

SPELLING BEE CAST OF CHARACTERS

- **Rona Lisa Peretti:** The number-one [realtor](#) in Putnam County and returning moderator. She is a sweet woman who loves children, but she can be very stern when it comes to dealing with Vice Principal Panch, who has feelings for her that she most likely does not return. It is implied that she sees much of herself in Olive Ostrovsky. Ms. Peretti herself won the Third Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee by spelling "[syzygy](#)", which she recounts at the very beginning of the opening number.
- **Vice Principal Douglas Panch:** After five years' absence from the Bee, Panch returns as the word pronouncer. There was an "incident" at the Twentieth Annual Bee, but he claims to be in "a better place" now (or so we think), thanks to a high-fiber diet and [Jungian analysis](#). He is infatuated with Rona Lisa Peretti, but she does not return his affections.
- **Mitch Mahoney:** The Official Comfort Counselor. An ex-convict, Mitch is performing his community service with the Bee, and hands out juice boxes to losing students. After the bee, he decides to make his community service life-long, comforting eliminated spellers, and often keeping in touch with them in the future.
- **Olive Ostrovsky:** A young newcomer to competitive spelling. Her mother is in an [ashram](#) in [India](#), and her father is working late, as usual, but he is trying to come sometime during the bee. She made friends with her dictionary at a very young age, helping her to make it to the competition. She longs to be loved by her parents, but they do not provide her the attention she needs.
- **William Morris Barfée:** A Putnam County Spelling Bee finalist last year, he was eliminated because of an allergic reaction to peanuts. His famous "Magic Foot" method of spelling has boosted him to spelling glory. He has one working nostril and a touchy personality. He has an often-mispronounced last name: it is *Bar-FAY*, not *BARF-ee* ("there's an accent [aigu](#)", he explains with some hostility).
- **Logainne "Schwartzzy" SchwartzandGrubenierre:** Logainne is the youngest and most politically aware speller, often making comments about current political figures, with two overbearing [gay](#) fathers pushing her to win at any cost as they might disown her if she doesn't win. She is somewhat of a neat freak, speaks with a lisp, is diabetic, and knows she will return to the bee next year.
- **Marcy Park:** A recent transfer from [Virginia](#), Marcy placed ninth in last year's nationals. She is fluent in six languages (though with less-than-stellar pronunciation): French, Spanish, Japanese, Russian, Hebrew, and German. She is a member of an all-American hockey team, a championship rugby player, plays Chopin and Mozart on multiple instruments, and several other impressive skills. But, she also sleeps only three hours a night, hides in the bathroom cabinet, is not allowed to cry, and is getting very tired of always winning. She is a total over-achiever, and attends a Catholic school.
- **Leaf Coneybear:** A homeschooler and the second runner-up in his district, Leaf gets into the competition on a lark: the winner and first runner-up had to go to the winner's [Bat Mitzvah](#). Leaf comes from a large family of former hippies and makes his own clothes. He spells words correctly while in a [trance](#). In his song, "I'm Not That Smart", he sings that his family thinks he is "not that smart", but he insinuates that he is merely easily distracted. Most of the words that he is assigned are [South American](#) rodents with amusing names.
- **Charlito "Chip" Tolentino:** A Boy Scout and champion of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, he returns to defend his title. Relatively social and athletic, as he plays little league, Chip expects things to come easily but finds puberty hitting at an inopportune moment. This "inopportune moment" could be called Marigold Coneybear, who happens to be one of Leaf Coneybear's sisters.

Minor characters

(All can be doubled by the actors playing the major characters.)

- **Carl Grubenierre:** One of Logainne's fathers; he has set his heart on his little girl winning the Bee, no matter what he has to do, including sabotaging William's foot. Sometimes played by the actor who plays Leaf.
- **Dan Schwartz:** Logainne's other father; he is more laid back and content than Carl, but is still intent on his daughter winning the Bee. Sometimes played by the actor who plays Mitch.
- **Leaf's Dad:** Doubtful and finds his son annoying and unintelligent. Sometimes played by the actor who plays Barfée.
- **Leaf's Mom:** Overprotective and doubtful of her son's abilities to stand up to the competition. Sometimes played by the actor who plays Logainne.
- **Leaf's Siblings:** Not very confident of Leaf's abilities, to say the least. They often ridicule him for having lower intelligence compared to everyone else in the family. Sometimes played by the remaining spellers (both cast and the volunteer audience spellers).
- **Olive's Mom and Dad:** Olive's mom is in India, Olive's dad is working late, but they appear in Olive's imagination to encourage her and tell her they love her. Sadly, their love is merely an imagination. Sometimes played by the actors who play Miss Peretti and Mitch.
- **Jesus Christ:** Appears to Marcy in a moment of crisis. Sometimes played by the actor who plays Chip.
- **Three or four spellers from the audience:** Audience members are encouraged to sign up to participate before the show, and several are chosen to spell words on stage. In touring productions, local celebrities are sometimes selected.