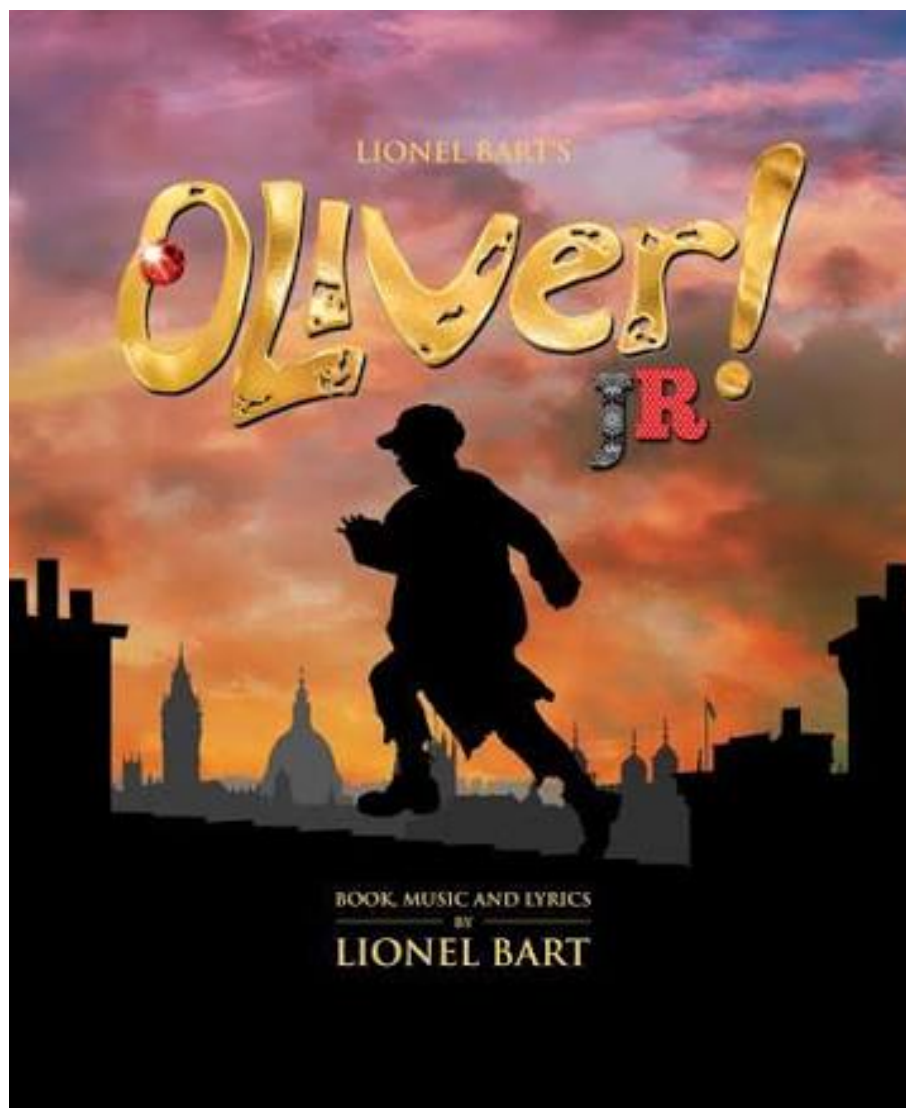


Sherburn High School



Oliver Jr Audition Information Pack



What is *Oliver!* about?

Bringing Charles Dickens' beloved novel to life, Lionel Bart's *Oliver!* takes audiences on a wild adventure through Victorian England. We follow young, orphaned Oliver Twist as he navigates London's underworld of theft and violence, searching for a home, a family, and - most importantly - for love.

When Oliver is picked up on the street by a boy named the Artful Dodger, he is welcomed into a gang of child pickpockets led by the conniving, but charismatic, Fagin. When Oliver is falsely accused of a theft he didn't commit, he is rescued by a kind and wealthy gentleman, to the dismay of Fagin's violent sidekick, Bill Sikes. Caught in the middle is the warm-hearted Nancy, who is trapped under Bill's thumb, but desperate to help Oliver, with tragic results. With spirited, timeless songs like "*As Long as He Needs Me*," "*Food, Glorious Food*," and "*Where Is Love*," *Oliver!* is a musical classic.

When will the show be?

The show will be performed to public audiences on 2, 3 and 4 March 2027. As well as this there will be matinee performances to Primary schools.

We will be rehearsing after school each week from September on days to be confirmed but most likely Monday or Wednesdays from 3pm until 4pm.

Auditions

EVERYONE is able to audition to be in the show. You do not need to have been a member of drama club, have picked GCSE Drama or have any experience in other shows at all. We will be holding auditions on **w/c 28 September.**

You will need to decide whether you want to go for a specific role from the list of characters. It may be that you are just happy to be in the show as part of the ensemble. The ensemble is a hugely important part of the company who bring to life the world of Oliver and Victorian London and will be very busy indeed!

For the audition you will need to prepare **ONE** monologue from the choice in this pack.

You will also need to prepare **ONE** song. We will teach these in September - you will need to come to the audition prep eve on either MONDAY 21 September or WEDNESDAY 23 September where we will go through the songs.

In the meantime it would be useful for you to listen to the following songs which we will be learning after the Summer. These can be found on Youtube if you search for Oliver and the title -

Food Glorious Food

Where Is Love?

As Long As He Needs Me

Consider Yourself

The auditions are nothing to be worried about - it is your chance to show what you can do! Nobody will be trying to catch you out or do anything other than your best. Just be positive and be ready to impress us!

If you have any questions about the process you can see Mr Ashley, Mrs Caldwell or Ms Connell.

Character Breakdown – *Oliver! JR.*

Oliver Twist

A kind-hearted orphan searching for a place where he belongs. Despite facing hardship, Oliver remains hopeful, brave and compassionate. A strong young singer with an innocent, sincere stage presence.

The Artful Dodger

A confident, witty and charismatic pickpocket who becomes Oliver's first friend in London. Full of energy, charm and quick thinking, Dodger is a natural leader amongst Fagin's gang.

Fagin

A colourful and eccentric character who looks after a gang of young pickpockets. Funny, clever and theatrical, Fagin walks the line between comic and cunning. Requires excellent acting and storytelling skills.

Nancy

Warm-hearted, caring and fiercely loyal, Nancy dreams of a better life but finds herself torn between loyalty and doing what is right. One of the show's strongest acting and singing roles.

Bill Sikes

A feared criminal with a violent temper. Bill is intimidating and unpredictable, making him one of the show's principal villains. Strong acting ability is essential.

Mr. Bumble

The pompous Beadle of the workhouse. Self-important, comical and often oblivious, Bumble provides plenty of humour throughout the show.

Widow Corney

The matron of the workhouse. Bossy, humorous and determined to get her own way. A fun comic role with great character opportunities.

Mr. Brownlow

A wealthy, kind and generous gentleman who shows Oliver compassion when others do not. A warm and dignified presence.

Mrs. Bedwin

Mr. Brownlow's caring housekeeper who looks after Oliver with kindness and affection.

Charlotte

The Sowerberrys' outspoken maid. A lively comic character with plenty of personality.

Noah Claypole

The Sowerberrys' apprentice. A boastful bully who enjoys making Oliver's life difficult.

Mr. Sowerberry

A funeral director who takes Oliver on as an apprentice. Often dry, practical and unintentionally funny.

Mrs. Sowerberry

Mr. Sowerberry's sharp-tongued wife. She has little patience for Oliver and enjoys keeping him in his place.

Bet

Nancy's close friend who is part of Fagin's world. A caring character who supports Nancy throughout the story.

Ensemble will feature as:

Fagin's Gang

A lively group of young pickpockets who become Oliver's companions. They are energetic, mischievous and feature prominently in many of the show's biggest musical numbers. Strong singers, dancers and actors are encouraged to audition.

Workhouse Children

The children of the workhouse open the show and appear throughout the story. They create some of the musical's most memorable moments and require strong ensemble performance skills.

Londoners

The bustling streets of Victorian London are brought to life by a large ensemble including market traders, servants, policemen, townspeople, customers, servants and many other colourful characters. Ensemble members sing, dance and help create the vibrant world of the musical, with many opportunities for featured moments.

Please note: Character ages and genders in this production are flexible where appropriate. We encourage every performer to audition for the role they feel best suits their talents. We are looking for strong actors, committed storytellers and enthusiastic performers above all else.

What monologue do I prepare?

When you have decided which part you want to go for look at the table below and try to learn the monologue that corresponds to that role. If you are not sure at this stage which part you want to go for just choose one that you think will show off your acting skills the best.

If you can't learn the script do not let this put you off auditioning - we don't mind if you use the script - we just find those without it tend to do a more confident audition, but you won't be penalised if you can't remember it.

Character	What monologue to prepare?
Oliver Twist	Monologue 1
Artful Dodger / Fagin / Bill Sykes	Monologue 2
Nancy / Bet	Monologue 3
Mr Bumble / Widow Corney / Sowerberrys	Monologue 4
Ensemble / All other characters	Monologue 5

MONOLOGUE 1 - Oliver

(Hopeful, sincere, vulnerable)

Everyone keeps telling me what I am. An orphan. A burden. Another mouth to feed. But... I don't feel like those things. I feel like... me. I don't ask for much. Just somewhere warm. Somewhere people smile when they see you instead of sighing. Somewhere I don't have to be frightened all the time.

I've made mistakes. Well... people say I have. But most of the time I don't even understand what I've done wrong. I only ever try to do what's right. Sometimes, when I look up at the stars, I wonder if there's someone out there looking for me. Maybe someone who doesn't even know I exist yet. Maybe one day they'll say my name because they're happy to see me.

I don't want riches. I don't want fancy clothes. I just want a chance. A chance to belong somewhere... because everyone deserves that, don't they?

MONOLOGUE 2 - Street Survivor

You can tell everything you need to know about a person by the way they walk down a London street. Head down? Easy target. Pockets hanging open? Even easier. Looking over their shoulder every five seconds? They've already lost something.

Now me? I keep my eyes open. Always.

People call us thieves, but they've never spent a winter with an empty stomach. They've never had to choose between doing what's proper and doing what's possible. Funny how rules are always written by people who've never had to break one.

You can waste your time wishing life was fair... or you can learn the game. Learn who to trust, who to avoid, and when to run. So keep up. Watch carefully. The city's always teaching lessons. If you're clever enough, you survive. If you're not... somebody else gets your dinner.

MONOLOGUE 3 - Nancy

People think they know me the moment they see me. They see where I live, who I'm with, the choices I've made... and they think that's the whole story.

But nobody ever asks how you end up here. Nobody asks what it feels like to dream about a different life when every door seems locked before you've even touched the handle.

I'm frightened. More frightened than I've ever been. Because doing the right thing isn't always the safe thing. But if I walk away now... if I pretend I haven't seen what I've seen... then I'm no better than the people who've spent their whole lives telling that boy he doesn't matter.

No. Not this time. Someone has to stand up for him. Even if it costs me everything.

MONOLOGUE 4 - Respectability

(A comic character monologue suitable for Mr Bumble, Widow Corney or Mr Sowerberry.)

There are some people who simply don't understand the importance of appearances.

They think kindness is enough. That hard work is enough. Well, it isn't.

Respectability—that's what matters. Standing a little taller than everyone else. Speaking properly. Making sure people know exactly who is in charge. Take children, for example. Give them an inch and before you know it they're asking questions... making requests... expecting second helpings! Next they'll be wanting opinions.

No, no. Order must be maintained. Rules exist for a reason, and if those beneath us don't like them... well... perhaps they should work harder until they're the ones making the rules.

Still... someone has to uphold standards. And fortunately for society...that someone is me.

MONOLOGUE 5 - A Day in London

They say London never sleeps.

I think that's because it's far too busy trying to keep up with itself.

Every morning the streets wake before the sun. The market sellers are shouting before they've even unpacked their carts. The chimney sweeps are already covered in soot. The rich hurry past as though they've somewhere terribly important to be... and the rest of us just try to stay out of their way.

If you're lucky, someone smiles at you. If you're unlucky, they don't even see you.

Most people think London is just buildings and streets. They're wrong. London is people. Thousands of ordinary people trying to make today just a little better than yesterday. And if you look closely enough...

...you'll find that even the smallest story can become the most important one of all.