

Chicago High School Edition

Character Descriptions

VELMA KELLY is a vaudeville star who (allegedly) murdered her husband and her sister in a fit of jealous rage. Velma is always looking out for Number One—herself. She’s smart, confident, and assertive, and she likes being the center of attention—that is, until Roxie Hart shows up. Cast one of your most dynamic singers and dancers in this role.

FRED CASELY is the furniture salesman whom Roxie kills. Though for much of the show he is onstage through the lens of Roxie’s imagination, he should be easily recognizable by the audience. The actor playing Fred does not have to be a singer, but he should be a good actor and mover. This role can be double cast as an ensemble member or a reporter so long as long as he isn’t recognizable as Fred Casely.

ROXIE HART becomes a celebrity overnight when the news of Fred Casely’s death gets picked up by the papers. Formerly dissatisfied with her life, Roxie revels in her newfound fame. Roxie is resourceful, cunning, and willing to do anything to stay out of jail. Cast a great singer, dancer, and actor in this role. The relationship between Roxie and Velma is the heartbeat of the show.

AMOS HART is Roxie’s hard-working husband. While Amos isn’t the sharpest knife in the drawer, he truly loves Roxie and wants what’s best for her. Though at first he is angry at her betrayal, he is willing to forgive her for the sake of their family. Cast an actor who can mine the comedy from this role without making Amos into a cartoon character. Amos should be able to carry his second act song, “Mister Cellophane.”

Officer FOGARTY is the policeman who responds to Roxie’s crime and interviews Amos. Cast an actor who can play a hard-boiled, streetwise cop. This role is great for a member of your ensemble.

MATRON “MAMA” MORTON is the keeper of the keys at the Cook County jail. Although she’s technically on the right side of the law, she’s not above making deals that would not exactly hold up legally upon closer inspection. She is shrewd and business savvy. For Matron Mama Morton, it all comes down to money, and who can make it for her. Cast a talented singer and actress who can command the stage and isn’t afraid to make bold character choices. As her character name implies, an actor with maternal maturity would be a good fit for this role.

BILLY FLYNN is the best criminal lawyer in Chicago. He revels in the fast-paced world of criminal defense, thrives by thinking on his feet, and trusts his ability to spin every situation to his client’s (and his) advantage. He is a master manipulator with a ton of charisma and charm—the debonair puppeteer behind the puppet show, pulling all the strings. Cast your best male singer, dancer, and actor in this role.

MARY SUNSHINE is the soft-hearted crime reporter from the *Evening Star* whose opinion Billy sways. She is a tenacious reporter and has lots of readers, and she is famous for humanizing the criminals she writes about. Cast a good singer and great actor in this role; she must hold her own sharing the stage with the flashy Billy Flynn.

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The REPORTER breaks the story of Kitty murdering Harry and his girlfriend and also interrupts Juror One just before Roxie's verdict is declared. Cast a standout actor in this featured role.

KITTY is an opinionated, wealthy socialite who kills her boyfriend, Harry, when she walks in on him at home with someone else. Kitty doesn't have a solo, but the cast member playing her should be a solid actor who can make a big impression in a short amount of time onstage.

HARRY is Kitty's boyfriend whose affair unfortunately ends his life. This is a great cameo for an ensemble member.

PRISONERS AT THE COOK COUNTY JAIL

The named prisoners at the Cook County jail are featured roles who sing, dance, and perform monologues throughout "Cell Block Tango." This number introduces the audience to the world Roxie has entered. The actors must use excellent diction, have a great sense of rhythm, and be effective storytellers. Cast strong dancers and actors in these roles.

LIZ killed her partner, Bernie, for popping his gum too loudly. She is quite matter-of-fact about the murder and isn't afraid to tell anyone her story.

ANNIE poisoned her boyfriend, Ezekiel Young, with arsenic after finding out he lied to her and had six wives. Annie is the perfect friend... who you never want to upset.

JUNE killed her husband, Wilbur, with a knife after he aggressively accused her of having an affair with the milkman. June is perhaps the toughest of the prisoners.

KATALIN HUNYAK is a Hungarian woman accused of murdering her husband with an axe. She speaks almost no English except for the words "not guilty." Though all the women in the Cook County jail claim they aren't guilty, Hunyak is perhaps the only one who is truly innocent. The audience should sympathize with her, making the news of her execution even more shocking. Her monologue is in Hungarian, so make sure to cast an expressive actor who is able to convey the message without being overwhelmed by the language.

MONA killed her sensitive, artistic boyfriend, Alvin Lipshitz, for repeatedly failing to be faithful to her. She appears sweet and unassuming when she tells her story.

ENSEMBLE ROLES

Chicago High School Edition features a number of ensemble roles that are essential to filling out the world of the musical. The size of your ensemble depends on the number of students you have who are interested in participating in the production, so feel free to tailor these roles to your needs.

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ENSEMBLE MEMBERS #1-12 serve as the show's narrators and all have important lines that set the scene for different parts of the show. Cast good actors and singers in these roles.

The THIRD REPORTER, JUDGE, CLERK, JUROR ONE, and HARRISON are all great roles for students who love being onstage but may not be ready for the pressure of a larger role with lots of lines. Feel free to double cast these roles.

Feel free to cast any students who want to be involved but may not be ready for a large role as additional REPORTERS and PRISONERS.