nunzio

Pulitzer's barber.

Gender: Male

Guard

The Guard removes the newsies from Pulitzer's building.

Gender: Any

Snyder

The crooked and sinister warden of The Refuge, a filthy and horrible orphanage, is concerned only with catching enough kids to keep his government checks coming.

Gender: Any

Medda Larkin

Inspired by vaudeville performer Aida Overton Walker, this big-voiced saloon singer and star of the Bowery offers her theater as a safe haven for the newsies. 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.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: E5

Vocal range bottom: F3

The Bowery Beauties

Female performers at Medda's Theater.

Gender: Female

Stage Manager

Introduces Medda's act.

Gender: Any

Nuns

The three nuns offer breakfast to the hungry newsies. Feel free to cast additional nuns.

Gender: Female

Photographer

Takes the triumphant photo of the newsies at the end of "Seize the Day."

Gender: Any

Woman

A newspaper customer.

Gender: Any

Mr. Jacobi

Allows the newsies to congregate in his restaurant to plan their strike – when he doesn't have any paying customers, that is.

Gender: Any

Policemen

Assist Snyder and turn against the newsies in the fight that concludes Act One.

Gender: Male

Mayor

The Mayor of New York City rebuffs Pulitzer's attempts to shut down the newsies' strike.

Gender: Male

Governor Teddy Roosevelt

A well-respected lifelong public servant, inspires Jack to stand up to Pulitzer.

Gender: Male

Ensemble

In the original Broadway production, the adult (non-newsie) ensemble comprised eight actors who doubled and understudied as indicated below. All other featured roles and understudies were cast from the ensemble of newsies. Feel free to follow these tracks or expand as your resources allow.

FEMALE ENSEMBLE 1 - Nun / Hannah / Bowery Beauty / Katherine understudy

FEMALE ENSEMBLE 2 - Nun / Woman / Bowery Beauty / Medda understudy

FEMALE ENSEMBLE 3 - Nun / Medda Larkin

MALE ENSEMBLE 1 - Wiesel / Stage Manager / Mr. Jacobi / Mayor / Pulitzer understudy

MALE ENSEMBLE 2 - Seitz / Roosevelt understudy

MALE ENSEMBLE 3 - Bunsen / Male Ensemble 1 understudy

MALE ENSEMBLE 4 - Nunzio / Guard / Policeman / Roosevelt

MALE ENSEMBLE 5 - Snyder / Pulitzer understudy

Gender: Any