

Casting
Suggestions

CATS Young Actors Edition is an excellent example of a true ensemble show. While there are many specific characters who have their own moments and/or songs in which to shine, all characters also become part of the ensemble during the rest of the show. When you are casting your production, it is important for the actors to be able to embody the characteristics noted below; however, it is equally important for the actors to have the ability to blend into the ensemble and not draw undue attention to themselves when they are not the main focus of the story.

The descriptions below are meant to guide your understanding of the characters and assist you in casting the individual roles. The actors don't have to completely fulfill every descriptive point for the character, but they should be able to meet the singing and dancing requirements. Included after each description is a list of production numbers that feature the character.

Character Descriptions for **CATS Young Actors Edition**

Munkustrap is responsible, brave, and levelheaded and often functions as the narrator of the group. He transitions easily from the leadership role, being front and center, to fading into the group and giving focus and reverence to whoever needs it, especially to Old Deuteronomy. Cast a natural, charismatic leader in this role with a strong stage presence and great singing voice, as Munkustrap is one of the characters who sings the most throughout the show.

Munkustrap sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Naming of Cats," "The Old Gumbie Cat," "Old Deuteronomy," "Introduction to the Jellicle Ball," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Jennyanydots (the Gumbie Cat) is a slightly frumpy house cat who is kind, doting, and motherly, but she is still able to command respect. While Jennyanydots may seem to be a bit lazy, she is able to whip the troops into shape and dance up a storm when required. Look for a strong actor, exciting dancer (there is a short dance break in her song), and solid singer to take on this fun character role. It is possible to cast a non-dancer in this role. In this case, simply have Jennyanydots oversee the dancing and strike simple poses as the other performers dance around her.

Jennyanydots sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Old Gumbie Cat," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

The **Gumbie Trio** consists of **Demeter**, **Bombalurina**, and **Jellylorum**. They sing with Jennyanydots during her number "The Old Gumbie Cat."

Demeter is a kind cat who is a bit on the shyer side. She is most comfortable when she's with her close friends, Bombalurina and Jellylorum. Together, the three make up the Gumbie Trio. While she doesn't demand attention from others, she has no problem singing and telling stories to anyone who will listen. Demeter leads some of the more difficult numbers and challenging harmonies in the show, so look for a great singer who is also a strong dancer for this role.

Demeter sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Old Gumbie Cat," "Introduction to Mungojerrie & Rumpleteazer," "Entry of Grizabella," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Macavity: The Mystery Cat"

Bombalurina is an incredibly social cat! She has a big, bright personality that shines through at all times. She sings extensively throughout the show as one of the Gumbie Trio and the Macavity duet, so cast a great singer who can also provide the life-of-the-party energy that pairs nicely with Demeter's shyer nature.

Bombalurina: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Old Gumbie Cat," "The Rum Tum Tugger," "Entry of Grizabella," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Macavity: The Mystery Cat"

Jellylorum is a motherly cat who seems to take care of the other cats, both older and younger. She is close to Asparagus and does her best to make sure he is comfortable and respected. Like the other two members of the Gumbie Trio, Demeter and Bombalurina, she has extensive solos, so cast a wonderful singer and actor in this role. Jellylorum does not need to be the strongest dancer – the most important aspect of this role is the singing.

Jellylorum sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Old Gumbie Cat," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Gus: The Theatre Cat"



Rum Tum Tugger is a rebel without a cause! He's boisterous, daring, and loves the limelight. He is always showing off and never backs away from trouble. Cast a confident and brave performer with a great singing voice. Since Rum Tum Tugger sings a great deal throughout the show, look for an actor that has the vocal stamina to last the whole run. Rum Tum Tugger doesn't need to be a classically trained dancer, but he should move well and have a big stage presence.

Rum Tum Tugger sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Rum Tum Tugger," "Old Deuteronomy," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Magical Mister Mistoffelees"

Grizabella was once a glamorous cat-on-the-town but has fallen far from her former glory into a lonely, isolated shadow of her former self. She now walks a bit hunched over, is afraid to look people in the eye, and has lost most of her cat-like, graceful movements. Grizabella sings one of the most iconic musical theatre songs ever written, so cast a fantastic singer and true actress in this coveted role. Ideally, find someone who can portray Grizabella's utter heart-break while still delivering the ultimate power ballad.

Grizabella sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Entry of Grizabella," "Grizabella: The Glamour Cat," "Memory"

Mungojerrie is one half of a criminal duo, along with Rumpleteazer. He is a mischievous cat with a bit of a brazen attitude and lots of personality. Find a singer and dancer who pairs well with Rumpleteazer for this role.

Mungojerrie sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Mungojerrie & Rumpleteazer," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Rumpleteazer is the other half of a team of the resident criminal duo, along with Mungojerrie. She is a young, mischievous cat with lots of energy and charm. She sings and dances throughout the show, so cast a strong singer and a good dancer who pairs well with Mungojerrie for this role.

Rumpleteazer sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Rum Tum Tugger," "Mungojerrie & Rumpleteazer," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Skimbleshanks: The Railway Cat"

Old Deuteronomy is the beloved leader of the group. He is an ancient, wise cat who functions as a father figure for the other cats. Cast an individual who can portray Old Deuteronomy's kind, calm manner and has an older presence onstage. The individual should be a great actor and singer (a full, resonate sound would be perfect), but this role does not require dancing.

Old Deuteronomy sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Old Deuteronomy," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Skimbleshanks: The Railway Cat," "Macavity: The Mystery Cat," "The Ad-dressing of Cats"

Asparagus (Gus) is a sweet, endearing, elderly cat who once lived the glorious life of a theatre performer. Gus moves slower than the other cats, and he has palsy, which makes his hands shake. What Gus loves most of all is telling stories about his time in the theatre and reliving the good old days. Gus doesn't need to be a strong singer or dancer, so this role is perfect for a good character actor.

Asparagus sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Gus: The Theatre Cat"

Skimbleshanks is a cheerful, upbeat, and focused cat who takes his responsibility of working on the mail trains seriously. He likes everything to work exactly how it is supposed to, and Skimbleshanks attends to his duties without being overbearing or rude. Cast a performer who can execute sharp, detailed movements while cleanly singing a patter-type song with lots of clever and specific lyrics.

Skimbleshanks sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Skimbleshanks: The Railway Cat"

Mister Mistoffelees, the famous conjuring cat, is sweet and charming and ultimately saves the day by magically making Old Deuteronomy reappear. This is primarily a dance role with no singing solos, so look for one of your most expressive dancers to fill it. Mister Mistoffelees performs a whole routine of magic and dance, so it is imperative that the actor portraying him has personality that lights up the stage and draws the audience's attention.

Mister Mistoffelees sings: "Magical Mister Mistoffelees"

Jemima is the youngest kitten in the bunch. She is friendly, playful, and empathetic. She is the first character to truly reach out to Grizabella and make her feel welcomed. The actor playing Jemima doesn't need to be a dancer, but she should have a singing voice that both contrasts and complements Grizabella's voice.

Jemima sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball," "Memory"

Macavity, the mystery cat, is as close to a villain as it gets in the Jellicle world. Macavity doesn't sing, but he does have a maniacal laugh that instills fear into the other cats. Macavity should be a strong actor who can move, as he must terrify the other cats during his brief appearances.

Macavity sings: "Macavity: The Mystery Cat"

Quaxo is a Jellicle cat with a number of featured solos lines. This is a great role for a strong ensemble member with a good voice who is not quite ready to take on a leading role.

Quaxo sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "The Naming of Cats," "Old Deuteronomy," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

The following named roles fill out the ensemble of the show. Each role has a solo or short feature in the show. The character descriptions below are based on the full version of CATS and describe the typical way each of the characters is often portrayed. For this adaptation of the show, casting actors that are able to embody these specific character traits is not imperative, but these character descriptions can provide a bit of inspiration for the young performers.

Coricopat and **Tantomile** are twins. Neither of them has a solo, but they do have some featured singing moments throughout the show where they sing together. Look for a pair of ensemble members who can work well together and who are ready for a short, featured moment. In the full-length version of the show, these two characters often sense when events are about to happen onstage before the other cats, which can be a fun characteristic to add to their portrayal.

Coricopat sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Old Deuteronomy," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Tantomile sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Old Deuteronomy," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Victoria, often known as the White Cat, is a younger cat who is kind, elegant, and graceful. Victoria doesn't sing a solo, so this is a great role for an ensemble member with dance training.

Victoria sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"



Carbucketty is a fun-loving, mischievous kitten with a few small solo lines. This role is perfect for one of your ensemble members who can handle a small moment or two in the show.

Carbucketty sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Bill Bailey is a younger cat with lots of spirit. He has a few featured solo lines that are perfect for a younger ensemble member.

Bill Bailey sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Alonzo has a few featured solos but is mainly an ensemble role who dances with the other cats. Alonzo is typically a more mature cat, so feel free to look for a performer who reads as a little older onstage.

Alonzo sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Admetus is easy-going, friendly, and sometimes goofy. He has a small solo, but this role is composed primarily of dancing, so this is the perfect role for a dancer who is new to performing in a musical.

Admetus sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

Cassandra is elegant and graceful and is often portrayed as a different breed than the other cats. She has a brief solo but is mainly a dancer and assists Mister Mistoffelees during his song.

Cassandra sings: "Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats," "Song of the Jellicles and the Jellicle Ball"

The **ensemble** for the show can be made up of any number of additional cats. For the ensemble, look for performers who are talented singers or dancers to fill out the group numbers. While there aren't specific names assigned to these roles, feel free to use T.S. Eliot's original poems for inspiration to find some additional names including **Electra**, **George**, **Gilbert**, **Plato**, **Rumpus Cat**, **Tumblebrutus**, and **Victor**.