

Disney's *Newsies JR.* is a 60-minute version of the 2012 Broadway musical, based on the 1992 film, inspired by the rousing true story of newsboys in turn-of-the-century New York City. When powerful newspaper publishers raise prices at the newsboys' expense, the charismatic Jack Kelly rallies newsies from across the city to strike against the unfair conditions. Together, the newsies learn that they are stronger united and create a movement to fight for what's right.

In this play, Newsies are kids of all genders and backgrounds (not just boys as the movie depicts)

Character Descriptions:

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 very loyal, Jack isn't afraid to use his voice to attain better conditions for the working kids of New York City. Looking for an actor who can command the stage with ease, possesses strong vocal abilities, and can exude Jack's tough-guy exterior and his big heart.

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 resourceful, Katherine should be a strong singer and actor with excellent diction.

Crutchie/Casey - Jack's best friend and a dedicated newsie with a "bum leg" from polio that causes pain, but helps sell more papers. Strong acting role.

Davey - Les's 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. Must be a strong actor and singer.

Les- Davey's cheeky younger sibling, is excited by the newsies' freedom and loves their independent lifestyle. Should present as younger than the other newsies.

Medda Larkin - Inspired by the African- American vaudeville performer, Aida Overton-Walker, A big-voiced singer and star of the Bowery. A proud supporter of the newsies, she offers her theater as a safe haven for their revolution. Strong actor and singer.

Bowery Brigade- Includes the roles of the upbeat and charming Ada, Olive, and Ethel. A group of vaudeville performers in Medda's act.

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. A non-singing role for a strong actor with a sharp and imposing presence.

Wiesel - Aka "Weasel". A disgruntled paper-pusher who uses the Delancey brothers as his muscle, runs distribution for the *World* and has little patience or sympathy for the newsies.

Newsies - The hard-working kids of New York City who go on strike for a livable wage.

Speaking roles include : Race, Albert, Muriel, Nancy, Specs, Pigtales, Hazel, Buttons, Tommy Boy, Romeo, JoJo, Scabs, Brooklyn Newsies, Spot Conlon. All of these characters have some lines and perform in the group musical numbers.

Darcy - A photographer who works with Katherine.

Dorothy- Katherine's upper class friend whose parents own the *New York Tribune* and help the newsies print the Newsies Banner.

Bill- Katherine's upper class friend whose parents own the *New York Journal* and help the newsies print the Newsies Banner.

Working Children - Featured in "Once and For All," they represent all of the other child laborers who receive the Newsies Banner and ultimately become a part of the children's crusade. These working kids can be part of the larger newsie ensemble (no solo lines)

Seitz- The editor of the *World* who advises Pulitzer, but ultimately admires the kids' newspaper.

Bunsen- Pulitzer's bookkeeper who helps Pulitzer come up with the idea to raise the newsies' price per paper.

Hannah - Pulitzer's secretary who is a clever advocate for the newsies.

Snyder - The crooked warden of The Refuge, a filthy and horrible juvenile reformatory. Sinister stage presence.

Governor Teddy Roosevelt- A well-respected lifelong public servant who inspires Jack to stand up to Pulitzer.

Police Officers - Includes the role of the Police Chief. They intimidate the newsies and arrest Crutchie.

Pat - An efficient stage manager who introduces Medda's act.

Woman- A newspaper customer.