

*A high school gym set up for a spelling bee.
RONA LISA PERETTI, long time local hostess of the bee enters and makes sure all is in order. While adjusting the microphone RONA flashes back to the moment when she stood here as a contestant ~~and~~ spelled her winning word.*

VOICE

Miss Peretti. Please spell "syzygy."

RONA

S-Y-Z-Y-G-Y

Syzygy!

VOICE

We have a winner!

RONA

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. (hugs trophy)

Thank you.

*RONA basks in the memory. She is jarred back to reality by Chip's entrance.
As spellers arrive each checks in with RONA and receives a placard with a number.*

CHIP

AT THE 25TH ANNUAL
PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE
MY PARENTS KEEP ON TELLING ME
JUST BEING HERE IS WINNING.
ALTHOUGH
I KNOW IT ISN'T SO.

RONA

BUT IT'S A VERY NICE
VERY VERY NICE...

RONA, CHIP

VERY VERY NICE
VERY NICE BEGINNING.

RONA

Our winner here last year: Chip Tolentino

Schwarzy enters- and Rona ignores Chip to offer commentary

SCHWARZY

Mrs. Peretti!

RONA

And, our youngest competitor, Logainne SchwarzandGrubeniere,

Schwarzy and Chip check each other out competitively. Coneybear runs in.

CONEYBEAR

AT THE 25TH ANNUAL
PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING GAME (Bee!)
I'LL STAND WHEN THEY ANNOUNCE MY NAME:

RONA

Leaf Coneybear.

CONEYBEAR

AND TRY TO KEEP FROM SHAKING.

SCHWARZY

ALAS
HIS SHAKING WILL NOT PASS

CONEYBEAR, CHIP, RONA AND SCHWARZY
'CAUSE IT'S A VERY BIG
VERY FRAUGHT-
SIMPLE BUT IT'S NOT-
IT'S A VERY BIG UNDERTAKING.

Barfee enters, stumblingly

RONA

(with some surprise and admiration)

Returning after last season's tragic setback: William Barfee.

BARFEE

It's pronounced Barféé, with an accent ague.

Marcy enters

RONA

I'm not sure who this girl is-

MARCY

Marcy Park.

SCHWARZY
WINNER'S DESTINATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

CHIP/SCHWARZY
PLASMA TV
IN A FANCY HOTEL.

MARCY/CHIP/SCHWARZY
WHERE THEY TREAT YOU WELL.

ALL
ALL BECAUSE YOU LOVE TO SPELL.
WE SPELL.

RONA
IT'S A MARVELOUS MEMORY
IF YOU WIN THE SPELLING BEE.
ONE'S LIFE IMPROVES FROM A TO Z
THE MINUTE YOU ARE CROWNED HERE.
I SEE
A TROPHY HELD BY ME!
BUT WHEN I WON
DID I SWELL—
OH THE STORIES I COULD TELL—
THOUGH BRAGGARTS WON'T DO WELL
AROUND HERE.

MARCY hands a form to Rona
RONA gives MARCY a good number. OLIVE enters—approaches Barfee

OLIVE
Hi- do you know where I check in?

BARFEE
Excuse me, I've marked this area off with invisible tape

CONEYBEAR
AT THE 25TH ANNUAL
WE'VE MEMORIZED THE MANUAL...

ALL

ABOUT HOW TO SPELL THESE WORDS.
WORDS THAT REQUIRE THOUGHT.
PEOPLE THINK WE'RE AUTOMATONS.
BUT THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE NOT.

MARCY
WE HEAR THE WORD,

SCHWARZY
WE BREATHE,

CONEYBEAR
WE WAIT.

ALL
UNLIKE IDIOTS WE IDEATE.

RONA
To ideate is to form an image or idea, to think

CONEYBEAR
AT THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE

SCHWARZY
WE FEEL NO ANIMOSITY

SCHWARZY/OLIVE
AND YET OUR HEADS ARE SPINNING.

BARFEE
WE ARE
THE SLIGHTEST BIT BIZARRE

MARCY
BUT SINCE THE TIME IS NOW

CONEYBEAR
HOLY COW

SCHWARZY
WE SHALL TAKE A SOLEMN VOW
TO CONCENTRATE ON WINNING.

ALL
WE CONCENTRATE ON WINNING.
AT THE TWENTY FIFTH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE
WE SPEAK SO DAMN CONVINCINGLY.

RONA
THEY'RE NERVOUS BUT THEY'RE GRINNING.

GIRLS
IT SEEMS
WE'RE LIVING OUT OUR DREAMS
SCHWARZY translates above in sign language

MEN
WHICH IS A VERY NICE
VERY NICE, VERY VERY VERY NICE

ALL
VERY NICE, VERY NICE
VERY VERY VERY NICE
VERY NICE
BEGINNING .

RONA
TWENTY FIFTH ANNUAL

KIDS
TWENTY FIFTH ANNUAL

ALL
PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE

RONA
Hello. I'd like to take this moment to ask you to please turn off all cell phones and other
distracting devices, and there are a few spellers who haven't checked in please come right
around this horseshoe and meet me by the piano. I'm missing—

Rona calls names of audience volunteers individually

And I need to have to speak with Miss Olive Ostrovsky.

Olive crosses to Rona as the volunteers are coming on stage.

RONA

Miss Ostrovsky. It seems we haven't received your entrance fee.

OLIVE

Entrance fee?

RONA

Did the school not tell you about the twenty-five dollar entrance fee- ?
Is your mom here maybe? Or your dad?

OLIVE

My dad had to go into work. He's gonna try to come later.

RONA

Who brought you to the bee, dear?

OLIVE

The bus?

RONA

All right. We'll talk about the entrance fee later.

CHIP

(to Marcy, taking her under his wing)

Hey, Marcy, don't be nervous. Just watch what I do

.

MARCY

Don't worry, I'm not nervous.

SCHWARZY

(to Coneybear)

Have you ever been in an underground gymnasium before?

CONEYBEAR

I've never been in a gymnasium before!

OLIVE

(to Barfee)

What school do you go to?

BARFEE

Shut up.

RONA

Ladies and Gentleman, all the children you see on stage are here because of their extraordinary ability and love of language-- but only one of them can go on to compete in the National Spelling bee! And this year, to celebrate our silver anniversary, our local sponsors, the Putnam Optometrists, are offering today's winner a two hundred dollar savings bond toward his or her future education.

kids respond

RONA

But remember, to get here each child had to win--

CONEYBEAR

oh but I

RONA

or place-- in their own district bee- so each of them is *already* a winner.

BARFEE

Already a winner

RONA

Hello, I'm Rona Lisa Peretti, and I'm pleased to be back for my 9th consecutive year as your host. Unfortunately, our long-time word pronouncer, Superintendent Spriggs has fallen ill, so please join me in welcoming back Vice Principal Douglas Panch from Lake Hemingway-Dos Passos Junior High- who's been kind enough to step in, and save the bee.

VICE PRINCIPAL PANCH enters.

PANCH

Thank you, and I would like to say as to the incident 5 years ago, I'm in a much better place now. It's amazing what a change of diet can do for a man.

Schwarzy applauds

PANCH

Thank you.

RONA

Wonderful.

PANCH

And may I add, Ms. Peretti here is not only one of the top realtors in our county, she's also a former spelling champion herself.

RONA

Third annual.

PANCH

(impressed) Syzygy.

RONA

“When the earth aligns with the moon and the sun.”

PANCH

Beautiful. And now for the Pledge of Allegiance led by our comfort counselor, *(checks writing on the palm of his hand)* Mitchell Mahoney

MITCH MAHONEY, the COMFORT COUNSELOR, enters.

RONA

Mr. Mahoney is doing his community service work with us here today.

MITCH leads pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone does pledge at own rate, so it comes out exaggeratedly disjointed

PANCH

Spellers, be seated. *(PANCH MITCH)* Thank you, Mitch. Now for the official spelling bee rules.

A SPELLER

SPELLERS

A SPELLER

PANCH

MAY ASK QUESTIONS

SPELLERS

MAY ASK QUESTIONS

PANCH

ABOUT THE WORD'S PRONUNCIATION OR DEFINITION,

SPELLERS

DEFINITION

PANCH

USE IN A SENTENCE,

SPELLERS

IN A SENTENCE

PANCH
AND LANGUAGE OF ORIGIN

SPELLERS
LANGUAGE OF ORIGIN.

PANCH
IF YOU START TO SPELL A WORD YOU MAY START OVER,

PANCH & IMPATIENT SPELLERS
BUT THE SEQUENCES OF LETTERS ALREADY SPOKEN MAY NOT BE
CHANGED.

RONA
IF YOU MISSPELL A WORD

SPELLERS
MISSPELL A WORD

RONA
WE WILL RING

SPELLERS
YOU WILL RING

RONA
THE BELL

PANCH
(rings bell)

RONA
AND THE COMFORT COUNSLOR

MITCH
Mitch Mahoney

ALL
MITCH MAHONEY

RONA
WILL ESCORT YOU OFF STAGE!

PANCH
So, is that understood spellers?

SPELLERS
YES

RONA
BEFORE ANYONE IS DISQUALIFIED
AND BEFORE PROCEEDINGS TURN SNIDE
AND CONTESTANTS TURN NASTY,
I SOBERLY CONFIDE:

IN THE MOMENT BEFORE THE BEE
CLAIMS ITS FIRST CATASTROPHE,
I LOVE WHAT I SEE:
KIDS ACTING INNOCENTLY.
IT'S MY FAVORITE MOMENT OF THE BEE.
IT'S MY FAVORITE MOMENT OF THE BEE.

PANCH
Then, without further ado, let the spelling begin.
With: Miss Schwartzandgrubenierre.

RONA
Miss Schwartzandgrubenierre is head of the Gay-Straight Alliance at her elementary school.

PANCH
STRABISMUS

SCHWARZY
Strabismus. May I please have the definition of that word?

PANCH
The inability of one eye to obtain binocular vision with the other because of an imbalance of the muscles of the eyeball.

SCHWARZY
Can you use it in a sentence please?

PANCH

In the schoolyard Billy protested that he wasn't cockeyed. "I suffer from strabismus," he said, whereupon the bullies beat him harder.

as Panch looks to Rona for approval, Schwarzy is writing the word on her arm

RONA

Notice how she writes on her forearm. This is her way to see the word before she speaks it out loud.

SCHWARZY

Strabismus. S-T-R-A-B-I-S-M-U-S. Strabismus.

PANCH

That is correct.
Mr. Coneybear

RONA

Mr. Coneybear was second runner up in the Putnam Basin district

...Phone rings. A flashback to the moment when he found out he's in

SCHWARZY as LEAF's MOM

Brook, will you tell Leaf he has a phone call?

MARCY as LEAF'S SISTER

Leaf! Phone!

CONEYBEAR

Thanks! I got it!

Hello, Leaf speaking. Uh, huh. Uh, huh. Uh, huh.

You're kidding? I'm gonna represent the Basin in the bee? Wow, I can't believe it.

As he calls his family members, kids rise taking on these roles audience volunteer is also pulled up to be "Paul"

CONEYBEAR

Mom, Dad, Marigold, Brook, Pinecone, Raisin, Landscape, Paul, - you're not going to believe this!

BARFEE as DAD: What's up Leaf?

LEAF: I made the county finals in the spelling bee!

family laughs

SCHWARZY AS MOM: Oh sweetheart, no, you came in third honey

LEAF: I know! but they just called and said the person who came in first has to go to their bat mitzvah, and the person who came in second... has to attend the bat mitzvah, so they want me to do it!

SCHWARZY AS MOM: You understand the other kids will have all won their district bees?

family laughs

LEAF: Yeah but well but

PANCH
(calling Leaf's attention back)

Capybara

CONEYBEAR

What?

PANCH

Your word is Capybara.

CONEYBEAR

Is that a word?

PANCH

That's a word, yes.

CONEYBEAR

No way- what does it mean?

PANCH
"a tailless largely aquatic South American rodent often exceeding four feet in length"

CONEYBEAR

Awesome. What else can I ask?

PANCH
You're allowed to ask for the word's language of origin or to have the word used in a sentence...

CONEYBEAR

Oh- can you use it in a sentence?

PANCH

Yes. “Don’t look now Pedro but I think that tailless four-and a half foot rodent swimming next to you may be a *capybara*.”

CONEYBEAR

Wow, that didn’t help at all!

PANCH

Are you ready to spell the word Mr. Coneybear?

CONEYBEAR

No, but it was fun to come here-
(*to family in aud*) hi guys-my whole family’s here which is really...
(*trance suddenly takes him*) C-A-P-Y-B-A-R-A Capybara.

PANCH

That is correct.

CONEYBEAR

It is?
I can’t believe it.

PANCH

Miss Ostrovsky

CONEYBEAR

It’s unbelievable, I just said the first letters that came into my head, and that “y” was really...

ALL

Shhh.

RONA

Miss Ostrovsky came in second in her school’s Halloween contest

OLIVE

I was road-kill.

BOANTHROPY

PANCH

OLIVE

(turning toward him so he can hear her pronunciation)
Boanthropy? May I have a definition?

PANCH

The delusion that one has become an ox.

OLIVE

(seeing someone taking chair she saved)
Oh wait- one second- please – ma’am could you not sit in that seat –

OLIVE

I SAVED A CHAIR FOR MY DAD
IN THE FOURTH ROW, ON THE AISLE;
AND IT MAY TAKE HIM A WHILE
BUT WHEN HE GETS HERE, THAT’S HIS CHAIR.

‘CAUSE MY MOTHER’S IN AN ASHRAM IN INDIA.
I SAVED A CHAIR FOR HER TOO
BUT IT’S MERELY SYMBOLIC
AS DAILY SHE WASHES HERSELF IN THE GANGES.

AND I LIVE IN A HOUSE
WHERE THERE’S AN OVERSIZED DICTIONARY
THAT I READ
AS A GIRL
ON THE TOILET.

PANCH

(calling her back to spelling reality)

Boanthropy

OLIVE

Is that from the Latin root *bo* meaning ox, and the Greek root *anthro* meaning man?

PANCH

Sure.

OLIVE

I LOVE MY DICTIONARY
AND I LOVE THE INDENTED BORDER.
EVERY WORD'S IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER
ERGO LOST THINGS ALWAYS CAN BE FOUND.

AND I WRAP MY HEAD AROUND
THE FACT THAT IN ONE BOOK
IS THE ENTIRE LANGUAGE OF OUR SPECIES—
WHICH IS A FAVORITE TERM OF NIETZCHE'S
WHO IS THE GREAT GRANDFATHER OF CHRISTINA RICCI'S.
YES I JOKE, BUT THE WORDS IN THE DICTIONARY
ARE THE FRIENDS I'LL HAVE FOREVER
MORE THAN THE FRIENDS I HAVE MADE IN SCHOOL

“Boanthropy” (*speaks spelling into her hand*)

CHIP AND CONEYBEAR

SHE'S SUCH A LOVELY GIRL,
WITH A LOVELY LITTLE VOICE.

SCHWARZY

AND I'VE HEARD THAT SHE'S PRO-CHOICE,
THOUGH STILL A VIRGIN.

RONA

AND SHE TALKS INTO HER HAND,
AN OFTEN-USED TECHNIQUE.

OLIVE

WHAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND
IS ONCE I SAY IT THEN I'VE SAID IT

RONA

AND SO MUCH TO HER CREDIT
SHE TALKS INTO HER HAND AND TURNS ASIDE

OLIVE

SO I WILL NOT MAKE A MISTAKE AND BE DISQUALIFIED

OLIVE

Boanthropy, Bo-a-n-t-h-r-o-p-y, Boanthropy

PANCH

That is correct!

OLIVE/RONA/THEN SPELLERS ADDED
MY (HER) FRIEND THE DICTIONARY
IS A VERY RELIABLE FRIEND
doo doo doo doo doo (etc)

PANCH calls Audience Volunteer #1

FOR AUDIENCE VOLUNTEERS

PLEASE SEE **PANCH APPENDIX- AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER WORDS**
(with definitions and sentences)

AND RONA APPENDIX- COMMENTS ABOUT AUDIENCE VOLUNTEERS

AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER ONE

Rona comments eg: [Ms. a]'s favorite tv show is "That's so Raven."

Audience comments rotate from list at discretion of actor playing RONA

word eg: Umami

from the Japanese

def: a savory taste sensation produced by amino acids

sentence eg: Mono sodium glutamate is pure umami.

Audience words rotate from list at discretion of actor playing PANCH except when set cues.

PANCH

Calls audience volunteer #2

AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER TWO

Rona comments eg: [Mr.. B is president of the Abstinence Club]

word eg: haruspex

def: one who inspects the entrails of dead bodies to foretell the future

*sentence eg: the haruspex industry suffered a death blow in 1836 with
the banning of the inspection of entrails.*

Whenever first audience volunteer gets out

SPELLERS

GOODBYE, YOU WERE GOOD BUT NOT GOOD ENOUGH
SO PLEASE DON'T ASK WHY
SIMPLY SAY GOODBYE

variations on Goodbyes follow all audience members' exits

PANCH

Mr. Barfee

BARFEE

Mr. Barfee

RONA

Mr. Barfee has a rare mucus membrane disorder

PANCH

LUGUBRIOUS

BARFEE

Yes, of course. Lugubrious meaning extremely sad and droopy?

PANCH

Yes, that's right.

BARFEE

A topic I am all too familiar with. One moment please.

RONA

Okay watch this technique – He calls it the Magic Foot, and he's the only one I've ever seen use it. He spells it out on the floor so he can get a visual and then speaks it out loud.
Incredible

BARFEE

L-U-G-U-Lugu!
B-R-I-O-U-S-Lugubrious.

PANCH

That is correct.

BARFEE

I know.

PANCH

[Calls Audience volunteer 3]

Rona comment
eg: Mr. Z is recovering from headlice

PANCH

(to aud volunteer Comparitively easy word)
eg: Mexicans.

CHIP, BARFEE & SCHWARZY

Mexicans!

CHIP

That's so easy!

PANCH

Only the speller at the microphone may repeat the word. (*to aud volunteer*) Mexicans.

Definition: The plural of the form. A resident or inhabitant of Mexico. (Many a Mexican)

Sentence eg: After surviving a near death experience, Mary walked wide-eyed through the streets, and for the first time noticed all of the Mexicans.

There may be some ad-libbed grumbling if volunteer gets it right

PANCH

Miss Park.

RONA

Marcy Park is new to our County, having placed ninth in Nationals last year, representing Virginia.

kids: ooh—(they didn't know that- an unknown serious contender)

Coneybear: Beautiful country

PANCH

Miss Park the word is *Phylactery*

MARCY

Phylactery. Am I pronouncing that correctly?

PANCH

Yes.

MARCY

Thank you. May I have the definition, please.

PANCH

“either of two small square leather boxes containing religious texts traditionally worn on the left arm and head by Jewish men during morning weekday prayers.”

MARCY

Thank you. May I have a sentence, please?

PANCH

“Billy, put down that phylactery- we’re Episcopalian.”

MARCY

Thank you. Phylactery. P-H-Y-L-A-C-T-E-R-Y. Phylactery.

PANCH

That is correct. Mr. Tolentino

RONA

Slam-dunk from Park

CHIP

Hey- you were at nationals? Remember me?

MARCY

I only remember the top ten.

RONA

Charlito “Chip” Tolentino is a little league pitcher with a wicked 22-mile an hour screwball.

PANCH

Omphaloskepsis.

CHIP

(pointing to appropriate aud volunteer)

Wait a second, didn’t [the guy with the head lice] just get Mexicans?

PANCH

Yes, and you got: Omphaloskepsis

CHIP

But are those rated at the same level of difficulty?

PANCH

They’re both level one words, yes

CHIP

Can that also be pronounced “omPHAlOskepsis”?

PANCH

It can. But that would be wrong.

CHIP

Omphaloskepsis. O...M...P...H...A...L-O-S-K-E-P-S-I-S. Omphaloskepsis.

PANCH

That is correct.

RONA

He rallies and nails it. That's what it means to be champion.

PANCH calls AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER #4. Easy word: MUSICAL CUE.

PANCH

Elephant

CHIP

Come on!

definition: "elephant"

sentence: "Please spell elephant"

CHIP

MY OH MY

OLIVE, CHIP

THAT WORD'S SO MORONIC.

SCHWARZY

I COULD CRY;

I WANT WORDS AS LAME!

PANCH: Mr. Coneybear

CONEYBEAR

SEMPER FI.

I FEEL SUPERSONIC.

PANCH: Spell "hospital"

Coneybear spells "hospital."

MARCY
THAT IS WHY I DESPISE THIS GAME.

PANCH: That is correct. Mr. Tolentino.

CHIP & CONEYBEAR
LIFE IS RANDOM
AND UNFAIR.
LIFE IS PANDEM-
ONIUM

PANCH (to Chip) Staphylococcus

ALL
THAT'S THE REASON WE DESPAIR

CHIP
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

CONEYBEAR
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

CHIP
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

BARFEE
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

PANCH: "broccoli"

CONEYBEAR
I KNEW THAT WORD.

OLIVE
I KNEW THAT WORD.

BARFEE
I KNEW THAT WORD.

ALL
GOD DAMN IT!

CHIP
IT IS SUCH A CALAMITY.

ALL
WHERE SHOULD WE BEGIN?
THE BEST SPELLERS

CHIP
DON'T NECESSARILY WIN.

KIDS
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM.
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM.

audience volunteers recruited into dance

MARCY
SET YOUR SIGHTS.
I AM ON A MISSION.

PANCH: Miss Park. "antediluvian"

SCHWARZY
WE HAVE RIGHTS.
(*to aud volunteer*): We have rights.
THAT'S WHY WE COMPLAIN.

PANCH: Mr. Barfee, "Halitosis"

BARFEE
DAMN LIFE BITES
BUT I LIKE COMPETITION

PANCH: Miss Ostrovsky: "Schematic."

OLIVE
IN THESE LIGHTS
CAN YOU FEEL OUR PAIN

PANCH: Somebody spell, "crayon".

MITCH
LIFE IS RANDOM
AND UNFAIR
LIFE IS PANDEM-
ONIUM

KIDS
THAT'S THE REASON WE DESPAIR:

CHIP
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

MITCH
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

CHIP
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

BARFEE
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

PANCH: "Dinosaur"

CHIP
I KNEW THAT WORD.

ALL
I KNEW THAT WORD.

CHIP
I KNEW THAT WORD, GODDAMIT.

ALL OTHERS
GODDAMIT

ALL
IT IS SUCH A CALAMITY
WHERE SHOULD I BEGIN?
THE BEST SPELLERS

CHIP
DON'T NECESSARILY WIN

ALL OTHERS
LIFE IS PANDE-MONIUM

CONEYBEAR & CHIP

THEY DON'T WIN

ALL OTHERS
LIFE IS PANDE-MONIUM

BARFEE
NO THEY DON'T

CHIP & OTHERS
LIFE IS RANDOM AND UNFAIR

CHIP
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

OTHERS
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

CHIP
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM
YES IT IS

OTHERS
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM
LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

CHIP
(overlapping)
OH YEAH!

OTHERS
YEAH

optional audience volunteer spot

PANCH

Miss Schwartzandgrubenierre.

Schwarzy crosses to mic.

RONA

Miss Schwartzandgrubenierre has proposed a constitutional amendment lowering the voting age to ten.

PANCH

Cystitis

SCHWARZY

thithtitith? Can I have the definition of that word please?

PANCH

An inflammation of the urinary bladder.

SCHWARZY

And can you use it in a sentence please?

PANCH

Sally's mother told her it was her cystitis that made her special.

SCHWARZY

Cystitis. I think I studied this one with my dads.

*Dad Carl is drilling Schwarzy- CARL played by Coneybear, DAN by Mitch.
It's a very fast drill- he keeps them coming and she spells extremely quickly.*

CARL

segue

SCHWARZY

s-e-g-u-e

CARL

good. siphon.

SCHWARZY

s-i-p-h-o-n

good. Cystitis

CARL

S-

SCHWARZY

No. Think.

CARL

C-

SCHWARZY

good

CARL

i-

SCHWARZY

No ! Logainne- are you concentrating?

CARL

Yes-

SCHWARZY

Maybe it's time for a break?

DAN

We're in the middle of a word here

CARL

You know she doesn't spell well when her blood-sugar is low

DAN

We gotta build up stamina- The bee could last three hours

CARL

Don't you talk to me about stamina, Carl!

DAN

Daddy conference. Now.

CARL

No, wait, please dads, let me get this one first, please!

SCHWARZY

with lingering sad associations

SCHWARZY

C-Y-S-T-I-T-I-S. Cystitis.

PANCH

That is correct. Mr. Coneybear.

RONA

Mr. Coneybear makes his own clothes

PANCH

Acouchi

CONEYBEAR

A-what?

PANCH

Acouchi.

CONEYBEAR

At a spelling bee? What's it mean?

PANCH

"A South American rodent of the genus Myoprocta, resembling an agouti."

CONEYBEAR

It's funny how I got another South American rodents.

PANCH

Hilarious.

CONEYBEAR

Look, honestly? I've never heard this word before- and I have no idea how to spell it.

PANCH

Would you like to forfeit your turn ?

thinks about it, music starts

RONA

Why don't you just give it your best shot Mr. Coneybear?

CONEYBEAR

I'M NOT THAT SMART.
MY SIBLINGS HAVE BEEN TELLING ME THAT FOR YEARS-
THAT I'M NOT THAT SMART.
WE'RE SCHOOLED AT HOME
(THEY SEE WHO'S BRIGHT)
IT BREAKS MY HEART..
I'M NOT THAT SMART.

I HAVE A GENTLE PERSONALITY
WHICH, YOU'LL ALL AGREE,
IS ANATH'MA TO MY MORE AGGRESSIVE FAMILY.
EVERYONE KEEPS SWATTING

FAMILY

DUMB KID

CONEYBEAR

EVERYONE KEEPS YELLING

FAMILY

DUMB KID

CONEYBEAR

HOW COULD A FLEA
SUCH AS ME
THINK HE'D BE
GOOD AT SPELLING?
HOW?
I DON'T KNOW.

I LIKE MY HAIR.
REALLY IT IS PLEASANT TO THE TOUCH.
I TOSS MY HAIR. (*HE DOES*)
A BIT TOO MUCH. (*HE DOES AGAIN*)
IT DOESN'T MOVE.
IT SIMPLY SITS.
I MAKE A PART. (*HE DOES*)
I'M NOT THAT SMART.

(BALLET BREAK)

CONEYBEAR

BA DA DE DA (ETC)
DOODLE DOODLE DOODLE....

I've forgotten the word.

PANCH

Oh my God. Acouchi.

CONEYBEAR

Right, the rodent resembling the other rodent – what was the other.
(*trance takes him*) A-C-O-U-C-H-I. Acouchi.

PANCH

That is correct

CONEYBEAR

(*stunned*)

I MIGHT BE SMART.
MY SIBLINGS (*POINTS THEM OUT*) CAN'T BELIEVE THAT I GOT IT RIGHT.
BUT I GOT IT RIGHT.
(*TO PANCH*) RIGHT?
I DIDN'T CHEAT
I SAW THIS LIGHT
AND IT WAS NEAT
I LIKE TO LAUGH
I LIKE TO SPELL
I LIKE TO NEVER HEAR THE BELL.
AND IF THIS COMPETITION'S HELL...
AT LEAST I'M FINALLY A PART.
I FEEL MY HEART
BEGIN TO SWELL
I LIKE- I LOVE- TO SPELL

I like it a lot.

Olive high fives Coneybear as he returns to seat

AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER

- Rona comment from list, at discretion of actor playing Rona.
- Panch/Speller ad lib on word, definition, sentence from list, at discretion of actor playing Panch.
- Outcome as appropriate, including sung Goodbye variation if speller eliminated

PANCH

Miss Ostrovsky

RONA

Miss Ostrovsky's mother is currently in India on a 9-month spiritual quest.

PANCH

FLAGELLATE

OLIVE

flagellate- um- that's a verb right?

PANCH

Yes.

OLIVE

May I have a definition?

PANCH

Would you step forward please, and speak into the microphone

OLIVE

Sorry.

RONA

Don't be sorry, just turn and face us, now speak into the mic, now—

You know, this girl needs to learn how to stand like a champion! *(as she approaches Olive and corrects her)* Shoulders back. Hair away from the face. Good.

Rona turns away and Olive's posture collapses again

RONA

(seeing this)

It's a hard age for girls.

CONEYBEAR

(Coneybear falls off his chair)

I fell.

RONA

And boys.

With this difference: Ask a child in a spelling bee if they expect to win, and boys and girls are trained to respond differently. The correct response for boys is:

BARFEE

I'm taking it all. You're all going down

RONA

while the correct response for girls is:

SCHWARZY

Honestly, I think there's a good chance I would do okay, but it's unlikely I'd win the whole thing, I'm a good speller, but I'm not a truly great speller, and though I have trained hard there's so much luck involved.

RONA

though in my experience the girls are sometimes *thinking*

SCHWARZY

I'm taking it all. You're all going down, suckas!

RONA

while the boys are sometimes thinking

BARFEE

I really don't know—am I good enough, or not?

beat

OLIVE

(out, simply, to audience)

I'm thinking about does flagellate have one ell or two—and also about how if you take the “w” of answer and the “h” in ghost and the extra “a” in aardvark and the “t” in listen, you could keep saying “what” but nobody would hear, cause the whole word would be silent.

RONA

You still need to speak up, Miss Ostrovsky.

OLIVE

FLAGELLATE. F-L-A-G-E-L...LA-T-E.
Flagellate.

PANCH

Very good on the volume. And correct.

CHIP

(to Coneybear, over spellers between them-whispered) Leaf- that girl in the second row in the fuzzy sweater? Is that your sister?

CONEYBEAR

that's marigold.

AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER

-Rona comment from list, at discretion of actor playing Rona.

-Panch/Speller ad lib on word, definition, sentence from list, at discretion of actor playing Panch.

Outcome as appropriate, including sung Goodbye variation if speller eliminated

PANCH

Mr. Barfee

BARFEE

Mr. Barfee

RONA

Mr. Barfee made it to the finals last year but had to be eliminated for health related reasons

Momentary flashback

BARFEE

Were there peanuts in the brownies?

They said there wouldn't be no peanuts in the brownies!

RONA

I'm glad to see him back and spelling so well.

PANCH

Hasenpfeffer.

BARFEE

Yes of course. A highly seasoned rabbit stew, often served with sour cream?

PANCH

Rabbit stew, yes.

BARFEE

My old friend. One moment please.

RONA

He's going for the foot.

BARFEE

MAGIC FOOT
TAKE ME TO THE FINAL ROUND
MAGIC FOOT
BARELY LIFTED OFF THE GROUND
MAGIC FOOT
DO IT WITHOUT MAKING A SOUND
MAGIC FOOT
WRITE THE LETTER
MAGIC FOOT
WRITE THE PERFECT LETTER
MAGIC FOOT
IT'S AN ALPHABETTER WAY TO SPELL

Okay, let's see what we got here, foot-

H-A-S-E N- Hasen

P F E F F pfeff

E- R- Let's- go!

MAGIC FOOT
BE SPECIFIC
MAGIC FOOT
IT'S HORRIFIC IF YOU'RE NOT SPECIFIC
MAGIC FOOT
I'M TERRIFIC WHEN I MAKE A WORD
WITH MY FOOT
MAGIC FOOT

BARFEE/.ALL

MAGIC FOOT (MAGIC FOOT, MAGIC FOOT)
MAGIC FOOT
MAGIC FOOT, MAGIC FOOT
DON'T GO KAPUT FOOT
MAGIC FOOT (MAGIC FOOT, MAGIC FOOT)
WRITE THE GODDAMN LETTER.
MAGIC FOOT (MAGIC FOOT, MAGIC FOOT)
IT'S AN ALPHABETTER WAY TO SPELL.

BARFEE

Take me home!

BARFEE/ALL

MAGIC FOOT (MAGIC FOOT, MAGIC FOOT)
WRITE THAT LETTER.
MAGIC FOOT (MAGIC FOOT, MAGIC FOOT)
WRITE THE PERFECT LETTER.
MAGIC FOOT (MAGIC FOOT, MAGIC FOOT)
IT'S AN ALPHABETTER WAY TO...

BARFEE
SPELL-

COMPANY
MAGIC FOOT
MAGIC FOOT
MAGIC FOOT

ALL

FOOT!

(Playoff music)

COMPANY
MAGIC FOOT MAGIC FOOT MAGIC FOOT

OPTIONAL AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER

Rona comment from list, at discretion of actor playing Rona.

-Panch/Speller ad lib on word, definition, sentence from list, at discretion of actor playing Panch.

Outcome as appropriate, including sung Goodbye variation if speller eliminated

PANCH

Miss Park

RONA

Miss Park skipped fourth and fifth grades. She's on track to become the youngest high school freshman in parochial school history.

PANCH

RACONTEUR

PARK

Raconteur. May I have a definition please?

PANCH

"one who excels in telling anecdotes"

PARK

Thank you. May I have a sentence, please?

PANCH

“The famed British playwright Joe Orton was considered quite the raconteur before being bludgeoned to death by his bald lover.”

PARK

Thank you. Raconteur. R-a-c-o-n-t-e-u-r. Raconteur.

PANCH

correct

RONA

Miss Park is all business

MARCY

I am not.

PANCH

Mr. Tolentino

CHIP

(caught up in his fantasy)

Marigold...

Marigold Coneybear..

That's a really fuzzy sweater, Marigold..

(Eg)

PANCH

Chip. Chip.

CHIP

Sorry – is it my turn to spell?

RONA

A rare break in concentration from Mr. Tolentino

CHIP

Um, can you maybe skip me now and ask me two in a row later?

PANCH

Why would you want to do that?

CHIP
I'd rather not say?

PANCH
You can either take your turn now or forfeit.

CHIP
I'll take my turn now

RONA
Another excellent decision by the incumbent

PANCH
TITTUP

CHIP
what?

PANCH
The word is: TITTUP.

CHIP
definition please

PANCH
It means "lively movement or behavior", or "to move restlessly." It refers to the sound of horses hooves. -tittup, tittup, tittup.

CHIP
Tittup. T...I... (*reluctantly, but he knows it*)T...U Oh wait. Two ts. I said both, right?
Backing up, T-I-T-T-U-P . Tittup.

ding

PANCH
I'm sorry, the correct spelling is T-I-T-T-U-P. Tittup.

CHIP
That's exactly what I said.

PANCH
No you said "T-I-T-U- Oh wait, two ts...

CHIP

No, but, I wasn't sure if you *heard* both ts. I obviously know how to spell it

PANCH

(*can overlap above*)

"If you start to spell a word you may start over..."

ALL

...but the sequence of letters already spoken may not be changed"

CHIP

(*can overlap above*)

That's not fair. I got it right. I can't get out on a word I spelled right.

MITCH

LIFE IS RANDOM AND UNFAIR

LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

CHIP

I said *two t's*. I *won* last year.

MITCH

THAT'S THE REASON WE DESPAIR

MITCH/SPELLERS

LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

LIFE IS PANDEMONIUM

MITCH

You can't comfort these damn kids. They don't yet know that the good don't always win, so there's nothing you can say to cheer them up when they lose. I want to tell them disappointment doesn't last—but from what I've seen disappointment lasts like hell. I want to tell them words don't matter; but from what I've seen words can get you killed. I want to beat them up a little, so they understand that pain has degrees, and this is nothing—this is nothing, you little freaks. But I can't do that, so I do what I can. I give them a hug and a juice box. I'm here to give comfort. Let's go.

CHIP

Miss Peretti, can I have one more chance? Please?

ding

MITCH

Let's go kid.

SPELLERS

GOODBYE
GOODBYE, GOODBYE, GOODBYE
GOODBYE, GOODBYE, GOODBYE ...

RONA

GOOD LORD,
THAT'S WHAT'S SWELL ABOUT SPELLING BEES.
I AM FLOORED
BY HOW LAST YEAR'S BIG CHEESE
BECOMES THIS YEAR'S DISASTER.
AND EXITS WITH NEW HUMILITY.

IT'S A WIDE-OPEN JAMBOREE
WHEN THE WINNERS LOSE SURPRISINGLY.
NOW, I LOVE WHAT I SEE.
I SEE HOPE AND POSSIBILITY.
WHEN THE FAVORITE LOSES 1-2-3,

SPELLERS

Bye!

RONA

THAT'S MY FAVORITE MOMENT OF THE BEE.

PANCH CALLS AUDIENCE VOLUNTEER

RONA: M[r/s] [audience volunteer name] could take it all

Word given to last remaining audience volunteer, volunteer is told there is no known definition. Audience member usually spells the word "correctly"—ie, unless their answer is entirely implausible they are retained, to the great surprise of Panch and Rona, amazed at the volunteer's good spelling.

Same volunteer is immediately called again. He/She is given a conspicuously difficult word. Mitch rises before spelling even begins.

After bell - Mitch comes out and sings to last aud volunteer

MITCH

MY FRIEND, YOU WILL BE MISSED
BUT NOW GO WITH DIGNITY
THIS ENDS BUT FIRST ON OUR LIST.
YOU'RE SCREWED
BUT HERE COMES THE TWIST:
YOU CAN GO WITH PRIDE

YOU'VE BEEN THE BEST-LOOKING DUDE WE'VE HAD ALL DAY.
YOU'RE A REAL SMART DUDE AS WELL
NOW GO HOME AND SPELL.
GIVE YOUR SQUEEZE SOME AFFECTION.
C'MON MAKE A CONNECTION
SPELL WITH PATIENCE AND CARE.
THAT DUDE IS MY PRAYER

KIDS

(with audience invited to join in?)

GOODBYE GOODBYE GOODBYE GOODBYE GOODBYE

MITCH

YOU NEED THE STRENGTH TO PRETEND IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
TRY TO LOOK LIKE YOU DON'T CARE.
TRY NOT TO CRY, DUDE
IN FRONT OF A BROTHER
DON'T EMBARRASS YOUR MOTHER.
MAKE YOUR EXIT WITH CARE.
THAT IS MY

ALL

PRAYER

MITCH

GOODBYE GOODBYE.

ALL

GOODBYE, GOODBYE,
GOODBYE, GOODBYE. ETC.

*Chip enters lobby.
kids on stage get to take a break during below*

PANCH

Snack break.

CHIP

(ad libs along these lines)

Snack break.

Snack break.

Chocolate chip cookies. M&Ms. All one dollar.

Any takers? Anybody? *(Pause.)*

I know- can you believe they make me do this? So humiliating.

Screw it. Who wants free candy?

Goobers! M & M's!

IT IS TRADITION

THAT THE PERSON ELIMINATED

FROM THE COMPETITION,

IS FAIR-GAME FOR DERISION,

ESPECIALLY THE ALPHA MALE,

WHO'LL SELL GOODIES IN THE BAKE SALE.

ANYONE FOR BROWNIES?

ANYONE FOR CHOC'LATE CHIPS?

ANYONE FOR ANYTHING THAT ISN'T DATED?

HOW COULD I

HAVE BEEN

ELIM-

INATED?

YOU WANNA KNOW HOW?

YOU WANNA KNOW HOW?

YOU WANNA KNOW WHY?

MY UNFORTUNATE ERECTION

IS DESTROYING MY PERFECTION.

IT IS MY RECOLLECTION

THAT EVERYTHING I ONCE DID

I DID PERFECTLY.

Last year's champ defeated!

BECAUSE OF

MARIGOLD CONEYBEAR.

CHIP (*cont'd*)

BECAUSE THERE'S SOMETHING
AND NOT A THING BETWEEN US.
I DON'T BLAME MY BRAIN,
BUT I DO BLAME MY PENIS.

MY UNFORTUNATE PROTUBERANCE
SEEMS TO HAVE IT'S OWN EXUBERANCE.
ANYONE FOR M & MS?
DELICIOUS AND APPROPRIATE.
ANYONE FOR CHEWY GOOBERS?
EXPENSIVE.
ANYONE FOR BUYING THE SHIT THAT I'M SELLING,
BECAUSE MY STIFFY HAS RUINED MY SPELLING?

ERECTION,
ERECTION,
MY UNFORTUNATE ERECTION.
WHOA.
IS RUINING MY LIFE,
IS RUINING MY WORLD,
IS RUINING MY RUINING,
RUINING, RUINING MY LIFE.
MY LIFE!

ADULTHOOD BRINGS IT'S OWN PECULIAR REJECTION,
WHICH IS WHY I'M SELLING THIS P.T.A. CONFECTION.
IT WILL RUIN YOUR COMPLEXION.
ALL BECAUSE OF MY UNFORTUNATE
ERECTION.
OH GOD

at end he's throwing things—candy packages into audience.

BARFEE

See you next year.
(*hits him - boop*)

Chip throws package of peanut M&Ms at Barfee

BARFEE

What are you nuts!
(*sees what it is*)
Huh! You threw the yellow ones!

BARFEE (*cont'd*)

Will someone pick up the yellow ones? I can't be near the peanuts!

Olive comes and picks up the package. Gives it back to Chip.

BARFEE

You could be disqualified for that—if you hadn't already been eliminated!

Rona separates the kids—tells Chip to go back to comfort room.

CHIP

You know something, Barf: I may have lost, but *you* are the biggest loser here
(*walks away*)

BARFEE

Oh yeah? Well, that is a common misperception.

OLIVE

Sorry about that- William, right? I'm Olive.

BARFEE

I know your name. Look, I do not need pity from a person named after a vegetable.

OLIVE

It's a fruit.

BARFEE

Well it's a disgusting fruit, and I can't keep them down.

OLIVE

Oh.

BARFEE

I guess it's okay for a name though.

OLIVE

Did you know that if you switch the first two vowels in "olive" it becomes "I love" ?

BARFEE

(*thinks about it*)

Did you know that if you switch the first two vowels in "William" it becomes "William"?

OLIVE

Yeah but you can switch the next two –then it's "will aim".

BARFEE
Are these really the kind of things you think about?

OLIVE
Um. Yeah?

BARFEE
Okay.
I'm more of a science guy myself

OLIVE
Well you're also a really great speller.

BARFEE
Yeah? Thanks.

Olive goes to join the others.

BARFEE
(after they have parted)
"Olive." "I love." – That's so retarded.

Adults re-enter

RONA
Ladies and gentlemen our final spellers

*Spellers enter to individual fanfare- could even be onstage musician who would be
announced as reed club- to play fanfare*

RONA
Home schooled from the Basin, Leaf Coneybear:

CONEYBEAR
Mom, I'm in the finals!!

RONA
From our Lady of Intermittent Sorrows, Miss Marcy Park

MARCY
I'm not all business

RONA
From Cold Spring Country Day, Mr. William Barfee

BARFEE

(Ad lib frustration)

RONA

From Garrison Elementary Miss Olive Ostrovsky

OLIVE

(silent "What")

RONA

And from the Magna Magnet Grammar School, Miss Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre.

SCHWARZY

I'd like to take one moment to thank my two fathers Daniel Schwartz and Carl Grubenierre who've been so supportive of me and all my endeavors.
Thank you dads.

as they're fixing her up

CARL

WE HATE LOSERS.

[Dan *(agreeing)* No one likes a loser]

WHICH IS WHY WE DISCIPLINE.

GOD HATES LOSERS

[D:But you are a winner.]

BECAUSE LOSERS DO NOT KNOW HOW TO WIN.

[D: And we have faith in you, honey

SCHWARZY

I HOPE YOU CAN LOVE ME, AMERICA.

I'M GUNNING FOR FIRST PRIZE.

HERE'S WHY YOU SHOULD LOVE ME, AMERICA:

MY NEEDS I CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE.

I MAKE MYSELF CRAZY

BEING WHAT MY DADS HOPE I'LL BE.

BUT WHAT ABOUT ME, DADS?

WHAT ABOUT ME?

JESUS CHRIST, WHAT ABOUT ME?

CARL

Practice your breathing, Logainne.

SCHWARZY

THOUGH I PRACTICE YOGA, I DON'T BREATHE

I TRY NOT TO DISAPPOINT,

BUT STILL I

SCHWARZY (*COND*)

DISAPPOINT THE DADS
WHO MY FRIENDS MOCK.
KIDS ARE MEAN, KIDS'LL TALK.
I SEE ALL MY "FRIENDS"
ROLL THEIR EYES
SO INCREDIBLY PETTY.
BECAUSE MY DADS ARE MY DADS
AND ALRIGHT ENOUGH ALREADY.

SCHWARZY/SPELLERS

WOE IS ME
WOE IS ME

SCHWARZY

WHICH IS WHY I GOTTA WIN THIS SPELLING BEE

CARL: (*wanting Logainne to pose by herself*): Take another one for her B.M.

SCHWARZY: Dad!

DAN: Don't call her that, Carl.

CARL: Sorry. Her "Birth Mother"

SCHWARZY: Peggy Jenkins.

DAN: Who'd be very proud if she could see you spell.

SCHWARZY

MY BIRTH MOTHER LIVES IN KANSAS, MO.
IN A TRAILER, IN A PARK.
TORNADOS.

SCHWARZY

EVERY NOW AND THEN SHE SENDS A CARD.
"LIFE AND MEN," SHE WRITES, "ARE HARD."
SHE WOULD LIKE TO MEET WHEN I'VE GROWN.
AND (*HOLDING OUT THE BREASTS OF HER JACKET*)
I'VE BURST LIKE A COMET.
I'M SO STRESSED BY MY STRESS
I JUST WANT TO UP AND VOMIT.

SCHWARZY/SPELLERS

WOE IS ME
WOE IS ME
WHICH IS WHY I GOTTA WIN THIS SPELLING BEE

DADS/SPELLERS

BE SMART
BE COOL
BE AN ADULT
BE REMARKABLY ADROIT

DADS/SPELLERS

IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS

SCHWARZY
WOE IS ME
WOE IS ME

DADS/SPELLERS
BE SMART, BE COOL
BE SMART, BE COOL

SCHWARZY/ DADS/SPELLERS

WHICH IS WHY WE GOTTA WIN
WHICH IS WHY SHE'S GOTTA WIN
THIS SPELLING BEE.

SPELLING MONTAGE

PANCH

Miss Schwarzandgrubeniere. Please spell Indicant.

SCHWARZY
(to a beat)

Indicant. I-N-D-I-C-A-N-T. Indicant.

PANCH

Correct. Mr. Coneybear. Vulpine

CONEYBEAR
(faster)

Vulpine. V-u-l-p-i-n-e. Vulpine

PANCH

Miss Ostrovsky
Hallux.

continues to speed up, fast mo:

Hallux?	OLIVE
Hallux.	PANCH
h-a-l-l-u-x hallux.	OLIVE
Mr. Barfee. Palaver.	PANCH
Yes, of course, one moment please. P-a-l-a-v-e-r. Palaver. <i>palaver- fast mo magic foot and spelled correctly</i>	BARFEE
That's correct.	PANCH
I know.	BARFEE
Miss Park. Rooibos	PANCH
<i>Rooibos</i>	PARK <i>(extremely sped up, she spells correctly)</i>
<i>tilapia</i>	PANCH/SCWHARZY <i>extremely sped up back and forth and spelling correctly</i>
	PANCH/CONEYBEAR <i>(incomprehensibly fast word and spelling)</i>
<i>.B.I.C</i>	PANCH/OLIVE <i>(spelling starts incomprehensibly fast and becomes slow mo at very end)</i>

PANCH

Slow-mo
Mr. Barfee

BARFEE

Mr. Barfee

PANCH

Please spell weevil

BARFEE

Yes, of course. W-E-E-V-I-L. Weevil.

back to fastest yet for next round, line up

PANCH: That is correct. Miss SchwarzandGrubeniere, please spell Peregrine.

SCHWARZY: Part of speech

PANCH: Noun.

CONEYBEAR: Chloro- what?

PANCH: Form

OLIVE: from the tupi?

PANCH: No.

BARFEE: yes, of course?

PANCH: of course.

PARK: Could you use it in a sentence?

PANCH: Yes.

SCHWARZY L-I

CONEYBEAR: V-A

OLIVE: Q-U

BARFEE: M-N

PARK: P-E. Clepe.

PANCH

*That is correct
Mr. Coneybear
That is correct
Miss Park
That is correct, that is correct,
that is correct, that is correct,
That is correct correct correct correct
Correct correct correct correct
Correct correct correct correct*

bell rings

PANCH

I'm sorry, that is incorrect.

gasp

CONEYBEAR

It is?

PANCH

the correct spelling is y-e-o-m-a-n . yeoman

CONEYBEAR

I HEAR THE BELL.
THAT, I THINK, IS NOT AN INVITING SOUND:
THAT LITTLE DING.
TO ME IT BRINGS
A PLAINTIVE AIR.
I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT LIFE WAS FAIR.
I MEAN I NEVER FELT A SMIDGEON OF DESPAIR.
THEY SAY A BELL CAN BREAK YOUR HEART;
BUT JUST NOT MINE,
SINCE I O-PINE
I THINK- I KNOW- I'M SMART
Apple juice please.

Coneybear shakes Mitch's hand and exits

PANCH

Mr. Barfee

BARFEE

Mr. Barfee

RONA

Mr. Barfee has a sea anemone circus in his basement.

BARFEE

My fake mom Sheila thinks my hobbies are weird, but my real mom Joan says the science will one day payoff. And I will grow up to be incredibly handsome.

PANCH

Antihistamine

BARFEE

Luck of the draw.
A-N-T-I-H-I-S-T-A-M-I-N-E.
Antihistamine Mr. Pancheee

PANCH

Doug Panch.

BARFEE

Will Barfee

PANCH

Miss Park

RONA

Miss Park speaks five languages.

MARCY

No I don't

RONA

Don't you?

MARCY

No.

RONA

Well it also says that you won your school's handwriting competition.

MARCY

And does it say that I only sleep three hours a night, and I hide in the bathroom cabinet, and I'm not allowed to cry?

RONA

No, it doesn't say that.

MARCY

Well, it should. And it should say...

MARCY

I SPEAK *SIX* LANGUAGES. (RONA: Ah. Six.)
EVERY LANGUAGE EASY
EASY AS THE RECIPE FOR MAKING JELLO.
I SPEAK SIX LANGUAGES
AND I CAN SAY HELLO
IN AT LEAST SEVEN MORE.

RONA

It does say you're an athlete

MARCY

TO EXCEL IN ATHLETICS IS NOT DIFFICULT IF ONE HAS THE
TEMPERAMENT.
APPARENTLY I HAVE THE TEMPERAMENT.
YES I SCORE SOME GOALS.
SO UNFAZED AM I,
AS MY LIFE UNSCROLLS
UNAMAZED AM I
I DON'T LIKE TO BRAG
AND I WON'T CAUSE I DON'T HAVE TO BUT
I SPEAK SIX LANGUAGES.
ALL AMERICAN IN HOCKEY.
AND ANYTHING I DO I DO WITHOUT GETTING SORE.
I SPEAK SIX LANGUAGES
AND I LIKE THE THEME FROM "ROCKY"
THOUGH I PLAY MOZART MORE.

MARCY

I ACHIEVE MY GOALS;
SO UNFAZED AM I.
AS MY LIFE UNSCROLLS
UNAMAZED AM I.
WINNING IS A JOB

GIRLS

OH AH

WINNING IS A JOB

MARCY (*cont'd*)
FROM WHICH GET NO REAL ENJOYMENT, BUT

JE PEUX PARLER SIX LANGUAGES
CADA IDIO MAES SIMPLE
JERRO OH YO NO RESHIPE NO YESASHESADES
YA GAVARU SHETZ YATZUKIM
V'ANI YODAT SHALOM

GIRLS (*cont'd*)
AND I GET NO
REAL ENJOYMENT
OOH OOH

SA SHA DES
YA ZI KI
YOR DAT SHALOM
IM NOCH
MINDESTENS SIEBEN

Marcy goes and plays piano.

MARCY
I AM SO SICK AND TI-RED
OF ALWAYS BEING THE BEST
AND THE BRIGHTEST AT EVERY MASS.
SIX LOUSY LANGUAGES!
AND FOR MY HEIGHT I'M THE LIGHTEST
OF THE GIRLS IN MY CLASS.

MARCY
I KNOW SIX LANGUAGES
THAT'S ONE, TWO,
THREE, FOUR,
FIVE,
SIX !

GIRLS
SHE KNOWS SIX LANGUAGES
SHE KNOWS, SHE KNOWS
SHE KNOWS, SHE KNOWS
SHE KNOWS
SIX!

RONA
That is very impressive- especially the piano.

PANCH
Miss Park the word is Camouflage.

MARCY
Camouflage. Dear Jesus, can't you come up with a harder word than that?

JESUS
(*from offstage*)
Of course I can, my child

JESUS appears, played by actor playing Chip

MARCY
Jesus?

JESUS
Marcy?

MARCY
Wow – Jesus- hi !

JESUS
Hi

MARCY
How are you?

JESUS
I’m good. -Is that your prayer, Marcy, for a more difficult word?

MARCY
Well yeah it was but now that you’re here can I ask for something better?

JESUS
I’m here for you now Marcy. *C’est pour toi que je suis ici.*

MARCY
Jesus... I was wondering what would happen if I *didn’t* win today.

JESUS
What do you think would happen?

MARCY
I don’t know, but what I mean is, would you be disappointed with me if I lost?

JESUS
Of course not- but Marcy? I also won’t be disappointed with you if you win.

MARCY
You’re saying it’s up to me then?

JESUS
Yes, and also, this isn’t the kind of thing I care very much about.

MARCY

Camouflage. C-A-M. . . O-U (*still deciding*) F-L. . .A. . .J (*and as soon as she dares miss the first letter, she takes more and more joy in getting it wrong*) . . .Z!! . . .H!!! Camaflajzh!
ding

MARCY

I BLEW THAT WORD.
I BLEW THAT WORD
PRAISE JESUS!
LIFE HAS SUCH POSSIBILITY
HERE'S WHERE I BEGIN
THE BEST SPELLER WON'T NECESSARILY WIN!!
I WON'T WIN! I WON'T WIN!
I WON'T WIN! I WON'T WIN!

GIRLS

SHE BLEW THAT WORD
PRAISE JESUS!

SHE WON'T WIN
GOODBYE!

MITCH approaches MARCY.

SHE leaps joyfully into his arms and HE carries her offstage

RONA

Three spellers remain!

PANCH

Miss Schwarzendgrubeniere.

SCHWARZY

Dads! I'm in the final three!

Olive's cell phone rings.

RONA

Ladies and gentlemen please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and

OLIVE

Oh -it's me-It's my dad- can I answer?

PANCH

I'm afraid we can't let you do that.

OLIVE

Well could one of you maybe answer to tell him I made the finals. (*confidentially*) And that I need the twenty-five dollar entrance fee.

RONA

Let's allow it this once.

Miss Ostrovsky's line Rona speaking. Just one minute, Logainne.

as Rona takes the call

SCHWARZY

(weekly ad lib about interruption)

For example: Doesn't anybody care about the rules here? This bee is as archaic as the conclave process. You know, I've been reading about our new pope, Pope Benedict; and as a progressive, half Jewish biracial child of two gay fathers, I don't believe this pope has my best interest in mind.

RONA

All right, I'll let her know.

PANCH

Can we get back to spelling?

SCHWARZY

I'm waiting for my word.

PANCH

I gave you a word.

SCHWARZY

No you didn't.

PANCH

Didn't I give her a –

KIDS/RONA/MITCH

No-

PANCH

My apologies. Sluice.

SCHWARZY

(maybe on her own she foregoes pronouncing this one)

Sluice. May I have a definition?

PANCH

It's an artificial passage for water with a valve or gate for regulating flow.

SCHWARZY

And are there any alternate definitions?

PANCH

Yes- a channel to drain or carry off surplus water

SCHWARZY

Hm. Are there any alternate definitions?

PANCH

Yes it's a body of water pent up behind a floodgate.

SCHWARZY

Are there any alternate definitions?

PANCH

Why don't you quit stalling and spell the damn word!

RONA

Principal Panch!

PANCH

Vice Principal Panch! Vice Principal! They won't let me be principal.

BARFEE

I wonder why.

SCHWARZY

(very upset, over the rest)

SLUICE. S-L-U-I-C-E. SLUICE!

RONA

That is correct. (to panch) What is wrong with you?

Panch stumbles off stage with Mitch and Rona assisting him. Carl Dad comes on stage from in the audience.

CARL

Breathe, Logainne. That's okay, you're okay, buck up (*as he pours a can of coke on the floor*) Oh that's no good (*aside to Schwarzy*) Let that dry. The foot, we have to disable the foot.

SCHWARZY

What foot?

CARL

The magic foot.

SCHWARZY

Wouldn't that be wrong?

CARL

Do you want to win?

SCHWARZY

Yes, but I believe in ethical conduct

CARL

And isn't having a magic foot an unfair *advantage*

SCHWARZY

I don't have a magical foot.

RONA

Can we have all parents in their seats please. This is not a soccer game.

SCHWARZY

(*to Olive*)

You're lucky your parents are far away.

OLIVE

No only my mom is – in India. My dad's coming from work.

PANCH

I apologize for that irregularity. I have a niacin condition. Miss Ostrovsky.

OLIVE

(*to Rona*)

What did my dad say?

RONA

Oh your dad says he's running late- and he'll discuss the entrance fee with you when he picks you up.

OLIVE
But did he say what time he was going to get here?

PANCH
Chimerical

OLIVE
What was the word?

PANCH
Chimerical.

OLIVE
Can I have a definition?

PANCH
It means unreal. imaginary. visionary. wildly fanciful. highly unrealistic
Olive sees an image of her mother- played by Rona

RONA as OLIVE'S MOM
OOOH OOH OOH OOH OOH OOH

OLIVE
IF I GO TO WASHINGTON
WILL I BE ON MY OWN?
BECAUSE IF I GO TO WASHINGTON
WHO WILL BE MY CHAPERONE ?

OLIVE'S MOM
WE ALWAYS KNEW YOU WERE A WINNER.
WE SAW IT WHEN YOU SMILED.
START FROM THE BEGINNING,
WHEN YOU WERE A BEGINNER.
YOU WERE A PERFECT CHILD.

WE ALWAYS KNEW, WE ALWAYS KNEW, YOU WERE A CHAMPION.
YOUR SADNESS FILLED MY ROOM.
DEAR, IF YOU SHOULD FEEL MY GLOOM
BLAME IT ON ME
BLAME IT ON YOUR DADDILY AND MAMMILY
CAUSE DEPRESSION RUNS IN OUR FAMILY.
I-I-I LOVE YOU
I-I-I LOVE YOU
I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU DEAR

OLIVE'S MOM (*cont'd*)

AND I SWEAR IT IS TRUE
I-I-I LOVE YOU

OLIVE'S DAD (played by MITCH)

I-I LOVE YOU.

OLIVE

And my dad says.

OLIVE'S PARENTS

I LOVE YOU
I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU BABY
AND MAYBE IT'S TRUE:
THAT I LOVE YOU.

OLIVE

I WROTE YOU A LETTER,
HOW I FOUND THE SPELLING BEES SUCH FUN.
MAMA, MAMA, MAMA,
BUT YOU DIDN'T REACT.
AND YOU NEVER ASKED ME
IF I'D JOIN YOU IN THE BOMBAY SUN.
MAMA, MAMA, MAMA,
I HAD QUIETLY PACKED.

WHEN ARE YOU RETURNING?
I KNOW WE AGREED
TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING
MA, I HAVE,
OH GOD,
THIS NEED...

I THINK DAD IS ANGRY, MA,
AND I DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO.
MAMA, MAMA, MAMA
SHANTI, SHANTI, AND OM.
I THINK HE TAKES OUT ON ME
WHAT HE WANTS TO TAKE OUT ON YOU.
MAMA, MAMA, MAMA,
HOW I WISH YOU WERE HOME
HOW I WISH YOU WERE HOME
HOW I WISH YOU WERE
WISH YOU WERE
HOME---

OLIVE'S PARENTS
WE ALWAYS KNEW YOU WERE A WINNER

OLIVE
HOW I WISH YOU WERE HOME

OLIVE'S MOM
A BATHING BEAUTY YOU

OLIVE
HOW I WISH YOU WERE
HOW I WISH YOU WERE HOME

OLIVE'S DAD
GOD, WE LOVED THE WAY YOU GREW,

OLIVE
HOW I WISH YOU WERE
HOW I WISH YOU WERE HOME

DAD
SINCE YOU WERE BORN

MOM
OLIVE, WE COULDN'T BE PROUDER
PLEASE LET ME SAY IT
ONE TIME LOUDER.

OLIVE
MAMA, MAMA, MAMA
HOW I WISH YOU WERE HOME!

OLIVE AND PARENTS
I-I-I LOVE YOU.
I-I-I LOVE YOU.
I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU BABY (DEAR)

MOM
AND I SWEAR IT'S TRUE

DAD
MAYBE IT'S TRUE

OLIVE'S PARENTS
I LOVE YOU
I LOVE YOU
I LOVE YOU
I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU BABY (DEAR)

OLIVE
MAMA
I LOVE YOU
MAMA MAMA MAMA

MOM
AND I SWEAR IT'S TRUE

DAD
MAYBE IT'S TRUE

OLIVE'S PARENTS
THAT I LOVE...

OLIVE
Chimerical. C-H-I-M-E-R-I-C-A-L. Highly unrealistic. Wildly fanciful.

PANCH
That is correct.

OLIVE AND PARENTS
I LOVE YOU.

PANCH
Mr. Barfee.

BARFEE
Mr. Barfée
(He doesn't respond)
PANCH

Crepuscule
BARFEE
Crepuscule? One moment please.

SCHWARZY
William. William.

BARFEE
Shut up! *(with the magic foot)* C. R. E. P. Crep. U. S.

He slips on the sabotage substance.
Ew. There's something sticky. I'll take it from after the crep.
He tries again
U. S.
He slips again

PANCH
We need a spelling now.

Can I wash off my foot first?	BARFEE
Now, William.	RONA
<i>(reluctantly)</i> May I have a definition?	BARFEE
Twilight. <i>(reluctantly)</i> Can you use it in a sentence?	BARFEE
“She thought she was walking into the dawn, but it turned out—it was the crepuscule.”	RONA
C-R-E-P- Crep. U-S-C-U-L-E. Crepuscule?	BARFEE
That is correct. Miss Schwarzandgrubeniere	PANCH
Mom, I did it without the foot.	BARFEE
I’d just like to say, Carl Dad-I can do this on my own.	SCHWARZY <i>(cleans up coke)</i>
VUG.	PANCH
Vug? That’s the whole word?	SCHWARZY
Vug.	PANCH
Language of origin?	SCHWARZY <i>(as she writes word on her arm)</i>
Cornish dialect, a Latin derivative	PANCH

SCHWARZY

Cornish. That's like English with Dutch influence. (*continues writing on arm*)
Vug. V-u-g-g-h-e. Vugghe

ding

PANCH

I'm sorry, the correct answer is V-U-G. Vug.

SCHWARZY

So simple?

PANCH

So simple.

SCHWARZY

Oh, dads. I'm so sorry. I overcomplicated. I'm sorry.
I HOPE YOU STILL LOVE ME, AMERICA.
AMERICA, I GAVE IT MY BEST TRY.
IF YOU STILL DON'T LOVE ME AMERICA
I UNDERSTAND WHY.
YOU HATE LOSERS.
SO DO I.
I'M A LOSER SO GOODBYE.

MITCH

GOODBYE

SCHWARZY

GOODBYE

MITCH

GOODBYE

SCHWARZY

GOODBYE

MITCH

GOODBYE

MITCH & SCHWARZY

GOODBYE.

She collapses into Mitch who gently escorts her off

RONA

How exciting!

PANCH

Will the final two spellers please step forward.

--Now the rules state that we continue spelling until someone misses a word- at that point, the final speller must spell the next word correctly in order to win the bee.

RONA

OH BOY!
AND OH GIRL!
ONLY TWO REMAIN.
I FEEL JOY BUT I ALSO FEEL PAIN
BECAUSE I KNOW WHAT'S COMING.
JOY NEVER COMES FOR FREE.

IN A MOMENT HE OR SHE
WILL ENTER SPELLING HISTORY,
FEELING TRIUMPH AND GLEE.
IN THIS MOMENT OF PERFECT SYZYGY.
I HEAR TRIUMPHANT SOUNDS OF TYMPANI
IT'S MY FAVORITE MOMENT OF THE BEE

PANCH

Mr. Barfee

underscoring and spelling sequence begin

Coryza

BARFEE

Coryza.

PANCH

Ilspile

OLIVE

Ilspile.

PANCH

Zoonosis

BARFEE

(for Olive's benefit)

Zoonosis. Does that happen to be the longest word that can be turned upside down and it's still the same word?

PANCH

Fabaceae.

OLIVE

(for Barfee's benefit)

Fabaceae. And does that happen to be the longest word that can be played on a musical instrument?

PANCH

Chromatophore.

BARFEE

Chromatophore. And if you were to rearrange the letters of that word, would you be able to form the phrase: "Mr. Pooh ate a roc"?

*As Panch and Rona look thoroughly baffled ("Is that a phrase?")
Olive and Barfee go head to head*

OLIVE

"Or, Cheap hoot, Mr."

BARFEE

"Hop home carrot"

OLIVE

"Rap home cohort."

PANCH

Mr. Barfee. Please spell Astrobleme.

OLIVE

I'M LOVING EVERY MINUTE.

BARFEE

Astrobleme.

OLIVE

WHO KNEW I HAD THIS THIRST?

A-S-T BARFEE

OLIVE
TO THINK THAT I MIGHT WIN IT
IS ASTOUNDING NEWS
AND I'M ABOUT TO BURST.

R-O Astro BARFEE

OLIVE
HOW WONDERFUL IT FEELS
TO STAND SO CLOSE TO FIRST.

B-L-E BARFEE

OLIVE
I'LL MAKE IT HAPPEN
--AND *NOT* AS PREVIOUSLY RECKONED
CAUSE I WILL NOT COME IN SECOND!
I HATE TO COME IN SECOND
YES I DO YES I DO YES I DO YES I DO
I WILL NOT COME IN SECOND.

M-E. Astrobleme. BARFEE

PANCH
Correct. Miss Ostrovsky. Elanguescence.

Olive ostensibly asks pronunciation and language of origin questions during below

BARFEE
AM I A RED SOCK OR A YANKEE
WHO WILL COME IN SECOND
PEOPLE ARE SCARED OF ME
AND NO ONE REALLY LIKES ME;
I WON'T COME IN SECOND.
HEY OLIVE, DON'T THINK THAT I'M STARING
AT YOUR EYES AND YOUR SMILE AND YOUR HAIRDO
OH THE THINGS I DO NOT DARE DO;
MY FEARS ARE ODIIOUS AND FECUND.

BARFEE (cont'd)
YOU WILL NOT OUTRANK ME.
I WON'T WAVE MY HANKIE

OLIVE	BARFEE	CHORUS
SECOND	SECOND	
I WON'T COME IN	I WON'T COME IN	
SECOND	SECOND	
SECOND	SECOND	WHO WILL COME IN
I WON'T COME IN	I WON'T COME IN ...	FIRST AND
		WHO WILL COME IN ...

Music continues

OLIVE
Elanguescence. E-l-a-n-g-u-e-s-s-e-n-c-e. Elanguescence.

Ding

Music stops

PANCH
I'm sorry the correct spelling is E-l-a-n-g-u-e-s-c-e-n-c-e

RONA
Now remember no speller can win on another speller's mistake. Mr. Barfee must spell the next word correctly to take the Putnam bee.

PANCH
Are you ready, William?

BARFEE
Yes, thank you Doug, I am ready.

PANCH
Weltanschauung.

BARFEE
Yes of course, Weltanschauung.
Meaning one's personal perspective, your philosophy, the way you look at the world?

PANCH
That is correct

BARFEE
 I know.
 Weltanschauung.
 W... E...L...T...A...N...S...C...H...A...U-
 (*turns and notices Olive*) You...

He hears music.
 FANTASY BALLET: *Barfee and Olive dance*
 CHORUS AAAHs

OLIVE
 I FEEL I'M IN MY GLORY,

 MAMA I MADE A FRIEND.

I'LL LOSE AND THAT'S
 THE STORY,

 BUT WE ARE EQUALS MA
 WHERE NEITHER
 CONDESCENDS.

 I AM
 I AM FINE WITH SECOND.
 I CAN LIVE WITH SECOND
 YES, SECOND
 I WILL COME IN SECOND.

CHORUS

 WHO WILL
 WHO WILL

 COME IN
 SECOND
 SECOND
 OOH
 OOH
 OOH

CHORUS
 WHO WILL COME IN
 WHO WILL COME IN
 WHO WILL COME IN
Etc.

BARFEE

 BUT SHOULD I COME IN
 SECOND?

 BUT SHOULD I COME IN
 SECOND?

 IS SECOND FOR ME ?

 MY FEARS WERE ODIIOUS
 AND FECUND.
 AND SHOULD I THROW
 THE BEE?
 WOULD I BE HAPPY
 SECOND?
 IF FOR EVER EVER EVER
 I WAS ALWAYS STUCK IN
 SECOND
 WILL I COME IN SECOND
 WILL I COME IN ...

OOOH OOH OOH OOH

CHORUS

S-C-H-A-U

BARFEE

(he again looks over at Olive on the you)

OLIVE

It's okay Barf

BARFEE

U-N-G. Weltanschauung

PANCH

We have a winner!

CHORUS

CHAMPION

OUR SENSATIONAL CHAMPION

UN-REPRESENTATIONAL CHAMPION

AT THE PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING

BEE!

PANCH

On behalf of our sponsors "The Putnam Optometrists"- of whom I am a client- we'd like to present you, William Morris Barfay, with this two hundred dollar savings bond toward your future education

BARFEE

I've worked so hard for this moment...*(almost overcome but rallies)* All my life I have only been able to breathe through one nostril and today is no exception!

PANCH is the only one to notice OLIVE in background looking very sad.

PANCH

(making this up on the spot)

And this year there's also a runner-up prize.

RONA

(really didn't know)

There is?

PANCH

Yes, as you know, if for any reason the winner cannot fulfill his duties as Putnam county spelling champ, the Runner Up must step in and assume all spelling responsibilities, so this year our sponsors are also offering a cash prize of twenty-five dollars to the second-place

PANCH (*cont'd*)

finisher. (*after speaking, takes cash out of his wallet and gives it to Olive, bringing her forward from background*) -Nice going, Miss Ostrovsky.

OLIVE

Thank you!

I can't believe it! Thank you!

Olive is really happy about this- she does not catch on to it being gift from Panch- though Rona does.

OLIVE

Miss Peretti - I can pay the fee now !

RONA

(*to Olive*)

Very good.

(*and looking at Panch in a whole new way*) Very good.

She offers her arm, and PANCH and RONA walk off together

OLIVE

(*to Barfee, at end of line*)

Good bee.

BARFEE

Thanks Ostrovsky. You too.

OLIVE

Well, I made a dumb mistake on elanguescence

BARFEE

No no, not really – (*lying*) I wasn't sure how to spell that one either

OLIVE

Hey Barf

BARFEE

Yeah?

OLIVE

Congratulations

Olive gives Barfee a big hug

BARFEE
(as they hug)

oh. of course.

EPILOGUES

PANCH

Vice Principal Panch found a new passion in life. Her name was Rona Lisa Peretti. After courting her tirelessly for over two years, she took out a restraining order on him. Still, he was grateful for the opportunity to experience love.

RONA

Rona Lisa Peretti left Putnam county for a stretch and traveled the world to bring competitive spelling to the less fortunate. She hosted national bees in Latvia, Sweden, and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, where she fell in love with an indigenous cashew farmer and became one of the top realtors in that country.

MITCH

Mitch Mahoney discovered a new talent at the Putnam bee, so he made his community service lifelong, comforting eliminated spellers and frustrated educators across the nation. Over the years he remained in touch with scores of people he had comforted:

ALL

Dear Mitch
(first line of letters)

CHIP

Chip Tolentino made it through adolescence, and in the course of time came to appreciate his erection. –As did many others.

MARCY

Marcy Park continued to explore the freedom of not living up to expectations. She later wrote a book called Not Living Up to Expectations. It did not live up to expectations. She is very happy.

CONEYBEAR

Leaf Coneybear has cats.

SCHWARZY

Logan Schwarzandgrubeniene won the 31st annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, on her 7th try and final year of eligibility. She went on to become Secretary of Education under President Chastity Bono! Her speech therapy was completely successful.

BARFEE

William Morris Barfée studied for Nationals with his new friend Olive Ostrovsky. He came in 42nd. In later years he grew up to be incredibly handsome and to gain fame and notoriety for his pioneering efforts in the combined scientific fields of psychiatry and podiatry, otherwise known as: poschietry.

OLIVE

Olive Ostrovsky reenacted the entire bee for her father in the car ride home. She grew up to be a loving and attentive parent-- and the host of her own radio talk show, where every year she interviewed the runner up of the Putnam County spelling bee.

COMPANY

AT THE 25TH ANNUAL
PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE
WE GREW UP UNDENIABLY
AND LOOK OUR HAIR IS THINNING.
OUR PAST
CAUGHT UP WITH US AT LAST.
BUT IT WAS A VERY NICE
VERY NICE
VERY VERY VERY NICE
VERY NICE
BEGINNING.
25th ANNUAL
25th ANNUAL
PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE.

The company bows.

COMPANY

GOODBYE, GOODBYE, GOODBYE, GOODBYE, GOODBYE...