

MIDDLETOWN

Written by Will Eno
Directed by Mr. Dan Fabrizio

Audition Workshop:	September 7 th
Auditions:	September 11 th & 12 th
Callbacks:	September 13 th
Performances:	November 1 st – 3 rd

Auditioners must fill out the audition form at tinyurl.com/middletownbigfish. and sign up for an audition slot on the callboard outside 171. Fill out Audition Card included at the end of the packet and bring to your audition.

Questions?

*E-mail Mr. Fabrizio (daniel_fabrizio@newton.k12.ma.us) or
Mr. Brown (adam_brown@newton.k12.ma.us).*

ABOUT THE PLAY

Middletown is anywhere and everywhere, the sort of place you'd expect to find Everymen and Everywomen on Every corner. Will Eno's beautiful, witty prose knits a series of vignettes together, weaving a story of a seemingly quaint town whose characters are quietly suffering huge crises. John Dodge, cycling through hobbies and earning a living doing menial labor, finds the middle of his life without meaning. This naturally leads him to consider how his life will end, and, dangerously, if he should bring the end about himself. Mrs. Swanson, a newcomer in town, spends her time preparing for the arrival of her baby, handling it all on her own as Mr. Swanson is (always) out of town on business. When their trajectories cross paths, they must navigate how the other's story weaves into their own. The townspeople – Cop, Librarian, Mechanic, Doctors, Landscaper – rightfully carry out their duties while grappling with their own place in the tapestry of life.

The plot itself is simple; it is the journey to get there that becomes complex. Mr. Fabrizio recommends that you read the script (a quick read!) in its entirety to best understand the *what* and the *how* of *Middletown*; the *what* is easily laid out, the *how* is harder to summarize here.

Consider these questions as you read: who is *stuck* in the middle, dwelling too much on the their beginning or their end? Who *relishes* in the present? And how does the *absence of something* help a character (or the audience) to appreciate that something even more?

CHARACTERS

Mrs. Swanson (F, Late 30's) – embraces the newness in her life: new town, new relationships, new baby on the way.

John Dodge (M, 30-40) – wallows in the in-between-ness, embracing everything and nothing simultaneously. Morbidly focuses on the end.

Cop (M, 30-50) – observes and reports to the audience, maintains the order in Middletown, though he can't in his own life.

Mechanic (M, 20-30) – excels at mediocrity and at fixing cars; cannot fix himself. Dwells on what he could have been.

Librarian (F, 50-60) – Injects her own voice as she informs and advises the townspeople of Middletown. Softens the blow of reality.

Sweetheart (F, 20-30) – a young woman in the “audience” with perhaps the clearest understanding of what's truly going on.

***Five additional actors** will be cast in the ensemble, each playing multiple roles (the distribution of which may be subject to change):*

ACTOR 1

Public Speaker – sets the tone, welcomes the audience

Aunt – ponders the show with her niece, Sweetheart

Female Doctor – helps characters navigate the next step

ACTOR 2

Tour Guide – learns to appreciate her job and her town

Ground Control – a grounding force for Greg

Attendant 1 – soothes and assists

ACTOR 3

Male Tourist - finds perspective, appreciates the present

Freelancer - ponders the show (and himself) in the audience

Male Doctor - expeditiously performs his duty

ACTOR 4

Female Tourist - finds perspective, appreciates the present

Woman - ponders the show from the audience

Attendant 2 - soothes and assists

ACTOR 5

Greg - the astronaut; appreciates Earth and Life from above

Man - ponders the show from the audience

Landscaper - considers new life

Janitor - cleans up the mess

AUDITION PROCESS

WHO CAN AUDITION?

While ***Middletown*** does conflict with ***Big Fish***, students are encouraged to audition for both. Auditioning for both shows increases your chances of getting cast (though does not guarantee it). If you plan on auditioning for both shows, please indicate the following on your audition card: 1) that you will also be auditioning for ***Big Fish***, and 2) any specific roles you would/would not like to be considered for in ***Middletown***. This will help the directors during the casting process.

Casting will be completed after ***Big Fish*** callbacks; both cast lists will be posted at the same time. When casting, Mr. Fabrizio, the student directors of the little musical, and Mr. Brown will take into consideration an actor's audition and conflicts, as well as the specific needs of each production.

WHAT AND HOW TO PREPARE

All auditioners will be asked to memorize and perform one 1.5-minute **contemporary** monologue at their audition. This monologue can be **dramatic** or **comedic** in nature. A seriocomic monologue would be ideal, as this best captures the style of ***Middletown***.

When you've finished presenting your monologue, you may be given some feedback and asked to perform it again. You may also be asked to do a brief improvisation exercise.

When preparing for your audition, keep in mind that Mr. Fabrizio is looking for actors who connect well with their text, practice good diction, exhibit strong vocal energy, and make bold choices. A good sense of comedic timing is a plus.

CALLBACKS

Callbacks will occur on **September 13th**, immediately after X-block. Actors will be reading sides from ***Middletown***. It is suggested that the actors preview the sides beforehand; they will be made available the week of auditions (both as hard copies near Room 171 and on *Theatreink.net*). They should not, however, memorize these scenes. Reading the play itself is also advisable, as being familiar with the plot and characters will be useful during the callback process. The complete script can be found at the callboard.

At callbacks, you will do a series of readings of the callbacks sides that have been provided for you. You will be given a short amount of time to rehearse them with a scene partner outside of the space, then perform them for the director. Mr. Fabrizio is looking for actors who 1) best fit each character, 2) play well off their scene partner(s) when acting and reacting, and 3) make every effort to incorporate feedback.

The cast list will be posted some time within the following week.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals will occur every weekday after all school obligations have finished (this includes X Block). No rehearsal will run past 6:30PM. The afternoon's agenda may include any combination of the following: warm-ups, table work, dramaturgy, character work, blocking, running of the show, discussion, and feedback.

Actors will also need to commit to work *outside* of the daily rehearsal time; this will include memorization of lines, character work, and other research. In many ways, being cast in ***Middletown*** will be like taking an additional class. Those with a heavy course load or intense commitments outside of school should consider the big picture before auditioning.

Tech Day will be Saturday, October 27th. All involved with ***Middletown*** will be expected to be in attendance from 9 AM to 6 PM. During Production Week (October 29th – November 3rd) actors may be held as late as 10:30 PM in order to accommodate dress rehearsals. An exact schedule with call times we be released well in advance. Students can purchase a bundle package, which provides them dinner before the runs on

AUDITION CARD

Please detach and bring this with you on the day of your audition.

I am auditioning for: _____ *Middletown* _____ *Middletown and Big Fish*

Actor Information

Name _____ DOB: _____

Address _____

Grade: _____ HR: _____ Preferred pronouns: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

Preferred E-mail Address: _____

Parent/Guardian Info:

Name _____

Phone # _____ E-mail _____

Please briefly list any past theatre experience you have had (or attach a résumé):

What do you think is your biggest strength as an actor? What needs the most improvement?

Please circle your answer:

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Are you comfortable using profane language onstage? | Yes | No |
| • Would you be comfortable cutting or dying your hair? | Yes | No |
| • Is there a role you'd prefer to play? | Yes | No |
| ○ If yes, which? _____ | | |
| • Is there a role that you would not accept? | Yes | No |
| ○ If yes, which? _____ | | |

Conflicts:

Fill out the form at tinyurl.com/middletownbigfish , including any recurring and one-time conflicts between September 17th and October 26th. Please do so **carefully** and **thoroughly**. An actor's presence at weekly rehearsals is imperative to a smooth, effective process – therefore, an actor's availability may affect casting decisions.

Note: **No** conflicts will be allowed on the following dates:

- Designer Run (10/12/2018)
- Costumes, Hair, and Makeup Training (10/20/2018)
- Tech Saturday (October 27th)
- Production Week (October 29th – November 3rd)

You will also read and sign the Theatre Ink Contract and give some additional information. Please complete this before the day of your audition.