

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

AUDITION MONOLOGUES

CHIP #1: “Tittup,” T ... I ... [reluctantly] T ... U ... Oh, wait – two T’s; you heard both, right? Backing up: T-I-T-T-U-P. Tittup. [The bell dings.] No, but – I wasn’t sure if you heard both T’s. I obviously know how to spell it. That’s not fair! I got it right! I can’t get out on a word I got right. Miss Peretti, can I have one more chance? Please?

CHIP #2: (Dreaming about the girl he has a crush on) Marigold...Marigold Coneybear...That’s a really pretty name. And what a loveley sweater, Marigold. Oh, Marigold. (wakes up) Oh, sorry! Is it my turn to spell? Um, can you maybe skip me now and ask me two in a row later? Why? I’d rather not say. No, I don’t want to forfeit. I’ll take my turn now.

SCHWARTZY #1: Doesn’t anyone else here care about the rules? This bee is as confusing as my current social calendar. As the daughter of two gay dads, I would like to know who scheduled Father’s Day and Gay Pride within seven days of each other?! Well, anyway, the Schwartzandgrubenniere household will be referring to the event as Gay Fathers’ Pride Weekend.

SCHWARTZY #2: I’m trying really hard, Dad. I know. I know I have to buck up. I’m trying as...why are you pouring that can of coke on the floor? What do you mean, “we have to disable the foot”? You want to make the floor sticky so he can’t use his Magic Foot? Wouldn’t that be wrong? I don’t have a magical foot. Or a mother. I want to win, but I also believe in ethical conduct.

LEAF #1: (On the phone) Hello, Leaf Coneybear speaking ... uhhuh ... uh-huh ... uh-huh ... You’re kidding! I’m gonna represent the Basin in the bee?! Wow, I can’t believe it! Mom, Dad, Marigold, Brook, Pinecone, Raisin, Landscape, Paul, you’re not going to believe this – I made the county finals for the bee! They just called and said the person who came in first has to go to their bat mitzvah, and the person who came in second has to attend the bat mitzvah, so they want me to do it!

LEAF #2: I’m not that smart. My siblings have been telling me for years. We’re schooled at home – they see who’s bright. I’m not that smart. I have a gentle personality. I like my hair. Really! It is pleasant to the touch. (plays with his hair) Ahhhh. I’ve forgotten the word. Oh yeah, Acouchi. The rodent resembling the other rodent – what was the... (snaps into a trance) A-C-O-U-C-H-I. Acouchi.

BARFEE #1: See you next year. [He is hit in the face with a package of peanut M&M's.] Ouch! Those M&M's have peanuts in them! What are you, nuts? ... Nuts! You threw the yellow ones! Will someone pick up the – [wheezes] I'm allergic to nuts! I can't be near the peanuts! You could be disqualified for that, if you hadn't already been eliminated! This is a bully-free zone!

BARFEE #2: My name is pronounced BarFAY. There is an accent ague. (is given the word "Lugubrious" to spell) "Lugubrious". Yes, of course. Lugubrious. Meaning extremely sad and droopy. A topic I am all too familiar with. One moment please. Lugubrious. (He spells out the word on the floor using his foot to create the letters as he spells.) L-U-G-U- Lugu! B-R-I-O-U-S – Lugubrious.

MARCY #1: Is that you Jesus? Hi! How are you? Um, my prayer was for a more difficult word, but now that you're here, can I ask for something better? Jesus, I was wondering ... what would happen if I didn't win today? What I mean is, would you be disappointed with me if I lost? You won't? You're saying it's up to me, then? [beat] "Camouflage," C-A-M ... O-U ... F-L-A ... [She makes the decision to throw the word, and as soon as she dares say the first incorrect letter, she takes more and more joy in getting it wrong.] J ... Z ... H, "Camouflajzh!"

MARCY #2: I speak six languages. Every language easy as the recipe for making Jello-O. And I can say "hello" in at least seven more. I'm also a champion rugby player. Apparently I have the temperament. Yes, I score some goals. I don't like to brag, and I won't. Because I don't have to. Six lousy languages. And for my height, I'm the lightest of the girls in my class.

OLIVE #1: I'm thinking about does "flagellate" have one L or two – and also about how if you take the W of "answer" and the H in "ghost" and the extra A in "aardvark" and the T in "listen," you could keep saying "What?" but nobody would hear, 'cause the whole word would be silent. "Flagellate," F-L-A-G-E-L ... L ... A-T-E, "flagellate." Oh, excuse me, ma'am, could you not sit in that seat? I saved a chair for my dad in the third row on the aisle, and when he gets here, that's his chair.

OLIVE #2: I live in a house where there's an oversized dictionary that I read as a girl on the toilet. I love my dictionary! And I love the indented border. Yes, the words in the dictionary are the friends that I'll have forever, even more than the friends I have made in school. Oh, how I love my dictionary! (pause) Excuse me, ma'am? Could you not sit in that seat? I saved that chair for my dad. I also saved a chair for my mom, but it's merely symbolic. She's in an ashram. In India.

RONA #1: Ladies and gentlemen, all the children you see onstage are here because of their extraordinary ability and love of language – but only one of them can go on to compete in the National Spelling Bee! This year, to celebrate our silver anniversary, our local sponsors, the Putnam Optometrists, are offering today’s winner a two-hundred-dollar savings bond toward his or her future education. (solicit applause) But remember, to get here, each child had to win their own district bee, so each of them is already a winner.

RONA #2: Hello, I’m Rona Lisa Peretti, and I’m pleased to be back for my ninth consecutive year as your host. Welcome everyone! I’d like to take this moment to ask you to please turn off your cell phones and other distracting devices, and put away cameras – sorry no photos at the bee. Unfortunately, our usual word pronouncer, Superintendent Spriggs, has fallen ill, so please join me in welcoming Vice Principal Douglas Panch, returning to us after a five-year hiatus. Thank you, Douglas, for stepping in on such short notice.

PANCH #1: Thank you, Rona – and I would like to say, as to the incident five years ago, I’m in a much better place now. It’s amazing what a change of diet can do for a man. And, may I add, Ms. Peretti here is not only one of Putnam County’s top realtors, she’s also a former spelling champion herself. Beautiful. Now, for the Pledge of Allegiance, lead by our comfort counselor Mr. Mitchell M. Mahoney. Mr. Mahoney is doing his community service work with us today.

PANCH #2: All right, then. Your word is... “Capybara”. Meaning? A tailless, largely aquatic, South American rodent – often exceeding four feet in length. (pause) You’re allowed to ask to have the word used in a sentence. Yes? Very well (clears his throat) “Don’t look now, Pedro, but I think that tailless, largely aquatic four-and-a-half foot rodent swimming next to you may be a capybara!”

MITCH #1: You can’t comfort these kids. They don’t know yet that the good don’t always win, so there’s nothing you can say to cheer them up when they lose. I want to tell them disappointment doesn’t last, but what I’ve seen, disappointment lasts like hell. I want to tell them words don’t matter, but from what I’ve seen, words can get you killed. I just want to beat them up a little, so they understand that pain has degrees, and this is nothing – This is nothing, you little freaks! But that would violate my parole, so I do what I can. I give them a hug and a juice box. I’m here to give comfort.

MITCH #2: I’m sorry you missed that silent “Q” little buddy. Bad luck, bad luck. But just know this my friend: you will be missed. But now, I need you to go with dignity. Go home and spell, my friend. All you need is strength to pretend that it’s no big deal. You’ve been the best-looking dude we’ve had all day. Try to look like you don’t care. Goodbye, now. Goodbye