



A YIMS MUSICAL PRODUCTION

**FRIDAY, APRIL 14
SATURDAY, APRIL 15
2023**

HANDBOOK

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Dear Students and Families:

My name is Kyli Stoner and I am your director and choreographer this year. This is my seventh year with the program and I am thrilled to be back. YIMS Musical is excited to produce *The Lion King Jr.* this year! The “junior” version is based on the Broadway show *The Lion King*. but some refinements have been made to make it easier for school productions. Those refinements include a shorter runtime, songs moved to easier keys, and less-intense tech elements.

YIMS Musical is open to all enrolled students at Yough Intermediate Middle School. Yes! This includes fifth graders! We pride ourselves in being an extracurricular activity that welcomes all grades at YIMS.

This handbook is designed to answer most of your questions about the YIMS Musical process, from auditions all the way until the final performance. Participating in the musical requires the same commitment and dedication that playing on the school’s sports team requires. Just as students need to attend sports practices to learn to work together as a successful team, they need to attend rehearsals together to create a successful production! Rehearsal time is precious and the drama staff works hard to plan rehearsals that will maximize the students’ use of time. Without the support of the students’ adults, the musical program would not be successful, so your communication and involvement is greatly appreciated. The director is committed to conducting a rehearsal schedule that makes the best use of students’ time while being sensitive to the children’s personal lives and academic responsibilities.

To see examples of *The Lion King Jr.* production numbers, costumes, and sets, I encourage you to browse Youtube or look up additional information through the publishing company, Music Theatre International. *Mtishows.com*.

The dedication of the students, staff, and community working together makes the Yough Intermediate Middle School drama program a special place to be - a place where all students are welcome; and where all students are encouraged to explore and create through the performing arts. Regardless of grade level or experience, kids build lasting friendships and create lifelong memories. We hope that students and their caretakers know and understand what is needed to make a commitment to participating in the musical. We are looking forward to an incredible experience!

If you have questions feel free to contact me. I look forward to seeing everyone at auditions!

DIRECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Kyli Stoner
Director, Choreographer
kyli.stoner@gmail.com
724-812-2633 (call or text)

PRODUCTION TEAM

Kyli Stoner: Director, Choreographer
Jordan Gilbert: Backstage Lead/Vocal Coach
Savanna Stants: Student Production Assistant

Dylan Pal: Assistant Director
Hallie Williams: Production Assistant
Julie Shuber: Student Production Assistant

SHOW SYNOPSIS

The Lion King JR. tells the story of the epic adventures of a curious cub named Simba as he struggles to accept the responsibilities of adulthood and his destiny as king. Along the way, the young lion encounters a colorful cast of characters including spunky lioness Nala, charismatic meerkat Timon, and loveable warthog Pumbaa. To claim his rightful place on the throne and save his beloved Pridelands, Simba must find his inner strength and confront his wicked Uncle Scar. *The Lion King JR.* features classic songs from the 1994 film such as “Hakuna Matata” and the Academy Award®-winning “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” as well as additional songs penned for the Broadway production.

LIST OF CHARACTERS

Rafiki	Young Simba	Shenzi	Lionesses
Mufasa	Simba	Banzai	Hyenas
Sarabi	Young Nala	Ed	Ensemble
Zazu	Nala	Timon	
Scar	Sarafina	Pumbaa	

*Ensemble plays various inhabitants of the Pridelands, such as giraffes, elephants, antelopes, wildebeests, grass, zebras, etc. The ensemble will be featured many times throughout the show.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ROLES AND CASTING

The Lion King Jr. has many roles in the show, and all roles will be cast after auditions. **No one is pre-cast for a role.** Roles are given based on the student’s audition score from *the current year*. We do not cast based on grade, seniority, or previous roles. Meaning, just because you had a lead role last year, does not guarantee you a lead role this year. If you are in fifth grade, you may get a lead role! Please write each of your regular conflicts down (dance class, youth group, ski club, scouts, etc). If the student has regular standing conflicts they may not get cast in a large solo role. Each and every part in a musical is important. If you do not get a lead, don’t worry! The ensemble is a huge part of the show’s success, so I encourage everyone to accept the role(s) given to them! With that said, the director’s decision is *final*. I am happy to discuss the assigned roles with students that have concerns, but part of participating in a musical is respecting the creative decisions the director makes.

AUDITIONS

All students must audition to participate in *The Lion King Jr.* Auditions are used both as a learning tool for the students and as a means for the production staff to cast each role in the show. The needs of the production staff vary year by year, so auditioning does not automatically guarantee you a spot in *The Lion King Jr.* That means try your best at auditions! Auditions will be held on Wednesday, November 30 and Thursday, December 1 from 5:30-8:30 PM. Please do not attend both days. Pick one.

There will be a singing, acting, and dancing component, so dress comfortably. I do not make casting decisions based on outfit choice, so please wear what you will perform best in! Interested students will pick up an **audition packet** either in the office or at the audition workshop.

Audition Packet Contents: Character descriptions, sheet music for both song options, and the audition form.

Whether it is your first audition ever or you are a musical theatre pro, auditions are meant to be fun for everyone! They can be scary, but we're here to help guide those nerves to turn them into excitement!

Singing: The audition packet will have two song options (lower voices and higher voices). Please come prepared to sing the song you chose. You are permitted to have the sheet music with you while you sing, and background music will be provided! The production staff will review the songs both at the audition workshop and on audition day before everyone goes. If you would like to audition for a specific character (Simba, Nala, Scar, etc), then you must sing by yourself. If you would like to be a part of the ensemble and are not looking to be a specific character, you can sing in a group!

Dancing: The dance will be four 8 counts long and will be taught the day of auditions. It will consist of basic movements. Do your best! I am not looking for perfection - I care about you having fun!

Acting: You will be given scenes from the *Lion King Jr.* and paired with other students to act out the scene. If you need accommodations to have a copy of the scenes ahead of time, please email me and I can get those to you.

Auditions are meant to be fun so don't stress out! Everyone else is just as nervous as you are. Adults are welcome to sit in the cafeteria while auditions are being conducted, but they are not permitted in the auditorium during auditions.

TIME COMMITMENT

The YIMS Musical team is committed to providing a quality educational and artistic experience to as many students as possible. Rehearsals are on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 6:30 to 8:30 pm starting Tuesday, January 3. Not each cast member will be called each day. Each student will be receiving a full rehearsal schedule for the entire season on the first day. I take conflicts into account when scheduling, but they cannot always be avoided.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is imperative during musical season. We use both "Remind" and email as a means of communication. Please make sure to write down an email you actually check on the audition form :) Remind works for folks who use the app and regular sms text messaging.

CONFLICTS

Conflicts with the rehearsal schedule will always happen. The YIMS Drama Department staff understands that. We do ask for a commitment from the students and their adults to try their best to attend every rehearsal the student is called for. On the audition form, please list all of your conflicts-standing conflicts (each week), long-term conflicts (vacations, etc). This is the only way we can put together a rehearsal schedule that won't interfere too much with other commitments. All conflicts approved by the director at the time of auditions will be considered *excused* absences. Illness and/or injury are also considered excused. Please make every effort to report absences to the director before the rehearsal time. A quick text or email helps the staff adjust the rehearsal schedule for that day.

ABSENCES

Rehearsal conflicts are difficult for everyone. Actors who have three or more *unexcused* or *unreported* absences will not be permitted to continue being a cast member for that season. To report any upcoming absences please contact the director at kyli.stoner@gmail.com or 724-812-2633. Example of excused absence: Dentist Appointment, CCD, Basketball Game, Dance Class, Family Member's Birthday, Illness. Example of unexcused absence: "I'm busy." No call/no show. "I have things to do."

COSTUMES

I do not require students and their families to go out and purchase their own major costume pieces. I may ask for specific items (black shoes, white socks), but I keep my requests to basic pieces only that you most likely have in your closet already. Major costume pieces will be provided by YIMS. Cast members will be sent home with a costume measurement form at the beginning of the season so I can get each student's measurement.

CLOSED REHEARSALS

YIMS Musical Rehearsals are considered "closed" rehearsals. Family and friends are asked to wait outside of the rehearsal area for your students. Each member of the production team have both Child Abuse and Criminal Background check clearances on file. Closed rehearsals allow the students to rehearse while being in a safe, creative environment without worrying about outside distractions. Waiting in the cafeteria for your student is more than okay!

GOOGLE DRIVE

A large part of YIMS Musical success is the work students do outside of rehearsal. Each year, there is a private Google Drive link distributed through the Remind and email. On Google Drive, you can find every form the production staff distributes, as well as the schedule, choreography videos, soundtrack, and anything musical! This is a vital resource for cast members and their adults. The production staff puts a lot of extra time and effort into creating those resources for you. This is a great resource if you missed rehearsal that day.

BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE POLICY

YIMS Musical follows the same rules of conduct that students are expected to follow during the school day, as outlined on the YIMS Middle School website. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to reach out.

VOLUNTEERS

The YIMS Musical program relies on volunteers each year to be successful. More specific details will follow, but we need help with prop construction/set decoration during rehearsal. We also need volunteers to work with Miss Kyli on various fundraising projects such as the hoagie sale and the t-shirt sale. We will send out a signup form closer to the show for folks to donate items for the basket raffle and bake sale, as well as work the booths on show nights. If you are interested and would like to learn more, please contact Kyli via email or text

IMPORTANT DATES

GENERAL REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

YIMS Musical rehearses three days a week from 6:30-8:30, starting the day the students return from Christmas Break. There will rarely be Saturday rehearsals. Each student will not be called to every rehearsal. A full rehearsal schedule is sent home with the students at the first rehearsal. Please keep in mind the schedule is always subject to change.

TECH WEEK SCHEDULE: NO CONFLICTS ALLOWED THIS WEEK

Monday, April 10: 5:00-8:30-FULL CAST

Tuesday, April 11: 5:00-8:30-FULL CAST

Wednesday, April 12: 5:00-8:30-FULL CAST

Thursday, April 13: 5:00-8:30-FULL CAST

Friday, April 14: Opening Night! 5:30 Call-FULL CAST

Saturday, April 15: Performance: 5:30 Call-FULL CAST

Sunday, April 16: Strike/Cast Party: 1:00-5:00-FULL CAST

STRIKE

Strike is an important and mandatory part of the process. Strike just means that we deconstruct the set and clean up costumes and props. Essentially, we return the theatre to its original state before we entered the space at the beginning of January. We request that all cast members attend this strike. Family members are welcome to come help! Strike is Sunday, April 16 from 1 - 5 PM.

CAST PARTY

After strike, we are going to have a cast party. This is a little way to celebrate the end of an awesome musical season! We will need parent help to coordinate. More information to follow.

GENERAL TIPS

As a pro tip, I would suggest becoming familiar with the show's music and characters prior to auditions. There are many versions on youtube you can check out. What I **don't** want you to do is completely copy the versions you see online. I want the characters you create to be your own. We are here to guide you through that process, and anyway, it's no fun to copy other people's character choices!