

Newsies

Stop the presses! This Disney film turned Tony-winning Broadway hit inspires everyone to fight for what's right and seize the day.

It's time to carry the banner on your stage with *Disney's Newsies!* Set in turn-of-the-century New York City, "*Newsies*" is the rousing tale of Jack Kelly, a charismatic newsboy and leader of a band of teenaged "newsies." When titans of publishing raise distribution prices at the newsboys' expense, Jack rallies newsies from across the city to strike against the unfair conditions and fight for what's right!

Based on the 1992 motion picture and inspired by a true story, *Newsies* features a Tony Award-winning score by Alan Menken (*Little Shop of Horrors*, *Sister Act*) and Jack Feldman and a book by Tony Award winner Harvey Fierstein (*Kinky Boots*). Featuring the now classic songs "Carrying the Banner," "Seize the Day," and "Santa Fe," *Newsies* is packed with non-stop thrills and a timeless message, perfect for the whole family and every audience.

Full Synopsis

Act One

As Jack Kelly is savoring the last few moments of quiet before the sun rises, he shares with his best friend Crutchie his rooftop view of the city and his dream for a better life out West ("Santa Fe - Prologue"). At dawn, the newsies sing about their life and their work ("Carrying the Banner"), introducing this ramshackle group of young friends. They make their way to the distribution window for the *World*, where they pick up their daily stacks of papers to sell from Wiesel, who runs the window, and Morris and Oscar Delancey, goons who work for the *World*. Davey and Les, brothers trying to earn money for their family, meet the newsies and try to learn the ropes. Jack agrees to partner with the boys since Les's young age will help him sell more papers, although Davey is skeptical.

Meanwhile, Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the *World*, expresses displeasure at the declining sales of his newspaper and vows to increase profits ("The Bottom Line"), even if it is at the expense of the newsies.

At the end of the day, it's clear that Les is a natural newsie. Before Jack and the brothers can part ways, a man appears and chases Jack. Davey and Les follow Jack's lead, running through the alleys of New York and finding safety in Medda's Theater. Jack introduces them to Medda Larkin, one of the Bowery's most famous performers.

Jack explains that the man chasing them is named Snyder; he runs The Refuge, an orphanage that he keeps in squalid conditions and embezzles from. He's had it out for Jack ever since he escaped. Medda offers her theater as a safe haven, and they stay to watch her perform ("That's Rich").

During Medda's performance, Jack notices Katherine, a bright young reporter he had seen earlier that day. A smitten Jack makes several attempts to flirt with her, but Katherine, quick-witted and ever-professional, cleverly rebuffs him. While the Bowery Beauties perform their routine, Jack resorts to sketching a portrait of Katherine ("I Never Planned on You / Don't Come a-Knockin'"), and leaves it for her to find.

The next day, as the newsies gather at the distribution window, the boys are outraged to learn that Pulitzer has increased their price for newspapers - they can barely afford to eat as it is! Prompted by Davey, the newsies decide to form a union and strike ("The World Will Know").

After a successful first day of striking, newly elected union leader Jack Kelly assigns some kids to spread the word to newsies in other boroughs. Katherine arrives, hoping that the newsies will give her an exclusive for the *Sun*. Jack tells her to be at the distribution window the next morning; not only will the newsies prevent others from selling papers, but they plan to stop the delivery carts as well. He tells her that they all have a lot riding on her reporting skills, and Katherine gets to work writing her breakout article ("Watch What Happens").

The next day, Jack arrives to find that only a few kids have assembled to strike. He urges Davey to convince the small group not to back down. When scabs arrive to take the newsies' place, Jack asks them to stand in solidarity with all the city's exploited working children. The scabs throw down their papers, just in time for Katherine and her photographer to snap a victorious photo ("Seize the Day"). But soon the newsies engage in a fierce fight with the Delanceys, Wiesel, and the police. Snyder scares Jack away, but not before he watches the Delanceys take down Crutchie and carry him off to The Refuge. Reaching the temporary safety of his rooftop, Jack paces, feeling guilty about leading the kids into danger. He looks out over the city and longs to escape ("Santa Fe").

Act Two

Battered and bruised, the newsies lament the previous day's events at Jacobi's Deli. Amid rumors that Jack was captured, several newsies wonder where he is. Katherine arrives with a copy of the story she published in the *Sun*, complete with a front-page picture of the newsies. Ecstatically, they thank her and celebrate their - and Katherine's - fame ("King of New York"). Meanwhile, Crutchie writes a letter to Jack from The Refuge expressing that he feels no ill will toward Jack and urging the newsies to stick together ("Letter from The Refuge").

Davey, Les, and Katherine find Jack back at Medda's Theater and try to convince him to come back to the fight. Jack refuses, saying that they can't win against a man as powerful as Pulitzer. The three convince Jack that theirs is a fight worth fighting ("Watch What Happens - Reprise"); Jack finally agrees, and the kids plan a rally.

Discovering Katherine's story, Pulitzer furiously resolves to take down Jack. Just then, a cocky Jack arrives to announce the newsies' rally. Pulitzer assures Jack that no paper will cover it - and if it's not in the press, it never happened. He then reveals Katherine, exposing her as his daughter, and Snyder, who emerges from the shadows. Pulitzer offers Jack a choice: get sent to The Refuge or renounce the strike and leave New York with pockets full of cash. The Delanceys escort Jack to the cellar, where an old printing press rests, to ponder his decision ("The Bottom Line - Reprise").

That evening, Brooklyn newsies cross the bridge with Spot Conlon, their leader, to join newsies from every borough at Medda's theater for the rally ("Brooklyn's Here"). Davey gives an inspiring speech, riling up the newsies about their progress. However, Jack appears and tells them to go back to work because they are no match for Pulitzer. Jack accepts his payoff money at the door and exits quickly.

On his rooftop, Jack finds Katherine looking through his drawings of The Refuge's bleak conditions. He snatches them from her and they argue fiercely until she kisses him.

Katherine shares her plan to have the newsies distribute an article which quotes Jack on the exploitation of working kids and calls for a citywide strike. Before heading to the old printing press Jack recently discovered, they share their hope in each other ("Something to Believe In").

With the help of Katherine and her well-connected friends, Darcy and Bill, the newsies sneak into Pulitzer's cellar to print their paper ("Once and for All"). The kids distribute the pamphlet all over the city.

Pulitzer's office is flooded with angry calls from every corner of New York. Having read the *Newsies Banner*, Pulitzer is furious at the kids' attempt to thwart him. Jack, Davey, and Spot show up ("Seize the Day - Reprise") to personally deliver the news and say that the kids are willing to make a compromise. Pulitzer refuses to back down until Governor Roosevelt appears with Katherine and Jack's drawings of The Refuge. Alone, Jack and Pulitzer come to an agreement they can both live with - the price increase is reduced by half, and publishers will buy back any unsold papers. The strike is over! Outside, Jack announces the end of the strike. Crutchie appears amid the jubilation, followed by a handcuffed Snyder. Despite his dreams for Santa Fe, Jack realizes that the newsies are his family and Katherine gives him something to believe in - so he's staying put for now ("Finale Ultimo").

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

Age: 16 to 20

Vocal Range: Bb2 to A4

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

Age: 13 to 17

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

Age: 15 to 20

Vocal Range: D3 to A4

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

Age: 10 to 15

Vocal Range: Db3 to Bb3

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.

Age: 13 to 20

Scabs

Three newsies who are hesitant to join the strike.

Gender: any

Age: 10 to 20

Spot Conlon

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

Gender: any

Age: 17 to 20

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, 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

Age: 17 to 20

Vocal Range: A3 to F5

Darcy

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

Gender: any

Age: 15 to 20

Bill

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

Gender: male

Age: 15 to 25

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

Age: 35 to 50

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

Age: 15 to 20

Goons

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

Gender: male

Age: 15 to 20

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

Age: 35 to 50

Vocal Range: C3 to F4

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

Age: 35 to 50

Hannah

Pulitzer’s practical and insightful secretary.

Gender: female

Age: 20 to 40

Nunzio

Pulitzer's barber.

Gender: male

Age: 30 to 50

Guard

The Guard removes the newsies from Pulitzer's building.

Gender: any

Age: 20 to 60

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

Age: 45 to 65

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

Age: 25 to 45

Vocal Range: F3 to E5

The Bowery Beauties

Female performers at Medda's Theater.

Gender: female

Age: 18 to 30

Stage Manager

Introduces Medda's act.

Gender: any

Age: 25 to 55

Nuns

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

Gender: female

Age: 20 to 60

Photographer

Takes the triumphant photo of the newsies at the end of “Seize the Day.”

Gender: any

Age: 15 to 25

Woman

A newspaper customer.

Gender: any

Age: 15 to 45

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

Age: 35 to 55

Policemen

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

Gender: male

Age: 20 to 60

Mayor

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

Gender: male

Age: 45 to 60

Governor Teddy Roosevelt

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

Gender: male

Age: 50 to 65

Ensemble