

## Children's Theatre Auditions

The Waupaca Community Children's Theatre will be holding auditions for its 2024 summer musical production of "School House Rock Live!", Jr.

Based on the popular Emmy Award-winning Saturday morning educational cartoon series and pop culture phenomenon, this musical follows Tom, a young schoolteacher, who is nervous about his first day of teaching. He tries to relax by watching TV, and when various characters representing facets of his personality emerge from the set and show him how to win his students over with imagination and music, his lesson plans vividly come to life.

"Schoolhouse Rock Live!" is a fun and educational show that teaches students and audiences of all ages that learning is fun. The show features music and lyrics by Bob Dorough, Dave Frishberg, George Newall, Kathy Mandry, Lynn Ahrens, and Tom Yohe; and a book by George Keating, Kyle Hall, and Scott Ferguson.

Tom Mizer, a new teacher, wakes up and prepares for his first day of school by practicing what he is going to say to his students. Struggling to find the right way to introduce himself, the Ensemble enters speaking Tom's anxious inner thoughts. Tom decides he needs to relax and turns on the TV, where he finds that "Schoolhouse Rock" is on ("Schoolhouse Rocky"). Tom is shocked when the characters in the television show begin talking directly to him. After his attempts to scare them away fail, George explains that the characters are just the ideas in Tom's head. Dina, Shulie and the rest of the group pull him into the world of "Schoolhouse Rock" by explaining, and acting out, the world of nouns ("A Noun Is A Person, Place, Or Thing").

Though Tom is eager to get to his lesson plans, George reassures him that teaching will be as easy as one, two, three ("Three Is A Magic Number"). Tom exclaims, "That was the coolest song!" and Dina proclaims that they have lots of other cool songs. Tom defends himself by saying "cool" was the first adjective he could think of. Dori asks what an adjective is, and the group explains this feature of grammar ("Unpack Your Adjectives"). From this song, Tom learns the best way to teach grammar is with imagination, but he then realizes he still needs help teaching other subjects. George becomes "Bill" to help Tom find a creative way to teach social studies ("Just A Bill").

Tom expresses his surprise at how much he has forgotten about "Schoolhouse Rock". Shulie reminds him that the TV show helped him pass a Constitution exam when he was younger. Tom reminisces about the song that helped him on his test ("The Preamble"). The song prompts Tom to remember something he's known all along: learning should be fun, like a game. Dina is tired and mentions that she's ready for a nap, but Tom insists they keep up their momentum ("Do The Circulation").

Dori then prompts Tom with a question made of a conjunction, as do Dina and Shulie. When Tom questions what the group is getting at, they respond with another song ("Conjunction Junction"). Tom feels inspired by the song. Joe points out that many of Tom's students won't be from America and will speak English as a second language, and Tom promises to keep this idea in mind in his teaching ("Great American Melting Pot"). Tom points out that America didn't come together as a country so easily ("Elbow Room").

Shulie ponders the notion of colonizing the moon, and Tom mentions he never knew anyone who traveled in space. Shulie says that she knows someone: Janet! ("Interplanet Janet").

George tells Tom they must go, but Tom pleads with them to stay. The group insists on leaving and sends him off with good wishes. Tom tells them he has a little more time left before his school day starts, so they all agree to sing one last song ("Interjections").

Auditions will be held Tuesday, April 16 from 3:30-6:30 p.m. at the Waupaca Learning Center's music room on Shoemaker Road. Any necessary callbacks will take place on Thursday, April 18. Auditions are open to area youth ages 8 to 18 who have completed 2nd grade. Participants can show up anytime between the start and finish times and may leave after completing their auditions.

Auditionees should come prepared with something short to sing and may be asked to read from a script. Any youth auditioning without a parent or guardian present must have a signed note from home stating that he or she has permission to audition. Parents are also responsible for picking up their child promptly at the end of his or her audition.

Rehearsals will be held Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Waupaca Middle School beginning June 10. Students will be brought back to the Waupaca Learning Center for lunch and pick up after rehearsals. Five performances will take place in the Waupaca Middle School's Knoepfel Auditorium on July 19, 20, 22 and 23. Cast members will also be expected to participate in Waupaca's 4th of July Parade.

Emma (Kelley) Ives, music teacher at the Waupaca Learning Center and the Chain Exploration Center, will direct and Erinn Manteufel will be the assistant director.

This production is a collaboration between the Waupaca Community Theatre and the Waupaca School District's summer school program. The Waupaca Community Children's Theatre is part of the Waupaca Community Theatre and a division of the Waupaca Fine Arts Festival.