

Note from the Director

Hello, Actors!

I wanted to write you a quick note to introduce myself and give you more information about this weekend's auditions. My name is Joe Turner and I'm thrilled to be directing this fall's production of Mary Poppins. I've been fortunate to be cast in a lot of great roles (e.g., Tin Man, Lord Farquaad, Grandpa Joe) and I'm excited to share with you what I've learned along the way.

As mentioned in the notice, this play is a musical, so you should be prepared to sing at auditions. Accompaniment will not be provided, so be prepared to sing a cappella (fancy way of saying without music). Also, you can sing anything you want! It can be from this show or a previous show (or even Happy Birthday). We just want to hear you sing! It doesn't have to be an entire song but try to at least sing 32 measures, so we can get a good sampling of what you can do.

We might ask you to read from the script, especially if you're auditioning for one of the leads (Mary, Bert, George, Winifred, Jane or Michael). Sample script pages are provided and will be available at the audition. You **DO NOT** need to memorize the lines for the audition. We encourage you to bring in the sample script and read directly from it. At this audition, we're mostly interested in how you portray the character, how clearly you speak the lines, and just getting to know you! I've included additional instructions and tips on the following page.

Lastly, you might be asked to dance. Mary Poppins has some fantastic dancing scenes, so we'll need as many dancers as we can get! While dance experience is a plus, don't bother learning your own dance moves for the audition. Our choreographer will be on hand to show small groups of auditioners some simple dance moves. This is mostly to give her an idea of how complex or simple to make choreography.

We hope you found this information useful and look forward to meeting you this weekend. Auditions can be nerve-wracking to some, but we hope to make it a relaxing, enjoyable, educational experience for everyone!

Your Director,
Joe Turner

Additional Instructions:

- Please arrive during the scheduled hours. Family members can audition during the same time slot.
- Once you are signed in and form received, please wait quietly for your name to be called. We can't make a lot of noise in the waiting area because others are likely auditioning.
- When called, someone will lead you into the audition room where myself, our music director and choreographer will be waiting.
- We'll introduce ourselves, review your audition form, and maybe ask you a few questions about yourself. Don't be nervous! We're just trying to get to know you.
- Feel free to ask us questions too.
- We'll then give you the opportunity to sing. If you mess up, don't worry! You can always start over again.
- We might ask you to read lines, especially if you're auditioning for a specific role.
- If you're interested in participating in some of the dancing scenes, we might ask that you stick around for a few minutes after your audition. Our choreographer will show small groups a simple dance move to see how well you pick it up.
- Once the audition is over, you can feel free to leave. Again, we ask that you remain quiet in the waiting area as other might be auditioning.
- Callbacks are Sunday, July 9th. If you're asked to callbacks, you'll be notified the following week.
- Finally, while we'd love to cast everyone that auditions, unfortunately, the script and stage size dictates how many people we can cast. The final cast list will be posted Wednesday, July 13th.

Tips:

- Enunciate! That means speak/sing the words as clearly as possible.
- Project your voice. If you whisper your lines, no one can hear you. Speak/sing clearly and loudly.
- Remember, acting is more than just words. Be sure to use your whole body to get a point across. If you're angry, stomp a foot. Be dramatic!
- Slow down. Most people try to read too fast. Take your time.
- Your audition is more than just singing and reading lines. How you act in the waiting area, how respectful you are to others, how you listen to instructions, all of that is noted by the directors and considered during auditions.
- If reading lines, get to know your character. Read the entire page to get an idea of what's going on in the scene. What's the mood? Which other characters are involved? What are those characters like? All this might give you an idea of how you want to portray your character.
- Feel free to write yourself notes on the script. If you want to emphasize a word in the script, underline it. If you want to remember to make a certain action with your arms/legs, make a note of it beside that line.

SCENE 2: MARY'S ARRIVAL - Parlor

(MARY POPPINS appears among them. She is wearing a hat with cherries in the brim and carrying an umbrella with a handle shaped like a parrot's head.)

MARY POPPINS

Good morning.

GEORGE

(approaching MARY POPPINS)

Yes?

MARY POPPINS

I've come in answer to the advertisement.

GEORGE

What advertisement? We haven't placed any advertisement. Not yet.

MARY POPPINS

George and Winifred Banks live here, do they not?

GEORGE

Mr. and Mrs. Banks live here, yes.

MARY POPPINS

And you are looking for a nanny?

GEORGE

Well, I suppose—

MARY POPPINS

Very well then. Now, let's see.

(From her pocket, MARY POPPINS takes a torn but now mended piece of paper.)

"Play games, all sorts." Which I most certainly can. "Take us on outings, give us treats."

(GEORGE casts an uneasy look towards the CHILDREN. This sounds very like... but it can't be! He stares at MARY POPPINS blankly. JANE and MICHAEL listen from the staircase.)

JANE

Michael! It's our advertisement!

MARY POPPINS

"Rosy cheeks and fairly pretty."

(to GEORGE)

There's no objection on that score, I hope?

GEORGE

(blushing)

Oh, none at all.

MARY POPPINS

I'm glad to hear it.

(MARY POPPINS stares at him so firmly that, for a moment, it is like a ray of light passing right through him.)

GEORGE

But—oh, take it up with Mrs. Banks. She manages all that side of things. Nothing domestic has anything to do with me! And don't forget the references!

(GEORGE is gone, leaving WINIFRED and the newcomer staring at each other. After a moment, MARY POPPINS speaks.)

MARY POPPINS

I make it a rule never to give references.

WINIFRED

But I thought it was usual.

MARY POPPINS

A very old-fashioned idea to my mind. The best people never require them now.

WINIFRED

I see. You will have every third Thursday evening off from five until nine.

MARY POPPINS

The best people give every second Wednesday from six 'til late, ma'am, and that is what I shall take.

WINIFRED

Oh, I see... well... it's all settled then...

MARY POPPINS

As long as I am satisfied. I'll see the children now, thank you.

WINIFRED

Of course...

(turns back nervously)

You'll find they're very nice children...

(JANE and MICHAEL come screaming down the stairs and stand in front of MARY POPPINS.)

Now this is... oh.

GEORGE

I used to love astronomy at his age. My nanny, Miss Andrew, soon beat it out of me.

WINIFRED

I suppose we do need a nanny, George. It is out of the question to do without one?

GEORGE

Don't be absurd! Of course we need a nanny! All the best people have nannies! So the wives can do charity work and entertain. Which reminds me, how is your tea party coming on?

WINIFRED

I'm not sure. It seems so odd to send out invitations to people I hardly know.

GEORGE

But they're people you should know. Remember: "By your friends shall ye be judged."

WINIFRED

But that's the point. They're not my friends... Actually, I heard today from Clemmie Bunting. She's rehearsing a new play at the moment and I thought I might ask her—

GEORGE

How many times must I tell you? I wish you to sever all connection with that part of your life.

WINIFRED

George, I was an actress. Lots of people might find that interesting... though you always talk as if I should be ashamed of it.

GEORGE

Well, it's not exactly something to be proud of!

(GEORGE has hurt WINIFRED's feelings, which was not his intention.)

Winifred. Dearest. I'm only thinking of you. I want people to admire you, to respect you.

WINIFRED

I know, George. But sometimes it's hard—

GEORGE

It is not hard. It's your job, to be Mrs. Banks.

WINIFRED

And what is your job?

GEORGE

To pay for everything.

(GEORGE turns his attention to the desk again. WINIFRED leans in, startling him.)

SCENE 4: JOLLY HOLIDAY - Park

#5A - All Me Own Work

(Park gates reveal the park beyond. BERT paints the scene as he addresses the audience.)

BERT

CHIM CHIMINEY, CHIM CHIMINEY, CHIM CHIM CHER-OO.
I DOES WHAT I LIKES AND I LIKES WHAT I DO.
TODAY I'M A SCREEVER, AND AS YOU CAN SEE,
A SCREEVER'S AN ARTIST OF HIGHEST DEGREE.
AND IT'S ALL ME OWN WORK
FROM MY OWN MEMORY.

(A furious PARK KEEPER hurries towards BERT.)

PARK KEEPER

Oh, Lummy. Not these again!

BERT

Come on, Mr. Park Keeper. It's just me pictures like it always is. There's no 'arm in 'em.

PARK KEEPER

I'll be the judge o' that! This is my park and I say you're interfering with a public railing! I want 'em removed this—

(The PARK KEEPER trails off as he becomes aware of MARY POPPINS, who is with the CHILDREN. She looks firmly at him. BERT continues to draw without lifting his eyes.)

That is— I— er... just you watch it. That's all... just you watch it!

(The PARK KEEPER walks off, muttering. BERT speaks, still without raising his eyes.)

BERT

Stay right where you are. I'd know that silhouette anywhere: Mary Poppins!

MARY POPPINS

It's nice to see you, Bert.

(BERT turns his eyes from his drawing and looks up.)

BERT

Well, I must say you do look swell.

(MARY POPPINS snorts, but as she pats her hair, it is clear she agrees.)

MICHAEL

How does he know you? He can't know you! You've only just arrived!

MARY POPPINS

I wasn't born one minute before I walked into your house, Michael Banks. Have you met these two, Bert?

BERT

I've seen 'em runnin' about chasin' a kite.

MICHAEL

It isn't a real kite.

BERT

So, what are you up to?

JANE

Mary Poppins says it's a game. It's called "A Walk in the Park."

MICHAEL

Some game.

(kicks the pavement)

I'd rather eat spinach.

MARY POPPINS

Come on, Bert. You're due for a break, and you promised you'd take me out when we met again. Or have you forgotten?

BERT

'Course I ain't, Mary. But...

(BERT picks up his cap. There's only one coin in it.)

MARY POPPINS

Oh dear, is that all you've got? Never mind. My treat. And no one's charging for the trees and the sky, are they?

JANE

Mary Poppins, is he really coming with us?

MARY POPPINS

Why shouldn't he?

JANE

Well, to start with, he's very dirty, isn't he? Father would never approve.

BERT

What's that?

MICHAEL

(berates BERT)

You can't come with us. You're too dirty. And we don't want to go to the stinky park anyway.

BERT

(gives it right back to MICHAEL)

Oh, yes you do. 'Cause when you walk with Mary Poppins, you go to places you never dreamed of. And if she says it's a game, she's got something in mind. You can be certain of that.

(BERT and the CHILDREN stand by his line of paintings.)

JANE

That's a picture of the park, isn't it?

MICHAEL

That's not the park. Not our park anyway. Look, that tree's a much brighter green and the sky's quite a different blue...

BERT

I think you'll find it's just the way I've drawn it.

#6 - Jolly Holiday

Bert, Jane, Michael, Neleus, Mary Poppins, Ensemble

(BERT)

All that it takes is a spark, then something plain as a park becomes a wonderland!

(BERT moves into the park with MARY POPPINS. The CHILDREN follow. PARK STROLLERS meander.)

ALL YOU 'AVE TO DO IS LOOK ANEW,
THEN YOU'LL UNDERSTAND...
WHY IT'S A JOLLY HOLIDAY WITH MARY.
MARY MAKES YER HEART SO LIGHT.

MARY POPPINS

Oh, really!

BERT

WHEN THE DAY IS GREY AND ORDINARY,
MARY MAKES THE SUN SHINE BRIGHT.

MARY POPPINS

You do talk nonsense, Bert.