

Magic Tree House: Dinosaurs before Dark KIDS

Character Breakdown: Jack

Jack is a young boy. He is bookish, careful and thoughtful, but he is NOT a nerd! Jack has tremendous curiosity about the world around him and loves to take notes about his observations. Jack tends to be very cautious in new situations, and his adventures in the tree house help him develop his confidence. He has a good (and protective) relationship with his younger sister, Annie, though her more impetuous nature often gets on his nerves. This is a big role and requires a strong singer and actor.

Character Breakdown: Annie

Jack's younger sister and, in many ways, his opposite in terms of personality. She is a risk-taker who often follows her heart instead of her head. She sometimes teases Jack about his careful attitude toward life and often encourages him to be more adventurous. She loves animals of any kind and has a very loving heart.

Character Breakdown: Otto

Otto is the oldest oak tree in the forest, a mild-mannered grandfatherly or grandmotherly type and a natural storyteller. This role doesn't require the strongest actor in the group, but he (or she) should have a strong speaking voice and the confidence to take center stage when necessary.

Character Breakdown: Stump

Stump is a grumpy tree stump, who, in direct contrast to Otto, is impatient and ill-tempered. Look for an actor who has good comedic instincts and a strong speaking voice. If you are able to cast a small child who has a "big" voice, even better.

Character Breakdown: Saplings

The Saplings are young, spirited and curious Trees, eager to hear about the mysterious tree house that appears in their Woods. These roles have very little dialogue, so they might be better suited for younger children. If you have a small cast, they can double as Baby Dinosaurs.

Character Breakdown: Red Pines / Hemlocks

The Red Pines and Hemlocks should be strong singers to help carry the opening and closing song in the show, but because their dialogue is mostly overlapping or spoken in unison with the rest of the Trees, these roles don't need to be filled by the strongest actors

Character Breakdown: Henry

Henry should be cast with an actor who has a strong stage presence. Although he has no "real" dialogue, his squeaks and giggles are just as important to the action as spoken words. This actor should be able to communicate through his facial expressions, should feel comfortable using his body to "fly" onstage and should enjoy making fun animal sounds.

Character Breakdown: Gary

Gary is the boldest, hippest and friendliest of the Triceratops. He is the first to step out of the ferns to get a better look at Annie and Jack. He is as impulsive, curious and guileless as Annie. Cast one of your stronger actors who has good comedic timing and who is skilled at memorizing lines and learning more complicated blocking.

Character Breakdown: Terri

Terri is the most domineering of the Triceratops, but her bossy comments toward Larry should serve as comic relief and not be perceived as bullying. Try casting contrasting physical types for Terri and Larry (a small Terri and a large Larry might have a nice humorous effect). Cast a strong actor with good comedic instincts who is skilled at memorizing lines and learning more complicated blocking.

Character Breakdown: Larry

Larry is the nerdiest of the Triceratops and is a little henpecked by Terri, but he isn't afraid to speak his mind. He and Terri should have a good rapport. Cast a strong actor with good comedic instincts and one who is skilled at memorizing lines and learning more complicated blocking.

Character Breakdown: Natty

Natty is the ultimate mother hen and takes great pride in protecting the baby Anatosaurus eggs. Cast a girl who is a little more mature than her peers and who will

provide a nice contrast to the babies in stature, voice and demeanor. She should be a strong actor and singer. Natty, Joan and Susan should work well as a trio.

Character Breakdown: Susan

Susan is a sassy Anatosaurus Mom who is more intrigued by Jack and Annie's presence than afraid of them. Cast a girl who is a little more mature than her peers, and who will provide a nice contrast to the Babies in stature, voice and demeanor. She should be a strong actor and singer. Natty, Joan and Susan should work well as a trio.

Character Breakdown: Joan

Joan is the most stressed out of all the Anatosaurus Mothers. She should be a little more no-nonsense compared to Susan's sassiness. Cast a girl who is a little more mature than her peers, and who will provide a nice contrast to the Babies in stature, voice and demeanor. She is a strong actor and singer. Natty, Joan and Susan should work well as a trio.

Character Breakdown: Toto

Toto is Susan's pestering child. She (or he) is as sassy as her mother and a bit of an imp. This is not a large acting or singing role, but look for a smaller child who has a good stage presence.

Character Breakdown: Baby Dinosaurs

The baby dinosaurs are freshly hatched Anatosaurus dinosaurs who are filled with wonder upon encountering the world for the first time. These are singing roles only, so they are ideal parts for younger actors who are good singers but not as adept at memorizing lines.

Character Breakdown: Ankylosaurus

Ankylosaurus are four-ton dinosaurs with spikes on their backs. Look for actors with strong speaking voices who aren't afraid to directly address the audience and who can pronounce more difficult words.

Character Breakdown: Protoceratops

Prooceratops are the "runts" of the dinosaur litter, so look for smaller actors with good speaking voices who aren't afraid to directly address the audience.

Character Breakdown: Iguanodons

Iguanodons are the cool kids of the dinosaur lot. They have spikes for thumbs and are not afraid to brag about it. Look for actors with good speaking voices who aren't afraid to directly address the audience.

Character Breakdown: Troodon

Troodon dinosaurs are the "brains" of the dinosaur lot but are not braggarts. Look for actors with strong speaking voices who aren't afraid to directly address the audience.

Character Breakdown: T-Rex

T-Rex is a fierce, meat-eating dinosaur. Look for an actor who has a strong stage presence and is comfortable moving onstage and adept at learning more complicated blocking.