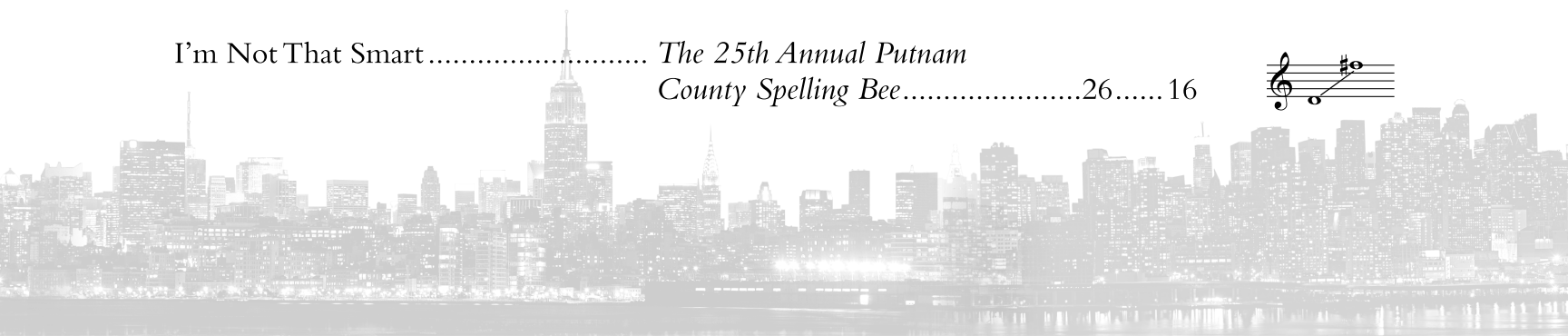


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Notes

Warning: the paragraphs about the shows may contain plot spoilers.

Any actor mentioned as having originally played a role is from the opening-night cast, unless otherwise indicated.

Some of the suggested 16-bar cuts are slightly longer or shorter than exactly 16 bars in order to create complete sections. Most often, these cuttings will still be accepted at auditions asking for 16 bars. You might choose to use a bar or two preceding the cut as an introduction, or simply ask the audition pianist for a “bell tone” to use as your starting pitch; the latter is more customary and time saving. Bar numbers are indicated as m. #, e. g. bar 16 is indicated as m. 16.

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

The Show

Centering on a fictional spelling bee somewhere in Putnam County, USA, this show follows the inner and outer travails of six eccentric young adolescents as they fiercely compete against each other—with valuable and (and often not-so-valuable) help from parents and other grown-ups around them. The bee’s hostess, Rona Lisa Peretti, is a former spelling champion, and the proceedings include a “comfort counselor” for losers, audience volunteers for early rounds of spelling, and a boy contestant who spells out the letters to words with his “magic foot” before speaking them aloud. The musical is based on “C-R-E-P-U-S-C-L-E,” a play by Rebecca Feldman.

The Authors

Music and Lyrics by William Finn; Book by Rachel Sheinkin.

New York Runs

May 2, 2005–Present. The role of Leaf Coneybear was originated by Jesse Tyler Ferguson; the role of Chip Tolentino was originated by Jose Llana.

The Song

“I’m Not That Smart” CD 1 / TRACK 16

Leaf Coneybear, a home-schooled boy who sees himself as an underdog in the spelling bee, steps up to the microphone and is given a word to spell. Before doing so, he reveals his inner thoughts to the audience in “I’m Not That Smart.” He interrupts himself to spell the word (“acouchi”) correctly, and finishes the song triumphantly. Note: in the original production, Leaf occasionally pulled out a finger puppet and expressed through it in a “monster voice.”

Song type

Contemporary Musical Theater Comic Uptempo (Youthful)

Suggested 16-bar Audition Cut

m. 47 (including pick-ups) to the end (m. 65). This equals 19 bars; up to 20 bars is generally acceptable for a 16-bar audition.

“My Unfortunate Erection (Chip’s Lament)” CD 2 / TRACK 5

Chip Tolentino, last year’s Putnam Bee champion, finds himself distracted by the presence of Leaf Coneybear’s sister in the audience while trying to spell. He loses his concentration and backtracks to correct a mistake in his spelling, but it is too late. He is eliminated, and soon finds himself relegated to selling snacks at the PTA bake sale. Humiliated and enraged, he sings the lament, “My Unfortunate Erection.”

Song type

Contemporary Musical Theater Comic Uptempo (Youthful)

Suggested 16-bar Audition Cut

m. 58 through m. 72; have the accompanist play and sustain the downbeat chord of m. 72 with the vocal sustaining the note ‘F’ on the word “Life!” (You could write in fermatas over the vocal and piano downbeat in this measure). For a more complete cutting, you may be able to get away with m. 76 (including pickups) through the end (m. 99). This is 23 bars (plus a bass sting), which is over the “20-bar limit.” However, the song moves quickly and this version would certainly provide a bigger (and higher) ending.

I'M NOT THAT SMART

(from "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee")

Words and Music by
WILLIAM FINN



Moderately (♩ = 108)

Dmaj7 Dm7 Dmaj7 Dsus Dmaj7 Dm7 N.C.

I'm not that

mf

3 Dmaj7 Dm7 Dmaj7 Dsus Gmaj7 F#7

smart. My sib - lings have been tell - ing me that for

5 Bm Bm/A E/G#

years, that I'm not smart. We're schooled at