

Newsies Audition Lines

If you don't see your first choice character on the pages below, you will need to be prepared to read the synopsis below

In 1899, Jack Kelly shares his dream for a better life out west with his best friend, Crutchie. Jack and Crutchie join the young boys and girls who peddle newspapers to customers throughout the city. As they start their day, they gather at the New York World's distribution wagon, when they pick up their daily stacks of papers to sell. Meanwhile, Joseph Pulitzer, the publisher of the World, vows to fight declining circulation of the newspaper.

If you are trying out for a Newsies character, Choose ONE of the Newsies characters below to act out for your audition. On your preference sheet, you will act out your first choice. If you don't see your first choice character listed below you will read the synopsis above for us.

Jack Kelly: (if trying for Jack, please be prepared to act out both scenarios below)

A: (Jack is speaking to the 'scabs'—other newsboys who have been paid extra by the newspaper to cross the strike lines and keep working.)

It ain't just about us. All across this city there are boys and girls who ought to be out playin' or going to school. Instead they're slavin' to support themselves and their folks. Ain't no crime to bein' poor, and not a one of us complains if the work we do is hard. All we ask is a square deal. Fellas ... for the sake of all the kids in every sweatshop, factory, and slaughter house in this town, I beg you ... throw down your papers and join the strike.

B: Scene change (Jack is talking to Davy, Les, and Medda. He is frustrated, injured, exhausted, and feeling extremely guilty about his friends' injuries)

Want to see a place I seen? How about this?

Newsie Square, thanks to my big mouth, filled to overflowing with failure. Kids hurt, others arrested - Is that what you're aiming for? Go on and call me a quitter, call me a coward. No way I'm puttin' them kids back in danger.

Davey:

(Davey is trying to convince Jack that it's worth continuing the strike despite a shaky start.)

They got us this time. I'll grant you that. But we took round one. And with press like this our fight is far from over. Every newsie who could walk showed up this morning to sell papers like the strike never happened.-- And I was there with them. If I don't sell papers, my folks don't eat. But then I saw this look on Weasel's face; he was actually nervous. And I realized this isn't over. We got them worried. Really worried. And I walked away. Lots of other kids did, too. And that is what you call a beginning.

Les:

(Les is around 8 years old, and during this monologue is trying to impress his older brother and friends.)

What's the hold up? I need to let my girl know. We've got a date. Yeah, you heard me. Fame is one intoxicatin' potion. And this here girl, Sally, she's a plum. So can we table the palaver* and get back to business? Will Medda let us have the theater or not?

("table the palaver" means "cut out the small talk and get to the point." Palaver is pronounced 'puh-LAV-er')*

Crutchie:

(Crutchie is talking to Jack, one of the few newsies he trusts to treat him as an equal despite his disability.)

I wanna beat the other fellas to the street. I don't think anyone should see; I ain't been walkin' so good. Someone gets the idea I can't make it on my own, they'll lock me up in The Refuge for good. Be a pal, Jack. Help me down. Let's get our papers and hit the streets while we still can.

Pulitzer:

(Pulitzer is used to getting what he wants, and frustrated with Jack for causing a disruption.)

Mark my words, boy. Defy me, and I will have you and every one of your friends locked up in The Refuge. I know you're Mr. Tough Guy, but it's not right to condemn that little crippled boy to conditions like that. And what about your pal Davey and his baby brother, ripped from their loving family and tossed to the rats? Will they ever be able to thank you enough?

Katherine Plumber:

(Katherine is responding to Jack's attempt to give up. He claims that nothing they can do will make a difference and her ideas won't help.)

Really, Jack? Really? This would be a good time to shut up. The strike was your idea. The rally was Davey's. And now my plan will take us to the finish line. Think, Jack, if we publish this - my words with one of your drawings - and if every worker under twenty-one read it and stayed home from work ... or better yet, came to Newsie Square - a general city-wide strike! Even my father couldn't ignore that.

Medda Larkin:

(Medda feels very motherly and protective towards Jack, who is about 10 years younger than she is.)

Here's everything I owe you for the first backdrop, plus this one, and even a little something extra just account'a because I'm gonna miss you so. Just tell me that you're going somewhere and not running away. When you go somewhere and it turns out not to be the right place, you can always go somewhere else. But if you're running away, nowhere's ever the right place.