

Farmington City Presents

# Mary Poppins

Addition Information

## Introduction from the Director

Mary Poppins is a delightful musical that has been adapted from the original books by P. L. Travers and the Disney film from 1964 starring Julie Andrews in her cinema debut and Oscar-winning performance. The stage play takes the best from both the books and film to create a new masterpiece. You will find the same characters, and much of the same music from the Sherman brothers (who also won Oscars for their work in 1964), but with new arrangements and a storyline that works beautifully for the stage.

I'm excited to bring this work of art to Farmington, and I hope you'll join us this summer for an unforgettable experience.

## Parts (in order of appearance)

Although full of iconic songs and wonderful dancing, Mary Poppins also an acting piece that needs to move quickly and convincingly. Below is a breakdown of characters. Included is a description of each role, the approximate age of the character and its vocal range (if necessary).

### BERT (30s)

Narrator of the story, is a good friend to Mary Poppins. An everyman, Bert has many occupations, including hurdy-gurdy player, sidewalk artist, and chimney sweep. Bert watches over the children as well as the goings on in Cherry Tree Lane. He has charm, speaks with a Cockney accent, and is a song-and-dance-man. Baritone.

Vocal Range: B to F#

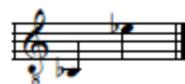


### GEORGE BANKS (early 40s)

Father to Jane and Michael Banks, is a banker to the very fiber of his being. Demanding "precision and order" in his household, he is a pipe-and-slippers man who doesn't have much to do with his children and believes that he had the perfect upbringing by his nanny, the cruel Miss Andrew. His emotional armor, however, conceals a sensitive soul. In fact, of all the characters in the show, George is the one who

develops the most. A baritone, George may speak-sing as necessary.

Vocal Range: Bb to Eb



### WINIFRED BANKS (30s)

George's wife and Jane and Michael's mother. A former actress, she is a loving and distracted homemaker who is busy trying to live up to her husband's desire to only associate with "the best people" as well as be a model wife and mother. She suffers from the conflicting feelings that she's not up to the job of "being Mrs. Banks," yet she is, and more. She has a great warmth and simplicity to her tone. Mezzo Soprano.

Vocal Range: B to D



### JANE BANKS (11)

High-spirited daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Banks, is bright and precocious but can be willful and inclined to snobbishness. Child soprano.

Vocal Range: A to F#



### MICHAEL BANKS (9)

Cute and cheeky son of Mr. and Mrs. Banks. Excitable and naughty, he adores his father and tries to be like him. Both he and Jane misbehave in order to get the attention of their parents. Male child voice, unbroken.

Vocal Range: A to E



### KATIE NANNA (30s)

Jane and Michael's nanny at the beginning of the show. Overwhelmed and upset, she has absolutely had her fill of the Banks children.

### POLICEMAN (30s-40s)

Neighborhood fixture who is respected by and observant of the households on his beat.

### MISS LARK (30s)

Haughty next-door neighbor of the Banks family who treats her dog, Willoughby, as if he were her child. Mezzo soprano.

### ADMIRAL BOOM (50s)

Retired Royal Navy man and neighbor of the Banks family. A physically large man with a loud and booming voice, he speaks in Navy jargon and has a soft spot for his neighbor, Miss Lark. Can be any vocal range needed.

### MRS. BRILL (50s)

Housekeeper and cook for the Banks family. Overworked and harassed, she's always complaining that the house is understaffed. Her

intimidating exterior is a cover for the warmth underneath. Mrs. Brill doesn't have a high opinion of nannies in general and Mary Poppins in particular. Alto.

Vocal Range: G# to D#



### ROBERTSON AY (20-30)

Houseboy (servant) to the Banks family. Lazy, sleepy, and grumbling, he never gets things right and believes himself to be useless. He doesn't do a lot of singing, but his "Spoonful" solo can be a fun surprise. Tenor.

Vocal Range: F to G#



### MARY POPPINS (20s)

Jane and Michael Banks's new nanny. She is extraordinary and strange, neat and tidy, delightfully vain yet very particular, and sometimes a little frightening, but always exciting. She is practically perfect in every way and always means what she says. A mezzo soprano with strong top notes, she should be able to move well. She can have a more traditional soprano sound, but precision and diction is key.

Vocal Range: Gb to C



### PARK KEEPER (40s-50s)

Uniformed and officious, he makes sure no one breaks park regulations. His life is defined by rules, but he secretly hankers after his childhood. Tenor.

### NELEUS (16-20)

Statue of a young boy posed with a dolphin in the park. Neleus was separated from his father, Poseidon, and misses him very much. A small and lonely being, he is very happy to befriend Jane and Michael. Strong dancer preferred.

### QUEEN VICTORIA (40s-50s)

Statue in the park.

### BANK CHAIRMAN (50s)

Head of the bank where Mr. Banks is employed, is an Edwardian stuffed-shirt. He can speak/sing his lyrics if necessary. Baritone.

Vocal Range: C to D



### MISS SMYTHE (40s)

Bank Chairman's humorless secretary.

### VON HUSSLER (30s-40s)

Businessman seeking a loan from the bank for a shady business deal. He speaks with a German accent.

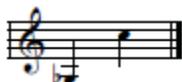
### JOHN NORTHBROOK (30s-40s)

Honest businessman seeking a loan to build a factory for his community. He speaks with an accent from Northern England.

### BIRD WOMAN (50s)

Covered in a patchwork of old shawls, and her pockets are stuffed with bags of crumbs for the birds. She tries to sell her crumbs to passersby, who ignore her as if she doesn't exist. Sings "Feed the Birds." There can be a gruff, folksy quality to her voice that reflects the hardness of her life. Alto.

Vocal Range: Gb to C



### MRS. CORRY (40s)

Owns a magical gingerbread shop. She is a mysterious yet extremely vibrant, energetic, and engaging woman of who speaks with a thick American New England accent. She is a decade ahead of her time, meaning she is a true blue 1920s flapper, while the rest of the real world is stuck in the nineteen teens. Her scene is welcome comic and colorful relief. Soprano.

### ANNIE and FANNIE (20s)

Mrs. Corry's daughters. Not a whit behind Mrs. Corry in spunk and vivaciousness. Flappers themselves.

### VALENTINE

Stuffed boy doll belonging to Jane.

Vocal Range: B to D



### TEDDY BEAR and MR. PUNCH

Toys belonging to Jane and Michael.

### DOLL

Ballerina who belongs to Jane. She comes out of a music box and does a beautiful dance on her toes during "Playing the Game."

### MISS ANDREW (40s-50s)

George's overbearing and scary nanny. With her bottle of nasty-tasting brimstone and treacle to keep naughty children in line, she is a bully who only knows one way of doing things – her way. A soprano with an alto belt, there can be some heaviness to her voice along with the range.

Vocal Range: Gb to F



## A word about accents

Just about everyone in *Mary Poppins* speaks with a British accent. In this musical, dialect (pronunciation along with regional-based word choices) illuminates a person's status in society – whether she is from the upper, middle, or lower class. An accent reveals if a person is from somewhere else in the world, which can make him seem strange or exotic. More than just creating the right sound, employing accents and dialects help create character. Speaking with an accent is actually a mindset! Most of the characters in *Mary Poppins* will speak either with Received Pronunciation (RP), which is a standard British accent that sounds very well-to-do (think of actors like Sir Patrick Stewart or Dame Judi Dench), or with Cockney accents. The easiest way to learn an accent is to listen to it over and over again. YouTube clips are excellent resources to get started.