

# Study Guide

## Annie

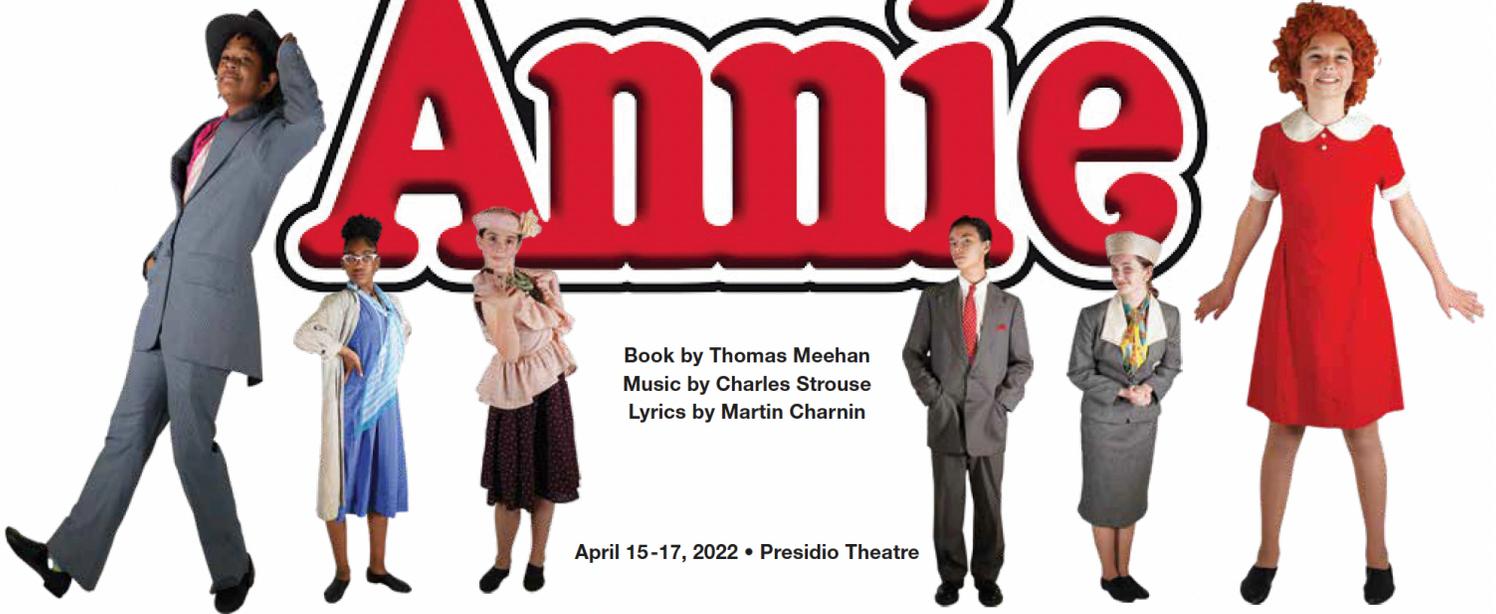
SFartsED  players

The SFArtsED Players in association with the Presidio Theatre present

# Annie

Book by Thomas Meehan  
Music by Charles Strouse  
Lyrics by Martin Charnin

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## Introducing Annie

Annie, the red-headed orphan full of optimism and charm, has delighted audiences for nearly 100 years! Long before she was singing and dancing on Broadway or lighting up the silver screen, Little Orphan Annie appeared in another one of the nation's major institutions- the pages of the Daily News. Created by cartoonist Harold Gray, the Little Orphan Annie comic strip first appeared in August of 1924. Capturing the political and economic spirit of the time, the strip and its leading lady swept the nation. Featuring the adventures of a young girl without any family to call her own, Annie connected to the American public at a time when people needed hope and an independent spirit. Gray used the comic strip to comment on the state of the country. He was influenced by the stock market crash, the Great Depression, and World War II. According to Harold Gray, Annie was inspired by meeting a young girl on the streets of Chicago while looking for cartoon ideas. "I talked to this little kid and liked her right away," Gray said, "She had common sense, knew how to take care of herself. She had to. Her name was Annie. At the time some 40 strips were using boys as the main characters; only three were using girls. I chose Annie for mine, and made her an orphan, so she'd have no family, no tangling alliances, but freedom to go where she pleased."

## Show Synopsis

Set in New York in 1933, Annie is an eleven year old girl living in a orphanage operated by the cruel Miss Hannigan. Annie, who was left at the orphanage as a baby with a letter saying her parents would return for her one day, decides to run away from the orphanage to search for her parents. While on her own Annie shares her optimistic attitude with everyone she meets. Annie is returned to the orphanage and Miss Hannigan by a policeman and is about to be punished by Miss Hannigan when Grace Farrell, private secretary to Oliver Warbucks the billionaire, arrives. Grace delivers the news that Oliver Warbucks wishes to welcome an orphan into his mansion for the holiday's. Grace chooses Annie. Annie is immediately loved by everyone at the mansion, including Oliver Warbucks, who asks her if she would like to be adopted by him. Although Annie tells him she is very grateful for his kindness, she is waiting to be reunited with her real mother and father. Oliver Warbucks then tries to help Annie find her parents by offering a reward for them to come forward. Hearing of this news, Miss Hannigan, her brother Rooster and along with his girlfriend Lily, hatch a plan to pretend to be Annie's long lost parents. With the help of Oliver Warbucks, Grace and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt Miss Hannigan and Rooster's plan is foiled.

## Historical Context

The storyline of **Annie** heavily references the economical and social climate of 1930s America, including featuring Franklin Delano Roosevelt as character and contrasting Oliver Warbucks' affluence with the poverty of Depression-era

**The Great Depression** - The Great Depression was a worldwide economic crisis. In the United States, the Depression was marked by widespread unemployment, near halts in industrial production and construction, and an 89 percent decline in stock prices. The start of the Depression is usually pegged to the stock market crash of "Black Tuesday" (October 29, 1929), when the market fell between \$8 billion and \$9 billion in value. As consumers lost buying power, industrial production fell, businesses failed, and more workers lost their jobs. By 1932 the unemployment rate had soared past 20 percent.

**Hoovervilles** - President Herbert Hoover started numerous programs, all of which failed to reverse the economic downturn of The Depression. Hundreds of thousands of Americans found themselves homeless and they began congregating in numerous shantytowns or "Hoovervilles" communities that had begun to appear across the country.

**A New Deal** - In 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president, and rallied support for the New Deal, a program focused on relief, recovery, and reform in the face of the Depression's devastating effects. The deal included bank reform, renegotiation of the federal budget, and the creation of jobs. There is debate over the success of the New Deal, but Roosevelt's efforts rallied a country in the midst of a financial crisis.

## *Annie*

### Main Character Study

<b>Annie Bennett</b>	A spunky and optimistic 11-year-old orphan who is looking for her birth parents.
<b>Oliver "Daddy" Warbucks</b>	Billionaire businessman who opens his home – and his heart – to Annie.
<b>Grace Farrell</b>	Oliver Warbucks' faithful secretary, who loves Annie from the start.
<b>Miss Agatha Hannigan</b>	The disillusioned orphanage matron. She hates children.
<b>Daniel "Rooster" Hannigan</b>	Miss Hannigan's "no-good" brother, always looking for some quick cash
<b>Lily St. Regis</b>	Rooster's girlfriend, an egotistical gold digger who is smarter than she appears.
<b>Drake</b>	The butler at the Warbucks Mansion; a good friend to Grace, Annie and Warbucks.
<b>Franklin D. Roosevelt</b>	<b>The 32<sup>nd</sup></b> President of the United States, he aids Warbucks in the search for Annie's parents.
<b>Molly</b>	The youngest orphan, Annie's best friend.
<b>Pepper</b>	The bossiest orphan, who likes to take control and is rivals with Annie.
<b>Duffy</b>	The oldest orphan, who often hangs around with Pepper.
<b>July</b>	The quietest orphan, who is mother-like to all the other orphans.
<b>Tessie</b>	The cry-baby orphan, who is known for the line "Oh my goodness".
<b>Kate</b>	The shyest orphan, who rarely speaks.
<b>Louis Brandeis</b>	Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. He is called upon to assist in Annie's adoption.
<b>Bert Healy</b>	Radio announcer who agrees to broadcast Annie's search for her parents.
<b>The Boylan Sisters</b>	Singers on the Bert Healy Show who hope to be famous someday.
<b>Fred McCracken and Wacky</b>	A ventriloquist and his dummy, who are guests on Bert Healy's <i>Oxydent Hour of Smiles</i> .
<b>Lt. Ward</b>	A policeman sent after Annie, he finds her in the local Shantytown, Hooverville.
<b>Sandy</b>	An abandoned mixed-breed dog that Annie rescues who becomes her faithful companion.
<b>Bundles</b>	The laundry man who initially helps Annie escape.
<b>Cordell Hull</b>	Franklin Roosevelt's Cabinet members.
<b>Frances Perkins</b>	
<b>Louis Howe</b>	
<b>Harold Ickes</b>	
<b>Henry Morgenthau Jr.</b>	
<b>Star-To-Be</b>	An upcoming Broadway star, who sings a solo in "N.Y.C."
<b>Mrs. Greer</b>	Warbucks's servants. They do a lot of housekeeping and are often supervised by Drake and Grace.
<b>Mrs. Pugh</b>	
<b>Cecile</b>	
<b>Annette</b>	
<b>Dog Catcher</b>	Characters who try to catch Sandy.
<b>Assistant Dog Catcher</b>	
<b>Sophie</b>	Child citizens of Hooverville.
<b>Apple Seller</b>	
<b>Kaltenborn</b>	Announcers on the radio.
<b>Radio Announcers</b>	
<b>Usherette</b>	A female usher who seats Annie, Grace, and Warbucks in the movie theater.
<b>Jimmy Johnson</b>	A guest on Bert Healy's <i>Oxydent Hour of Smiles</i> , who calls himself "radio's only masked announcer".
<b>SFX Man</b>	A member of Bert Healy's radio show, who controls the sound effects for the show and encourages crowd participation.

#### **Men and Women of Hooverville**

Men and women who are homeless and live in shanties in the town of Hooverville.

## Musical Numbers

### Act I

- Overture – Orchestra
- "Maybe" – Annie and Orphans
- "It's the Hard Knock Life" – Annie and Orphans
- "It's the Hard Knock Life" (Reprise) – Orphans
- "Tomorrow" – Annie
- "We'd Like to Thank You, Herbert Hoover" – Ensemble
- "Little Girls" – Miss Hannigan
- "Little Girls" (Reprise) – Miss Hannigan
- "I Think I'm Gonna Like It Here" – Grace, Annie, Ensemble
- "N.Y.C." – Warbucks, Grace, Annie, Star-to-Be, Ensemble
- "N.Y.C." (Reprise) / "Lullaby" – Warbucks
- "You Make Me Happy" – Miss Hannigan, Grace
- "Easy Street" – Rooster, Miss Hannigan and Lily
- "You Won't Be an Orphan for Long" – Grace and Warbucks
- "Why Should I Change a Thing?" – Warbucks
- "Maybe" (Reprise) – Annie

### Act II

- "Maybe" (Reprise II) – Annie
- "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile" – Bert Healy and the Boylan Sisters
- "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile" (Children Reprise) – Orphans
- "Easy Street" (Reprise) – Rooster, Miss Hannigan and Lily
- "Tomorrow" (Cabinet Reprise) – Annie, Roosevelt, Warbucks and Cabinet
- "Tomorrow" (Cabinet Reprise II) – Roosevelt and the Cabinet
- "Something Was Missing" – Warbucks
- "Annie" – Grace, Drake and Staff
- "I Don't Need Anything But You" – Warbucks and Annie
- "Maybe" (Reprise III) – Annie
- "New Deal for Christmas" – Warbucks, Grace, Annie, Roosevelt, Orphans and staff
- "Tomorrow" (Reprise) - Company

## Glossary

**Bet your Bottom dollar** – You can be very sure

**The Great Depression** - A period during the 1930s when there was a worldwide economic hardship and mass unemployment

**Hard-Knock Life** - A tough life

**Herbert Hoover** – Elected president in 1928, Herbert Hoover promised more wealth and business for the American people. Unfortunately, the economy plummeted when the stock market crashed on Black Tuesday in October 1929. America experienced the greatest depression the nation had ever seen. Millions of Americans lost their jobs and homes.

**Hoovervilles** - The popular name for shanty towns built by homeless people during the Great Depression; named after Herbert Hoover, who was President of the United States during the onset of the Great Depression and widely blamed for it.

**The jig is up** – The illegal activity has been found out or has come to an end.

**Living in Clover or Living Fat** - to enjoy a life of money and comfort

**Mush** – A thick porridge or pudding of cornmeal boiled in water or milk

**President Franklin D. Roosevelt** – FDR was born in 1882 in New York and was elected the 32<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States in November 1932 at the height of the Great Depression. By March, there were 13,000,000 Americans unemployed and almost every bank was closed. FDR provided hope for Americans during this hard time. To fix this problem, he created The New Deal Program: Social Security, heavier taxes on the wealthy, new controls over banks and a work relief program for the unemployed.

**Prohibition** - The legal act of barring the manufacture, transportation and sale of alcohol

**The Roxy** - A movie theatre chain built by U.S. radio and film entrepreneur Samuel Lionel Rothafel

**Shenanigans** – Mischievous

## Post Show Questions & Activities

### Post-Show Questions

- What is a family? What are the different types of families that exist?
- Why is Annie's necklace so important to her?
- What makes you happy? When is Mr. Warbucks happiest in the play? Why do you think this is the case?
- Who is an important person in your life that you really appreciate? Why?
- What does it mean to support someone? In what ways do the characters support each other in the play?
- "FDR says "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." What does this phrase mean to you?
- What are some ways you can make yourself happy when times are tough or life isn't going your way?
- Who is your favorite character in the play and why?
- Did any of the costumes reflect a character's personality or wealth? What clues did the costumes give about the characters?

### Post-Show Activity

#### MODERN-DAY ANNIE

Ask your students to recall the plot of *Annie* through the lens of communication and technology. What plot points relied on older forms of communication (i.e. Annie's radio announcement)? How would the story change if it were told in modern-day New York City, with the use of smart phones, television, and the internet? Using the synopsis provided, and their memory of the play, ask students to rewrite the story in New York 2022, keeping the same dramatic arc of the story. What changes, and what stays the same? What does this say about the modern world compared to the 1930s?

### Post-Show Activity

When Warbucks takes Annie out on the town, she remarks,

"To think that I've lived here all of my life, and never seen these things!"

- Are there places in your own city that people from out of town come to see? Are there locations that you take for granted, that could be really interesting?
- Ask your students to create and design a brochure about a location in San Francisco. Through this assignment, ask them to see the city through new eyes. How would they describe it to someone who has never been to see it? Encourage them to be as creative as possible when designing this presentation, through photograph, video, drawings, descriptions, or other means of presenting San Francisco to a potential visitor.

### Post-Show Activity - Create Your Own Comic Strip

Title: \_\_\_\_\_


# Theater Etiquette

Seeing a musical is a unique and exciting experience. All the members of the production, both cast and crew, work hard to give you a great show. As an audience member, you also have an important job. You must help the performers give their best performance possible. You can do this by practicing these rules of theater etiquette:

1. Turn off your cell phone. A ringing phone is very distracting and can be embarrassing for you if it is your phone that is disrupting the show.
2. Make sure to visit the restroom before the production begins.
3. Don't speak or whisper during the performance...whispering is still speaking, so only in an emergency should whispering occur.
4. Remember that the Overture (introductory music) in Musical Theater is part of the performance, so remain silent when the show begins.
5. Do not take pictures during the performance. It can be very distracting to the actors and it can result in an accident.
6. Do not put your feet up on the seats, or kick the seat in front of you.
7. Do remain in your seat for the entire performance. If you must leave, exit during intermission. In an emergency, calmly walk toward the nearest exit.
8. Do laugh when the performance is funny.
9. Do applaud when the performance is over. Applause is how you say "Thank you" to the performer. The actors will bow as you applaud. That is how they say "Thank you for coming."
10. Do stand and applaud if you thought the show was outstanding

## Theater Vocabulary

<b>Actor/Actress</b>	Someone who performs on stage or screen.
<b>Blocking</b>	The actor's movements on the stage.
<b>Cast/Company</b>	All of the actors in the entire show.
<b>Character</b>	A personality that an actor or script creates.
<b>Choreography</b>	The organized dance moves.
<b>Comedy</b>	A work of theatre that is funny.
<b>Costume</b>	The clothing or outfit worn on stage by performers.
<b>Critique/Review</b>	Opinions and comments that evaluate the actors or their performances.
<b>Cue</b>	A signal that indicates something else is about to happen.
<b>Dialogue</b>	The conversation between actors on stage.
<b>Director</b>	The person who oversees the entire creative vision and staging of a production.
<b>Dress Rehearsal</b>	The final rehearsal before the performance with costumes and makeup.
<b>Ensemble</b>	The group of performers on stage (usually with multiple roles) that support the story. In musicals, this group typically does large song and dance numbers.
<b>Gesture</b>	An expressive body movement.
<b>Libretto</b>	The book or text of a musical or opera.
<b>Monologue</b>	A long speech by a single character.
<b>Motivation</b>	A character's reason for doing or saying something.
<b>Musical Theatre</b>	A type of play that contains music, singing, and usually dancing.
<b>Playwright</b>	The person who writes a play or book of the musical (also called libretto).
<b>Props</b>	The items carried or used by actors.
<b>Stage</b>	The area where the characters perform – usually containing a set.

## SFArtsED Players Performers

SFArtsED Players is a dynamic musical theater troupe founded in 2001. The Players are comprised of 9-14-year-old students who meet after school and Saturdays to work with professional theater artists. Their focus is training in singing, dancing and acting through original musicals and Broadway classics. These talented performers exhibit enormous discipline and enthusiasm, devoting at least nine hours a week (more when show dates near) to classes and rehearsals. It pays off in fully staged performances that are deeply investigated and thoroughly polished.

### The Players Company

Phoenix Anderson  
Karina Barance  
Zara Bashir  
Mingus Blanco-Norberg  
Jasmine Boyd  
Naomi Coffman  
Zackery Cornejo  
Fia Delmon  
Amaya Diwan  
Belen Diwan  
Francesca Gangitano  
Samantha Gangitano  
Max Ginsburg  
Tereza Gomez-Henry  
Lucia Gonzales

Ruby Holland  
Savvy Ingle  
Alon Johnson  
Helena Kirschner  
Parker Lee  
Simone Myers  
Ian Nguyen  
Lily Normanly  
Mauressa Perkins  
Sylvie Reavill  
Colette Rush  
Sophia Shiller  
Diego Vaznaugh-Sanchez  
Trisha Yee

