

The X Factory

Junior Script

by

Gawen Robinson

Ideal Cast Size 50-60

Speaking Roles 31

Minimum Cast Size 25

Duration (minutes) 60 to 80

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PRODUCTION NOTES

STAGING

The acting area can vary according to the space available. It can be a conventional school stage or floor area, with staging built at the back of a floor acting space, or the action can be performed 'in the round' if desired.

Suggestions for scenery are given below. Backdrops can be as simple or elaborate as you wish. However, for a really easy solution and fuss free performance, instant scenery is now available with our digital backdrops: Project It! provides a different backdrop for EVERY scene change and is supplied in both a PowerPoint presentation and as individual JPG files.

Scene One – ‘St Dithers School Assembly’: This scene should look like a school hall and should (preferably) have a piano or keyboard to the side. It could have a backdrop of the St Dithers school logo or school memorabilia etc.

Scene Two – ‘St Dithers Staff Room’: This scene should look as much like a traditional school staff room as possible and can take place either in the centre with a few chairs added, or to the side of the main acting area.

Scene Three – ‘The Schoolyard’: This scene requires no scenery or staging as it is set in a schoolyard. Everyone is standing so it can be set in any open space available.

Scene Four – ‘The School Hall’: This scene is again set in the main school hall (similar to Scene One). This time, Simon Trowel and his team are leading proceedings, so a panel (as in a celebrity game show) would look good. This could be a very simple construction by using card with a design saying ‘X Factory’ on the front of it.

Scene Five – ‘Dance Auditions’: This scene requires an open space so that the dancing can take place. The judges/teachers can be sat behind the panel (similar to Scene Four) where they can sit during the actual auditions and produce their scorecards. The students who have been rejected can sit on the opposite side of the stage or to the front.

Scene Six: – ‘Interlude’: This is essentially a transition scene so that the vocal coaches can replace the dancers. Bant and Beck can be in front of the proceedings as the actors change places behind the panel (similar to the ones used in Scene Four and Five).

Scene Seven – ‘Vocal Auditions’: This scene again uses the panel for the judges/teachers as in the previous scenes. The chair that ‘Will.I.Was’ sits on, however, should be a swivel chair so that he can easily turn around when required (as in ‘The Voice’).

Scene Eight – ‘The Schoolyard’: This scene is similar to Scene Three, as it requires no scenery or staging. The old staff can enter from one of the wings as they are supposed to be outside the school gates. You might have something to represent the gate. A practical alternative might be to move this scene in front of the audition scene so that the panel desk can remain in place.

Scene Nine – ‘After The Auditions’: This scene should look like the aftermath of Scene Seven with the addition of bits of paper (if possible some signed photos of Simon) and rubbish strewn around the floor. You can make this look as messy as possible. It is important that the costumes (hanging up) and the laptop (or sound equipment on Will’s desk space) are left onstage so that the following scene can run directly on from this one.

Scene Ten – ‘Later That Night’: This follows on directly from the previous scene but with the lights slightly dimmed so that it looks like it is the evening. The costumes must be hanging up and the laptop needs to be on the set so that both can be tampered with. There should be places on the set where the rebels can hide.

Scene Eleven – ‘The Showcase’: The scene follows on directly from the previous night-time scene but must look bright and ‘glitzy’. The judges/teachers again sit behind their panel; Will must be next to his laptop/equipment. The old staff should be hidden behind the school piano/keyboard (preferably with musical instruments). Mr Quaver will mime playing the piano to Track 38.

CHOREOGRAPHY/MOVEMENT

- ‘The School Song’:** The students and staff should be sitting or standing still and should look bored. Mr Quaver should be positioned behind the school piano or something that looks like one.
- ‘Average’** During this song the teachers are in one group while the students form another. They should use strong, fist pumping type gestures to emphasise how they feel.
- ‘Average (Reprise)’:** The teachers are again protesting angrily but this time alone. A stage-side Chorus can also join in to increase the volume in the final chorus.
- ‘Rap Pack’:** Emma and Rachel need to adopt ‘hip-hop’ movements and actions during this short rap. They can follow the suggestion within the lyrics for things such as ‘Taking Selfies’, being on their phones and pointing in a rap style.
- ‘The X Factor’:** This song is lively and punchy and requires lots of posing and character acting from the soloists. During the chorus a suggestion would be for the cast to cross their arms on the words ‘X Factor’ and to move in a simple series of steps if you wish.
- ‘Tango 1’:** A short tango step featuring Bruno, who wildly dances around Dusty in a very entertaining, exuberant style.

- ‘Tango 2’:** A longer tango built around the plot where the celebrity teachers are judging the couples. Daphne and Chad are competent, if a little highly strung. Davey is very exaggerated in his movements much to Sophie’s annoyance, while Fraser and Izzy are just comically incompetent.
- ‘Blue Skies’:** This is a solo song and should be performed with as much character as possible by the performer (Jenny Lane).
- ‘Rap Pack Audition’:** Emma and Rachel are now joined by Joe who does his ‘own thing’ with as much exaggerated comedy as possible.
- ‘Be Alive’:** This song is a big chorus, show-stopping number and should feature some dance moves by the dancers. It has a driving, rock rhythm and would suit sharp, dynamic movements.
- ‘Brand New Day’:** This song has a positive, 80s feel (almost a Madness parody). It should have some simple steps and arm movements to emphasise the upbeat feel and lyrical content.
- ‘The X Factor (Reprise)’:** This short reprise is purely character-driven by the actors.
- ‘Brand New Day’ (Reprise)’:** This song starts with Mr Quaver and his colleagues on their instruments and develops into a big chorus number with movements similar to Track 32.

COSTUMES

This show gives you an opportunity to explore costumes from TV celebrity game shows and either modern or 80s dress to suit the style of the music.

- Mrs Crabtree:** Fairly dowdy, old-fashioned clothes for an elderly headteacher. She could have a long tweed skirt and smart blouse and possibly a cardigan.
- Mr Sprout:** Fairly traditional but not too smart. Perhaps Corduroy trousers and a jacket with elbow patches and a cap. He does not quite match.
- Mr Quaver:** Fairly old-fashioned but friendly-looking music teacher. He could look like an eccentric professor with glasses and a tweed jacket.
- Ms Grimshaw:** Very neat and efficient-looking but fairly gaudy (possibly very pink) and overdressed. Perhaps she might wear winged glasses and have bouffant hair. She could be similar to Professor Umbridge in Harry Potter.
- Miss Blunt:** Extremely smart with glasses. She is younger than Ms Grimshaw but just as efficient and sharp-looking, although less extravagant.

- Mr Potter:** As the deputy head, Harold Potter would have a suit and be very smart. He might have a neat moustache.
- Miss Findley:** Traditional P.E. teacher with tracksuit and pony tail. Possibly she would wear a whistle round her neck.
- Madam Onions:** She is fairly extrovert in nature and might wear fairly garish colours and large knitted cardigans and scarves.
- Mrs Fudge:** Very old, dodderly teacher who is hard of hearing. She would wear drab, grey clothes including a knitted cardigan and a hearing aid.
- Davey:** He might wear very current clothing (or trendily accessorised if using school uniform). He is a bit rebellious so use costume to reflect this.
- Izzy:** She is very bright and well organised and so would have neat clothes that are trendy but also tasteful. If uniform is being used she would wear it well.
- Joe:** He is the computer and gaming expert so he might wear a video game-based cap, hoodie or T-Shirt.
- Fraser:** Fraser is the slightly awkward one. He is mad on sport so might have a football top, hat or scarf. If wearing uniform he might be a little scruffy.
- Emma and Rachel:** These two characters are very trendy and slightly ‘chavvy’ in appearance. This might include make-up; big, exaggerated accessories and jewellery and ‘hip-hop’ style caps and hoodies etc.
- Simon Trowel:** Based upon a certain TV talent show celebrity he would wear a black T-Shirt (with possibly a black jacket) and black trousers with a very high belt.
- Dusty Barrel:** Based upon a certain dance-based TV show judge, Dusty is very glamorous and well-dressed with an evening dress and jewellery.
- Bruno Macaroni:** Based upon another dance-based TV show judge. He is Italian and very well-dressed with a sharp suit and skinny tie. He may wear a buttonhole.
- Craig Rebel-Cardboard:** Another character based upon a dance-based TV show judge. He wears a white shirt with a bow tie and a smart dinner jacket.
- Will.I.Was** Based upon a TV talent show judge and rap star, Will is extremely extrovert and wears very elaborate, fashionable clothing, usually a hat and a trendy street-type jacket. Usually endowed with rings and large jewellery.
- Cherri Cola:** Based upon another TV talent show judge and pop star, she is extremely glamorous with bright lipstick, elaborate jewellery and a choker necklace. She often wears a white jacket although anything glamorous will do.
- Bant and Beck:** These two characters are based on two famous Geordie TV game-show hosts and must look similar in the way they dress.

- Typically they wear white shirts and ties with a dark suit but always the same as each other.
- Sophie Le Brie:** Must look well-dressed and wear expensive clothes. Should look fairly snooty and superior.
- Daphne Gorgonzola:** Very superior and traditionally well-dressed in a really austere way.
- Chadwick Roquefort:** Extremely rich and neatly dressed, perhaps with an Aaron scarf around his neck.
- Jenny Lane:** Jenny is a very talented singer but not big-headed. She would wear more sober and ordinary clothing to reflect her modest nature.
- Wilf Sprocket:** Elderly caretaker, he would wear a very traditional work overall or brown coat and boots.
- Gladys Overall:** Elderly cleaning lady, she would wear a work overall and rubber gloves, and her hair would be tied up with a mop cap or perhaps a large ribbon.
- Safety Inspector:** Very official-looking either with a suit and a clipboard or perhaps smartly dressed with a Hi-Vis jacket on top for health and safety. Very neat and tidy.
- Announcer:** Only appears once and must look very official (perhaps like a BBC announcer). This part could be played by anyone from a teacher to a small child as an extra role.
- Chorus:** The chorus could be dressed either as a distinct group or perhaps in a theme such as 80s colourful outfits or brightly-coloured T-shirts. This is entirely up to you and how you want your show to look.

LIGHTING AND SOUND

Lighting

If stage-type lighting is available, good use could be made of colour, especially in the showcase and the audition scenes, and particularly during the songs. In scenes nine and ten you should attempt to dim the lights to give the effect of early evening and then dusk. The final scene should be the most dramatic in terms of lighting as this emulates a performance. When the performance goes wrong then very random lighting changes would look good, even if it is just turning the hall lights on and off.

Sound

All the music required to stage this production, including sound effects, can be found on both the Vocal and Backing CDs. This includes overture, songs, raps, and all play-on, play-off and underscore music.

As a general principal when playing back these tracks (particularly sound effects), it is best to use reliable media player software which automatically pauses playback between tracks. We recommend iTunes, which works on PC and Mac. It can be downloaded for free from <https://www.apple.com/itunes/>. This results in smooth and seamless playback of all sound cues for an entire show, and is often easier, more flexible and more reliable than using a CD player.

For learning the songs, a fabulous product called **Sing It!** is also available. In CD-ROM or download format, its simultaneous audio/visual presentation can teach the songs to the children without any teacher input. Children can use it at school or at home, saving you valuable time! Most schools use it in class on an interactive white board, or in the school hall on the overhead projector to allow full cast practice.

If Radio mics are available it is best to use them on characters that sing solo parts in songs. Also, if you are using microphones at all, always position them behind the line of main speakers to avoid unnecessary feedback.

Sound Effects (SFX), Songs and Scene Change Music

The sound effects in this show are specifically designed to enhance the mood of the piece although it is sometimes possible to adapt some of them if you prefer live sounds that you can create (e.g. applause and booing). Adapt them freely, if you like, and feel free to experiment with different sounds so that they fit your own production.

If you have the luxury of a live pianist, a full Performance Score is also available (Grade 6), containing songs and all incidental music including overture, play-on, play-off and scene change music.

Scene One – St Dithers School Assembly

- Track 1** (Music) – **Overture**
This is a traditional overture lasting just over a minute to allow the cast on to the stage and to introduce some of the themes to the settling audience.
- Track 2** (Song) – **School Song**
This follows directly from the overture and it is a short, traditional-sounding song performed by the whole staff and students of St Dithers. The chorus can also join in as students. Mrs Crabtree, who scolds Mr. Quaver for improvising in his ‘pop music style’, interrupts the song.
- Track 3** (Music) – **Dramatic Piano Music**
This is a short burst from Mr. Quaver to add drama to the Ofset decision.

Track 4 (Song) – **Average**

Song performed at the end of the scene by the split groups. The teachers form one group while the chorus and students form the other part.

Track 5 (Music) – **Average – Transition Music**

A short musical reprise of the previous song to cover the scene change.

Scene Two – St Dithers Staff Room**Track 6** (Song) – **Average (Reprise)**

Song performed at the end of the scene by the teachers who can be joined in the second stanza by the chorus.

Scene Three – St Dithers Schoolyard**Track 7** (Song) – **Rap Pack**

A very short rap performed by Emma and Rachel in exaggerated ‘hip-hop’ style. This should have lots of gestures and attitude.

Scene Four – The School Hall**Track 8** (Music) – **X Factory Theme**

This music is in the style of a TV music talent theme and is used as a transition to the new regime where Simon Trowel introduces the new ‘Super-Teachers’ to the new St Dithers students.

Track 9 (Song) – **The X Factor**

This is a strong character song that (if possible) should be started by Simon. It includes suggested solo parts although these may be freely adapted depending on the talents of your cast. The parts can be doubled if required and sung as an ensemble. The chorus join in later.

Scene Five – Dance Auditions**Track 10** (Music) – **Dance Theme**

This short transition theme (based upon a TV dance reality show) helps to introduce the next scene and allows the stage to be set up for the dance auditions. Audience participation would be good, such as cheering and clapping from the chorus and the cast.

Track 11 (SFX) – **Applause 1**

This (as with all the audience-based sound effects) can be used in conjunction with your chorus to create the effect of having a live studio audience. Hopefully your real audience will join in.

Track 12 (Music) – **Tango 1**

A short tango where the teachers demonstrate some moves to the students. Bruno wildly dances around Dusty in a very entertaining style.

- Track 13** (Music) – **Tango 2**
An extended version of the previous tango where the students attempt to copy the steps they have just seen, to comic effect.
- Track 14, 15 & 16** (SFX) – **Applause 2 & 3 / Booing 1**
More audience-based effects. (See Track 11)
- Track 17** (Music & SFX) – **Dance Theme Exit**
This transition music allows the set to be changed for the next scene.

Scene Six – Interlude

- Track 18** (Music) – **X Factory Theme 2**
A piece of transition music (including audience applause) that takes us into the vocal audition scene and allows the judges time to move into position.

Scene Seven – Vocal Auditions

- Track 19** (SFX) – **Applause 4**
Another audience-based effect. (See Track 11)
- Track 20, 21 & 22** (SFX) – **Ahh! 1, 2 & 3**
These are audience-based effects to enhance the dialogue.
- Track 23** (Song) – **Blue Skies**
This is a solo song (sung by Jenny Lane). This is designed to give a talented singer the chance to perform a solo song. A boy could play this role, if you prefer, by making minor changes to the script.
- Track 24, 25 & 26** (SFX) – **Booing 2 / Applause 5 & 6**
More audience-based effects. (See Track 11)
- Track 27** (SFX) – **Applause 7**
Another audience-based effect. (See Track 11)
- Track 28** (Song) – **Rap Pack Audition**
A short rap performed by Emma, Rachel and Joe for their audition.
- Track 29** (SFX) – **Buzzer**
This follows ‘Rap Pack Audition’ and is co-ordinated with the panel pressing their buzzers on the desk to show that they dislike the performance.
- Track 30** (Song) – **Be Alive**
Performed by the student cast and chorus as a rehearsal of their big showcase number. This should be energetic and lively.

Scene Eight – The Schoolyard

Track 31 (Music) – **Be Alive Play-Off**

This is a short transition into the schoolyard scene.

Track 32 (Song) – **Brand New Day**

This is a positive song featuring the rebels and St Dithers teachers. There is scope for the chorus to join in too with some movement, if required.

Track 33 (Music) – **Brand New Day Play-Off**

This is a short transition reprise of the previous song designed to allow time for you set the next scene up.

Scene Nine – After The Auditions

Track 34 (SFX) – **Creepy Night Music**

This is a short transition from the previous scene to show a passage of time. It sets the mood for late evening in a deserted building.

Scene Ten – Later That Night

Track 35 (Song) – **The X Factor (Reprise)**

This is a short character-based reprise of the Super-Teachers' song. Again, it can be performed in any way you wish and parts can be doubled or sung together in groups.

Track 36 (Music with SFX) – **Transition Into The Showcase**

This is a short transition into the next scene (The Showcase). It allows the cast to enter and the stage to be set. It is lively and has applause to give the impression that it is a live performance.

Scene Eleven – The Showcase

Track 37 (Music) – **Showcase Track Messed-Up**

This is the song 'Be Alive' where the entire track has been sabotaged. This should sound and look chaotic as the students try desperately to sing and dance along until they are halted at the end.

Track 38 (Song) – **Brand New Day (Reprise)**

This song builds from a short instrumental intro (by Mr Quaver and his colleagues) into a big production number featuring the rebels, staff and the chorus.

Track 39 (Music) – **Finale and Bows**

This medley acts as music for curtain bows but feel free to join in and sing the segments of songs if you wish.