

A Little Princess The Musical

**Adapted from
Frances Hodgson Burnett's "Sara Crewe"**

**Book by Vera Morris
Music and Lyrics by Bill Francoeur**

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For preview only

A LITTLE PRINCESS—THE MUSICAL

Adapted from Frances Hodgson Burnett's "Sara Crewe"

Book by VERA MORRIS

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SYNOPSIS

The action takes place mostly at Miss Minchin's Select Seminary for Young Ladies, located in the city of London. The time is Victorian England.

ACT ONE

A classroom.

ACT TWO

An attic room, followed by a visit to Mr. Carrisford's home.

For preview only

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In Order of Speaking)

	<u># of lines</u>
ERMENGARDE ST. JOHN.....a pupil at the seminary	42
LOTTIE.....another pupil, a few years younger than the others	19
ALICE.....another pupil, same age as Ermengarde	19
JESSIE.....another pupil	29
LAVINIA.....another pupil, dislikes Sara	54
MISS AMELIA.....teacher, Miss Minchin's sister	51
MISS MINCHIN.....school owner and principal	184
BECKY.....servant, an orphan	80
MR. BARROW.....attorney	19
COOK.....school employee	33
SARA CREWE.....a little princess, intelligent and imaginative	141
MRS. CARMICHAEL.....a neighbor	37
RAM DASS.....servant to Mr. Carrisford	31
PERKINS.....house servant to Mr. Carrisford	25
MR. CARRISFORD.....another neighbor	30
MR. CARMICHAEL.....works for Mr. Carrisford	20

Additional PUPILS at Miss Minchin's school can be added, if desired.

*PERKINS can easily become a housemaid, if desired, with few line changes.

A LITTLE PRINCESS—THE MUSICAL

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

MC	1	A LITTLE PRINCESS-Prologue	Ensemble
MC	2	PROPER ENGLISH GIRL	Lavinia, Pupils
MC	3	A SUITABLE EDUCATION	Miss Minchin, Mr. Brown, Amelia, Cook
MC	4	THE BEST GIFT OF ALL	Sara, Pupils
MC	4A	A LITTLE PRINCESS - Reprise	Spirit of Captain, Crewe, Sara
MC	5	TWO LITTLE GIRLS	Sara, Becky, Miss Minchin, Amelia, Cook, Lavinia, Pupils

ACT TWO

MC	6	ENTR'ACTE (A Proper English Girl)	Instrumental
MC	7	SUNNY DAY IN LONDON	Ensemble
MC	7A	SUNNY DAY IN LONDON - Exit	Instrumental
MC	7B	A PROPER ENGLISH GIRL-Entrance	Pupils
MC	7C	A PROPER ENGLISH GIRL - Exit	Pupils
MC	7D	SCENE CHANGE MUSIC	Instrumental
MC	8	THE MAGIC IN YOUR HEART	Ram Dass, Perkins, Chorus (optional)
MC	9	HAIL, HAIL, THE LITTLE PRINCESS	Sara, Becky, Ensemble
MC	9A	THE BEST GIFT OF ALL - Reprise	Miss Minchin, Sara
MC	10	TWO LITTLE GIRLS - Reprise	Sara, Becky, Ensemble
MC	11	SUNNY DAY IN LONDON - Reprise	Curtain Call
MC	12	A LITTLE PRINCESS - Reprise	Exit Music

A LITTLE PRINCESS—THE MUSICAL

PROLOGUE

MUSIC CUE 1: "A Little Princess — Prologue." This may be performed with **OFFSTAGE VOICES** or the entire **CAST SILHOUETTED, FORESTAGE**. If the latter is used, **ENSEMBLE** should be in raincoats, holding umbrellas, giving the illusion of a dismal London street.

CHILDREN'S CHORUS or **CHORUS ONE:** *(Sings.)*

Little Princess, Little Princess, far from home.
Little Princess, Little Princess, on your own.
Little Princess, oh, my princess, so alone.
Princess, let me be your friend.

Little Princess, Little Princess, why the tears?
Little Princess, Little Princess, have no fear.
Little Princess, oh, my princess, I am near.
I'll always be by your side.

FULL ENSEMBLE: *(Sings.)*

Hold your head up high, look deep within,
A kingdom is waiting for you.
Just follow your heart, soar to the sky,
Your reign is about to begin.

ADULT CHORUS or **CHORUS TWO:** *(Sings.)*

Little Princess, Little Princess, precious one.

CHILDREN'S CHORUS or **CHORUS ONE:** *(Sings.)*

You were born to be a princess.

ADULT CHORUS or **CHORUS TWO:** *(Sings.)*

You will surely charm the world before you're done.

CHILDREN'S CHORUS or **CHORUS ONE:** *(Sings.)*

Stay with me, my little princess.

ADULT CHORUS or **CHORUS TWO:** *(Sings.)*

Little Princess, oh, my princess, time has come.
I'll always be...

CHILDREN'S CHORUS or **CHORUS ONE:** *(Sings.)*

Princess, I will always be...

ALL: *(Sing.)*

By your side.

ACT ONE
Scene One

SETTING: A classroom. Originally, this room was one of several parlors in a large house, before it was converted into a school. It's rather severe looking, sparsely furnished. **LEFT** are at least six chairs for pupils [more chairs if **EXTRAS** are being utilized as additional pupils]. **RIGHT** is a table with a world globe on top and a small stack of books. There's a rather handsome chair to the **LEFT** of the table, another chair or upholstered stool behind the table. There's a blackboard **UPSTAGE CENTER**. **OPTIONAL** stage dressing as desired: fireplace (**RIGHT**), fire screen, plants, etc. [NOTE: Only the basic stage props needed for blocking the play are mentioned. For more elaborate possibilities, consult **PRODUCTION NOTES**.] Entrance into the classroom from the outside hallway is **UP LEFT**. Another parlor is reached via **DOWN RIGHT**. **FORESTAGE** represents sidewalk. A few seconds prior to **LIGHTS UP** we hear **SCHOOLGIRL LAUGHTER**.

LIGHTS UP: The following pupils are seated **LEFT**: **LAVINIA**, **JESSIE**, **LOTTIE** and **ALICE**. In terms of age, they're about 10 or 11, except **LOTTIE**, who's a few years younger. **ERMENGARDE ST. JOHN** is at the blackboard holding a piece of chalk. She has just written: "A young lady is always polight." **ERMENGARDE'S** misspelling of "polite" is causing the laughter.

ERMENGARDE: I don't know why you're laughing at me. Miss Minchin told me to write it on the blackboard. She said I was to write it five times. She was annoyed with me when I bumped into her on the stairs and didn't say "Excuse me, Miss Minchin."

PUPILS: (*Reciting.*) "A young lady is always polite."

ERMENGARDE: Writing that on the blackboard is an easy punishment, but it's nothing to laugh at. Or make fun of.

LOTTIE: That's not what we're laughing at, Ermengarde.

ERMENGARDE: It isn't?

ALICE: Certainly not.

JESSIE: It's the way you've spelled "polite."

ERMENGARDE: (*Stares at blackboard.*) What's wrong with the way I spelled polite?

LAVINIA: (*Stands.*) Everyone knows you spell polite —
P-O-L-L-I-T-T-E.

ERMENGARDE: Really?

LAVINIA: But of course. If I were you, I'd change it at once.

(LAVINIA smirks to the OTHERS. They turn their heads aside and cover mouths. They don't want ERMENGARDE catching them laughing at LAVINIA'S unkind joke.)

ERMENGARDE: Thank you, Lavinia. Miss Minchin gets so angry when I misspell words. And there are so many words to misspell. I dislike reading, but I dislike spelling even more. *(ERMENGARDE picks up a blackboard eraser and wipes out "POLIGHT." Unnoticed by ERMENGARDE, PUPILS start to giggle. ERMENGARDE puts down the eraser and chalks in as she spells it out.)* Polite. P-O-L-L-I-T-T-E. Polite. *(This is too much for the OTHER GIRLS. They break out into raucous laughter.)*

ERMENGARDE: *(Bewildered.)* What's so funny this time? Didn't I do it right? *(Louder laughter.)*

ALL PUPILS: *(Except ERMENGARDE; reciting.)* "A young lady is always polite!" *(MUSIC CUE 2: "A Proper English Girl.")*

LOTTIE: *(Speaks.)* But I don't want to be a lady.

JESSIE: *(Speaks.)* I don't think we have much choice in the matter.

ALICE: *(Speaks.)* Being a lady is much more difficult than I imagined. *(ALL agree except LAVINIA.)*

LAVINIA: *(Speaks. Sarcastic.)* You must all stop sniveling and accept your station in life, as I have, though it isn't always easy.

PUPILS: *(Sing.)* A young lady must always be polite,
An exemplary model of good breeding.
A young lady must stand upright,
(Speak in rhythm.) Heads high. Backs straight. Eyes forward.
(ALL except LAVINIA half-heartedly go through the motions.)

LAVINIA: *(Speaks.)* She is graceful and poised,
Genteel and charming,
Tasteful and calm,
Cordial and disarming.

ALL: *(Except LAVINIA, sing.)* Prim and proper everyday,
How can we go on this way?
Wish just once someone would say...
(Speak.) "Cancel class. It's a holiday!" Yeah!

(Sing.) I want to run, I want to climb,
I want to have a high old time.
Let me crawl, let me creep,

I want to hop, skip, jump and leap.

I want to tease, I want to taunt,
I want to be the girl I want,
(*Shout.*) Let me sweat! Let me smell!
(*Sing.*) Eat my supper dripping wet.

No more ruffles, no more frills,
No more bows, I've had my fill.
Sick of dresses, sick of curls,
Don't wanna be a proper English girl. (*PUPILS laugh and carry on.*)

LAVINIA: (*Speaks, mimicking MISS MINCHIN and MISS AMELIA.*)
Young ladies. Young ladies. Department. Department.
Remember, you are England's future. Heads high. Backs
straight. Eyes forward. (*PUPILS begrudgingly compose
themselves.*)

PUPILS: (*Sing.*) A young lady must always be refined,
An exemplary model of good breeding.
A young lady must walk divine,
(*Speak in rhythm.*) Heads high. Backs straight. Eyes forward.

LAVINIA: (*Speaks.*) She has fluency, nobility,
Elegance and symmetry,
Stability, fluidity,
Like poetry in motion. (*PUPILS relax their attitude believing
LAVINIA is finished. LAVINIA abruptly, to the dismay of the
other PUPILS, continues to speak.*)
Confidence, aplomb,
She is collected and composed,
Steady, unruffled,
Imperturbable, unflappable!

ALL OTHERS: (*Speak; confused.*) Huh?!

LAVINIA: (*Speaks; proud.*) Trust me. I know what it means.

ALL PUPILS: (*Sing.*) Prim and proper, what a pain,
A lady's life is inhumane.
Take away this ball and chain,
This place is driving me (*Shout.*) insanel!

I want to scream, I want to shout,
Hold my breath, whine and pout.
Wind myself up tight as a drum,
Then have myself a bloomin' tantrum!

(More out of control.)

Have a fit, throw my food,
Play a prank when I'm in the mood.
Sneak about the halls at night,
I want to have a pillow fight!

(Even more out of control.)

No more lessons, no more rules,
No more "Prima Donna" schools.
Don't want to be a mother of pearl,
Don't want to be a proper English girl!

Don't want to be a mother of pearl,
Don't want to be a proper English girl!
(Shout.) Not!!

LAVINIA: *(At end of song, slowly walking to the blackboard.)* Yes, we must remember. A young lady is always... *(Pointing at ERMENGARDE'S spelling of the word, polite.)* ...polite! *(Loud laughter.)*

ERMENGARDE: Stop laughing, I say. *(Stamps her foot.)* Stop it! Stop it! *(The uproar causes MISS AMELIA, MISS MINCHIN'S rather timid sister and a teacher ENTERS DOWN RIGHT.)*

AMELIA: Young ladies, young ladies. What is the meaning of this uproar?

ERMENGARDE: They're laughing at me, Miss Amelia. They're always laughing at me because of something I've done or said.

AMELIA: Stop it, young ladies. *(Claps her hands together for attention.)* Stop it, I say. Otherwise, I shall inform my sister of your unseemly behavior. *(On mention of "my sister," the PUPILS settle down. LAVINIA crosses LEFT and takes a seat.)* That's better. *(Looks about, checks watch pinned to her blouse.)* Why, it's after ten o'clock. Isn't this the time for your class in deportment?

PUPILS: Yes, Miss Amelia.

AMELIA: I wonder where my sister can be? *(On cue, MISS MINCHIN ENTERS from UP LEFT. A tall woman with a cold personality, dressed in respectable black. All the PUPILS and SERVANTS, even AMELIA, stand in awe of her. She absentmindedly reads some letter as she ENTERS.)* Ah, here she is.

PUPILS: *(They stand.)* Good morning, Miss Minchin.

MISS MINCHIN: Good morning. (*Coolly.*) You may be seated, young ladies.

PUPILS: Yes, Miss Minchin. Thank you, Miss Minchin. (*They sit. MISS MINCHIN folds the letter and moves to the table. Puts letter down.*)

MISS MINCHIN: Amelia.

AMELIA: Yes, sister?

MISS MINCHIN: I'm expecting a Mr. Barrow. He's a solicitor from the law firm of Barrow and Skipworth. I'll see him in here. You may have my young ladies join your sewing class. (*PUPILS groan.*) A young lady never expresses her feelings with a groan. Repeat that.

PUPILS: "A young lady never expresses her feelings with a groan."

MISS MINCHIN: I should have liked a bit more enthusiasm. You will join Miss Amelia's class in the sewing parlor.

PUPILS: Yes, Miss Minchin.

AMELIA: (*Gestures DOWN RIGHT.*) Hurry along, girls.

PUPILS: Yes, Miss Amelia. (*They stand and cross for DOWN RIGHT. MISS MINCHIN looks to the blackboard.*)

MISS MINCHIN: One moment. (*PUPILS stop. MISS MINCHIN moves to the blackboard.*) What's this, what's this? "A young lady is always -- (*Spells it out.*) P-O-L-L-I-T-E?" Ermengarde St. John, did you write this?

ERMENGARDE: Yes, Miss Minchin. You told me to.

MISS MINCHIN: Wretched spelling. Deplorable. You really are a dull pupil. I shall have to write to your father.

ERMENGARDE: Oh, please, Miss Minchin, don't write to my father.

MISS MINCHIN: We'll discuss it later. Go along, all of you.

PUPILS: Yes, Miss Minchin.

ERMENGARDE: It's all your fault, Lavinia. (*Dutifully, PUPILS EXIT DOWN RIGHT. Annoyed, MISS MINCHIN picks up the blackboard eraser and wipes out the sentence.*)

MISS MINCHIN: That St. John girl is quite hopeless.

AMELIA: I'd be careful what you write to Ermengarde's father. You don't want him to take her out of school. He always pays Ermengarde's expenses on time. That's more than you can say for some.

MISS MINCHIN: You have a point. (*She walks back to the table and picks up the letter. Scans it.*) Seems we're to have a new pupil. A Miss Sara Crewe. Odd that a solicitor should be arranging for her admittance. The girl's from India.

AMELIA: (*Impressed.*) All the way from India?

MISS MINCHIN: She'll be spoiled. They usually are when they come from India. No doubt she'll pretend she's the daughter of a Rajah.

AMELIA: Will you accept her?

MISS MINCHIN: If the financial arrangements are satisfactory. I have no reason to suspect they won't be. I wonder how this Mr. Barrow came to select this school? *(BECKY, a pitiful young slave, ENTERS from UP LEFT. She wears a ragged dark dress and stockings. Soiled apron and dust cap. In one hand she holds a broom and in the other a dustpan. Soot on her face. Trace of cockney accent. She gives an awkward curtsy.)*

BECKY: Beggin' yer pardon, Miss Minchin.

MISS MINCHIN: *(Sharply.)* What are you doing in here, Becky? I told you to clean out the upstairs fireplaces.

BECKY: All done, Miss Minchin.

MISS MINCHIN: I'm sure Cook will find work for you.

BECKY: She already has, Miss Minchin. I'm to scrub all the pots and kettles. When I'm done with them pots and kettles, I'm to scrub the kitchen floor and mop it dry.

MISS MINCHIN: In that case, what are you waiting for?

BECKY: There's a gentleman what wants to see you. He's got a young lady with him. She's dressed ever so lovely. I expects she's a new pupil.

MISS MINCHIN: *(Aghast.)* No — don't tell me. You didn't —

BECKY: Maid was nowhere to be found, Miss Minchin. So when I hears the front doorbell, I opens the door. Wouldn't be polite to have the gentleman and young lady wait too long on the welcome mat.

MISS MINCHIN: *(Clutching hand over heart, collapses into the fine chair.)* You stupid girl. I should have thrown you out long ago. You're useless. Imagine, Amelia, the door to my school opened by this dirty little wretch. What must Mr. Barrow think? Ow, ow! Go to him, Amelia. Oh! Oh!

AMELIA: Yes, sister. At once, sister. *(Hurries OFF, UP LEFT.)*

BECKY: I was only trying to be of service, Miss Minchin. I was trying to make myself useful, I was.

MISS MINCHIN: Get out of my sight, you horrid girl.

BECKY: Yes, ma'am. *(She gives a frightened curtsy, starts to EXIT UP LEFT.)*

MISS MINCHIN: Not that way! I don't want Mr. Barrow to see you again. You've done quite enough harm for one day.

Appearances matter, but that's something I wouldn't expect you to understand. (*A sweeping gesture DOWN RIGHT.*)
OUT! (*BECKY is on the verge of tears.*)

BECKY: Yes, ma'am, Miss Minchin. Sorry for any inconvenience I've caused.

MISS MINCHIN: OUT! OUT! (*BECKY flees DOWN RIGHT, OUT.*)

AMELIA'S VOICE: (*From hallway.*) My sister is expecting you, Mr. Barrow. She's in her classroom.

MR. BARROW'S VOICE: Thank you. (*MISS MINCHIN quickly recovers from her scene with BECKY. She stands, faces UP LEFT. Forces a professional smile. AMELIA RETURNS.*)

AMELIA: Mr. Barrow, sister. (*AMELIA steps back and MR. BARROW ENTERS. A matter-of-fact gentleman. All business.*)

MISS MINCHIN: Ah, Mr. Barrow. A pleasure.

MR. BARROW: Miss Minchin. (*A nod of his head.*)

MISS MINCHIN: How prompt you are, sir. (*Picks up letter.*) I barely had time to read your communication and here you are. (*Indicates fine chair.*) Pray be seated.

MR. BARROW: I prefer to stand. The exercise will do me good. A solicitor needs all the exercise he can manage. The law is a sedentary profession.

MISS MINCHIN: I quite understand. (*She sits, scans the letter again.*) The girl is with you?

MR. BARROW: She is.

AMELIA: She's in the hallway, sister. She's watching the lorrymen bring in her luggage. Trunk after trunk. I never saw so many trunks. Such fine leather! The brass locks are so brightly polished!

MISS MINCHIN: Don't babble, Amelia. It suggests frivolity. See that — (*Checks name in letter.*) Miss Crewe doesn't wander off.

AMELIA: But my sewing class —

MISS MINCHIN: It can wait.

AMELIA: Yes; sister. (*AMELIA knows better than to argue. EXITS UP LEFT. MR. BARROW looks about, taking in the classroom.*)

MR. BARROW: This is a large house, Miss Minchin.

MISS MINCHIN: It has to be. We accept boarding young ladies from an early age until they finish school. Then there are the day students. My seminary is actually two houses joined together by an enclosed walkway.

MR. BARROW: Ingenious.

MISS MINCHIN: May I ask how you came to select my school for this Miss, uh — (*Checks letter again.*) Crewe.

MR. BARROW: Certainly. Sara's father, Captain Crewe, is a close friend of Lord and Lady Meredith. India, you know.

MISS MINCHIN: Lady Meredith's two daughters were students here.

MR. BARROW: It was Lady Meredith's recommendation that persuaded Captain Crewe your school was the place for his daughter.

MISS MINCHIN: How flattering. What of the girl's mother?

MR. BARROW: She died in India some years ago. Cholera.

MISS MINCHIN: How tragic.

MR. BARROW: As you know, the climate in India is troublesome for English children.

MISS MINCHIN: That is true. Is she a sickly child?

MR. BARROW: From what I can tell, she's in robust health.

MISS MINCHIN: Excellent. I don't approve of weak constitutions.

MR. BARROW: Captain Crewe accompanied his daughter to England, but business matters required him to return to India as soon as he landed.

MISS MINCHIN: Business matters?

MR. BARROW: Captain Crewe is retired from the military.

MISS MINCHIN: I see. Before a new pupil can be admitted, there are certain formalities —

MR. BARROW: Ah, yes. Formalities. Troublesome, but necessary. If you're worried about money, you needn't be. Captain Crewe has diamond mines.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Impressed.*) Diamond mines!

MR. BARROW: The mines are worth millions. One day the little princess will be an extremely wealthy young woman. She is, after all, an heiress.

MISS MINCHIN: You called her "the little princess."

MR. BARROW: That's what Captain Crewe calls his daughter. Sara quite likes the title.

MISS MINCHIN: Any young girl would. I hope she won't kick and scream. Sometimes new pupils carry on dreadfully when they first arrive.

MR. BARROW: Sara isn't that sort. She's a sensible little thing. A bit old-fashioned, perhaps.

MISS MINCHIN: That's in her favor.

MR. BARROW: Captain Crewe wishes her to have a pretty bedroom and a sitting room of her own.

MISS MINCHIN: Naturally. Only fitting, considering her financial status. If Captain Crewe wants her to have a pretty bedroom and sitting room of her own, she shall have them.

MR. BARROW: She is to have a pony and carriage, as well.

MISS MINCHIN: That can be arranged.

MR. BARROW: A personal maid.

MISS MINCHIN: If you say so.

MR. BARROW: I am merely relaying Captain Crewe's wishes.

(MUSIC CUE 3: "A Suitable Education." AMELIA APPEARS UP LEFT.)

MISS MINCHIN: *(Speaks.)* Of course. Please write Captain Crewe that his daughter, uh -- *(Checks letter again.)* Sara, will receive a suitable education.

(Sings.) We are wonderfully modern in our approach...

AMELIA: *(Interrupting, sings.)* The latest in academia!

MISS MINCHIN: *(Sings.)* Our select seminary for young English ladies...

AMELIA: *(Interrupting, sings.)* Has a reputation beyond reproach.

MR. BARROW: *(Sings.)* Yes, of course I have heard of your reputation,

(Sarcastic to AMELIA.) The latest in academia,

And though it's of interest to Captain Crewe

He still has his moments of trepidation.

MISS MINCHIN: *(Ignoring him, sings.)* We teach reading and writing and penmanship...

AMELIA: *(Interrupting, sings.)* The finest in academia!

MISS MINCHIN: *(Sings.)* You will find out techniques of the highest standard...

AMELIA: *(Sings.)* A British model of scholarship!

MISS MINCHIN/AMELIA/IMPRESS: *(Sing.)* A suitable education,

Begins with a lesson in strict deportment,

But always in moderation,

There's nothing that we wouldn't do for our girls.

MR. BARROW: *(Speaks.)* The captain tells me he's not worried about her education. The difficulty will be to keep Sara from learning too fast.

MISS MINCHIN: *(Speaks.)* Oh, how extraordinary.

(Sings.) She'll learn science, the latest in mathematics.

AMELIA: *(Sings.)* The finest in academia.

MISS MINCHIN: *(Sings.)* Proper manners...

AMELIA: *(Sings.)* Refinement...

MISS MINCHIN: *(Sings.)* And cultural ways.

Rest assured, of this I am quite emphatic.

MR. BARROW: (*Sings.*) If you please, I beseech you to tell me more,
Will the child be given good care?

Will you treat her with kindness and comfort her?

Would you still be her friend, were she rich or poor?

MISS MINCHIN: (*With a nervous laugh; ignoring him, sings.*) We teach German, Italian (*Pronounced "Eyetalian."*) and French... (*Trying to impress. Speaks.*) Bonjour!

AMELIA: (*Not to be outdone; but with terrible pronunciation. Sings.*) Pardon ez moi, c'est soir... Monsieur. (*Pronounced "Monsewer."*)

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sings.*) She will no doubt be leaving bilingual, I'm sure.

COOK: (*Passing by UP LEFT; tired of the whole affair, sings.*) At the end of the day she'll 'ave soup de jour! (*AMELIA takes MR. BARROW aside as MISS MINCHIN and COOK sing.*)

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sings. Aside to COOK.*) A little princess, indeed!
COOK: (*Aside to MISS MINCHIN, speaks.*) A spoiled brat, (*Sings.*) I daresay.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sings.*) I smell a bundle of money.

MISS MINCHIN/COOK: (*Sing.*) This little princess simply must stay. (*MUSIC continues UNDER.*)

MR. BARROW: (*Speaks.*) Sara speaks both French and German. The Captain says she is always sitting with her nose buried in books. Says she doesn't read them, she devours them.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Speaks.*) How charming.

MR. BARROW: (*Speaks.*) Captain Crewe wants you to drag her away from her books when she reads too much. Wants her to ride her pony and go out and buy things.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Speaks.*) It does sound as if he's intent on spoiling the girl.

MR. BARROW: (*Speaks.*) I am merely the messenger, Miss Minchin.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Speaks.*) Of course. (*Continues as if she has not heard him; sings.*) There'll be lessons in spelling and history.

AMELIA/MR. BARROW: (*Sing.*) The latest in academia!

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sings.*) And of course she will learn all the skills of a lady...

AMELIA: (*Again interrupting, sings.*) Like cooking and sewing...

MISS MINCHIN: (*An evil eye to AMELIA, sings.*) Embroidery!

MR. BARROW: (*Sings.*) Once again, I beseech you to tell me

more,

Will the child be given good care?

Will you treat her with kindness and comfort her?

Would you still be her friend, were she rich or poor?

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sings.*) My dear fellow, in truth,
There's no more to tell.

(*Speaks in rhythm.*) How much did you say she is worth?

MR. BARROW: (*Speaks.*) Millions.

AMELIA: (*Sings.*) We will treat her with kindness and comfort her.
And yes, rich or poor, we would treat her well.

WOMEN: (*Sing.*) A suitable education...

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sings.*) Begins with a lesson in strict deportment.

AMELIA: (*Sings.*) But always in moderation.

COOK: (*Sings.*) There's nothing that we wouldn't do for our girls.

ALL: (*Sing.*) A suitable education
Begins with a lesson in strict deportment.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sings.*) There's no need for trepidation,

WOMEN: (*Sing.*) There's nothing that we wouldn't,
Nothing that we couldn't,
Nothing that we wouldn't do for our girls.

MR. BARROW: (*Sings.*) Captain Crewe will be,
Yes, I'm sure he'll be,
Captain Crewe will be pleased.

MISS MINCHIN: (*At end of song, AMELIA and COOK EXIT UP LEFT.*) I trust money due for Sara's expenditures will not be forwarded from India. It takes a long time and it's confusing.

MR. BARROW: You needn't concern yourself. Barrow and Skipworth have charge of all Captain Crewe's affairs in England. I'll give you any advice you want, and all bills you submit will be paid promptly. You have my word.

MISS MINCHIN: In that case, the tiresome details of business have been concluded. (*Stands.*) And now, Mr. Barrow, I should like to meet this little princess.

MR. BARROW: The sooner she's settled in, the happier I'll be. I'm a busy man. Children are a bit out of my line. (*He moves UP LEFT. MISS MINCHIN moves behind the table. Calls into hallway.*) Sara, would you step in here, please?

SARA'S VOICE: (*From hallway.*) Yes, Mr. Barrow. (*Pause for dramatic impact. SARA ENTERS. She's about 10 or 11. She wears a handsome traveling cape [OPTIONAL] over a beautiful frock. Charming hat. Holds a large doll.*)

MR. BARROW: (*Indicates.*) Sara, this is the lady I spoke to you

about. Miss Minchin. (*MISS MINCHIN forces another of her professional smiles.*)

MISS MINCHIN: Welcome to my school, dear. (*SARA moves CENTER, curtsies.*) I hope you'll be happy here.

SARA: Father wants me to be happy. So does Emily.

MISS MINCHIN: Emily? Who's Emily?

SARA: (*Holds up doll.*) This is Emily. Papa bought her for me. Just before he sailed away. She is going to be my friend now that Papa is gone. I'll always be able to talk to Emily about Papa.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Studies SARA for a moment, wondering if she's going to be profit or pest. Then —*) What an original child! What a darling little creature!

SARA: The trouble with dolls is that they never seem to hear.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Flat.*) Is that a fact?

SARA: Papa bought a wonderful wardrobe for Emily.

MISS MINCHIN: Emily is a most fortunate "doll." (*Steps DOWN RIGHT, calls OFF.*) Lavinia!

MR. BARROW: Miss Minchin will take good care of you, Sara.

SARA: I'm sure she will, Mr. Barrow.

MR. BARROW: Your father expects you to write him twice a week without fail.

SARA: I promised Papa I would, and I won't break my word for anything. (*SARA wipes away a tear.*)

MR. BARROW: Now, now, Sara. You're not going to cry, are you?

SARA: It's just that I shall miss Papa so.

MR. BARROW: I understand and so does Miss Minchin.

MISS MINCHIN: You won't be lonely, Sara. You'll make friends soon enough. (*LAVINIA ENTERS from DOWN RIGHT.*)

LAVINIA: You called, Miss Minchin?

MISS MINCHIN: Lavinia, this is a new boarder, Sara. She's the daughter of an Indian officer, Captain Crewe. She's going to have the two pretty rooms overlooking the garden.

LAVINIA: Those are the finest ones in the house!

MISS MINCHIN: That needn't concern you. I think it would be quite nice if you showed Sara her rooms.

LAVINIA: (*Coolly.*) If you say so, Miss Minchin. (*It's obvious that LAVINIA dislikes SARA on sight.*)

MISS MINCHIN: Introduce her to some of the girls. Help her to get settled in.

LAVINIA: (*To SARA.*) If you'll follow me.

MR. BARROW: Good-bye, Sara. I'll keep in touch.

SARA: Thank you, Mr. Barrow. When you write to Papa, don't

forget to tell him I love him very much. (*Holds out the doll.*) So does Emily.

MISS MINCHIN: Go along with Lavinia, Sara.

SARA: Yes, Miss Minchin. (*LAVINIA EXITS. SARA follows.*) I hope we'll become friends, Lavinia. Emily and I don't know anyone in London. (*She's OUT.*)

MR. BARROW: If you require me for any reason, you know where to find me.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Moves CENTER.*) Have no fear, Mr. Barrow. Sara is in good hands. Please inform Captain Crewe of that fact.

MR. BARROW: I shall. (*He starts to EXIT as AMELIA gushes IN UP LEFT.*)

AMELIA: Oh, sister. One of the trunks fell open. Such clothes! There's sable and ermine on Sara's coats! Her undergarments are trimmed in Irish lace. Her shoes have such pretty little buckles. Hats and gloves and handkerchiefs.

MISS MINCHIN: (*Sternly.*) Amelia, you're babbling again.

AMELIA: (*Calms down.*) Forgive me.

MISS MINCHIN: Show Mr. Barrow out.

MR. BARROW: That won't be necessary. Ladies, I bid you both good day. (*He gives a little nod of the head, EXITS UP LEFT.*)

AMELIA: (*Moves CENTER.*) Sara seems a sweet child.

MISS MINCHIN: Sweet? Perhaps. Spoiled? Most assuredly. She has been given her own way in everything.

AMELIA: Those clothes in the trunk that fell open. What do you think of them?

MISS MINCHIN: They sound perfectly ridiculous. However, they will look very well at the head of the line when we take the children out for walks. Mr. Barrow spoke the truth. Sara Crewe has been provided for as if she were a little princess. Tend to your sewing class, Amelia.

AMELIA: Yes, yes. (*She hurries across the room to DOWN RIGHT.*) Imagine. A little princess. (*She EXITS.*)

MISS MINCHIN: (*Scoffs.*) A little princess, indeed. (*She EXITS UP LEFT.*)

End of Scene One

ACT ONE
Scene Two

PRODUCTION NOTES

STAGE PROPERTIES

FOR CLASSROOM: Six (or more) chairs for pupils; table with world globe, books; blackboard with eraser.

FOR ATTIC ROOM: Cot with tom blanket and pillow; trunk with flat top; small table with candle; toy mouse behind trunk.

FOR CARRISFORD PARLOR: Armchair, two additional chairs; small side table with medicine bottle, glass of water, spoon.
BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene One: Chalk (ERMENGARDE); watch (AMELIA); letter (MISS MINCHIN); broom and dustpan (BECKY); large doll (SARA).

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene Two: Brightly-wrapped gifts (SARA, BECKY, AMELIA); hanky (MISS MINCHIN); large doll from Scene One (SARA).

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene One [Sidewalk]: Pail with rag and scrub brush (BECKY); sweet roll (SARA); hat and gloves (MISS MINCHIN, PUPILS, AMELIA).

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene Two [Attic Room]: Handsome blanket (RAM DASS); food hamper containing jars and tins, chocolate bars, assorted delicacies, note (PERKINS); ragged shawl (SARA); three books (ERMENGARDE).

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene Three [Sidewalk]: Pail, scrub brush, toy mouse (SARA); belongings wrapped in bandanna (BECKY); coin (LAVINIA).

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene Four [Carrisford Parlor]: Lap robe (CARRISFORD); toy monkey wrapped in SARA'S ragged shawl (SARA).

SOUND: Wind, thunder.

COSTUMES: Victorian. PUPILS might wear school aprons over their costumes. For the birthday party, the aprons might be removed and colorful sashes worn. Special attention should

be paid to SARA'S ACT ONE costumes. They should look both beautiful and expensive. RAM DASS wears a turban and high collar jacket. COOK an apron and cap.

If there is no intermission, SARA will have a quick change from her birthday party frock to her black dress. Have dresser(s) OFFSTAGE ready to assist.

FLEXIBLE CASTING: For a larger cast, add more PUPILS. A SERVANT or two might be added for the birthday party scene when presents are carried in. One of the SERVANTS could be SARA'S personal maid. For a smaller cast, MR. BARROW, with a change in acting style and makeup, can easily double as MR. CARRISFORD. Even as RAM DASS or the spirit of CAPTAIN CREWE. To change the balance, PERKINS can become a housemaid.

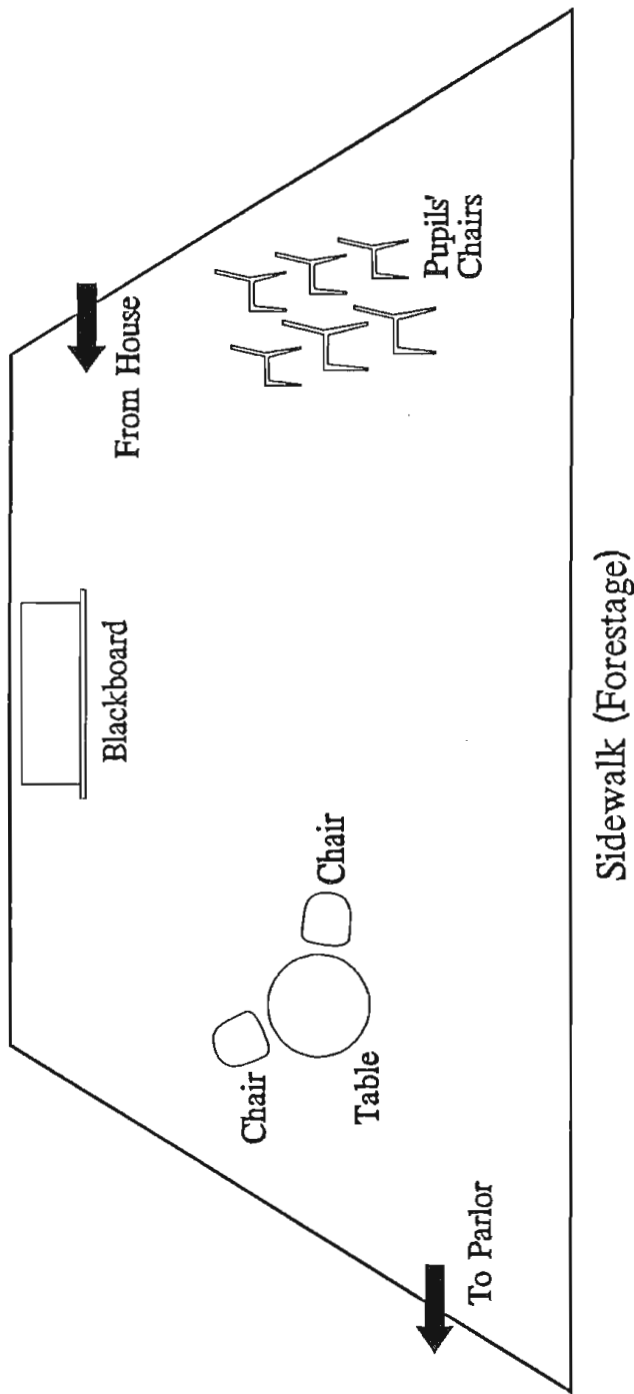
ACCENTS: If you can manage English accents, it's a wonderful touch; however, it is certainly not necessary. If you are going to attempt accents, make sure they are consistent throughout the whole play. At the very least, BECKY, COOK and PERKINS should sound less educated, with a cockney accent. RAM DASS should sound "foreign" and mysterious.

MISCELLANEOUS: The required stage properties are very few. In this regard, the play is also suitable for arena staging. However, if you wish to elaborate, a fireplace and bench might be added to the classroom. Desks for PUPILS instead of chairs. Some indoor plants, bric-a-brac. Maybe a window with drapes. Just remember, if there is no intermission, the properties will have to be changed swiftly, so don't add anything that will prove cumbersome to move.

In the last scene of the play, MR. CARRISFORD might be seated in a wheelchair. Make sure it's not a modern wheelchair. It should be the old wooden kind. A dressing screen and a large potted plant might also be added.

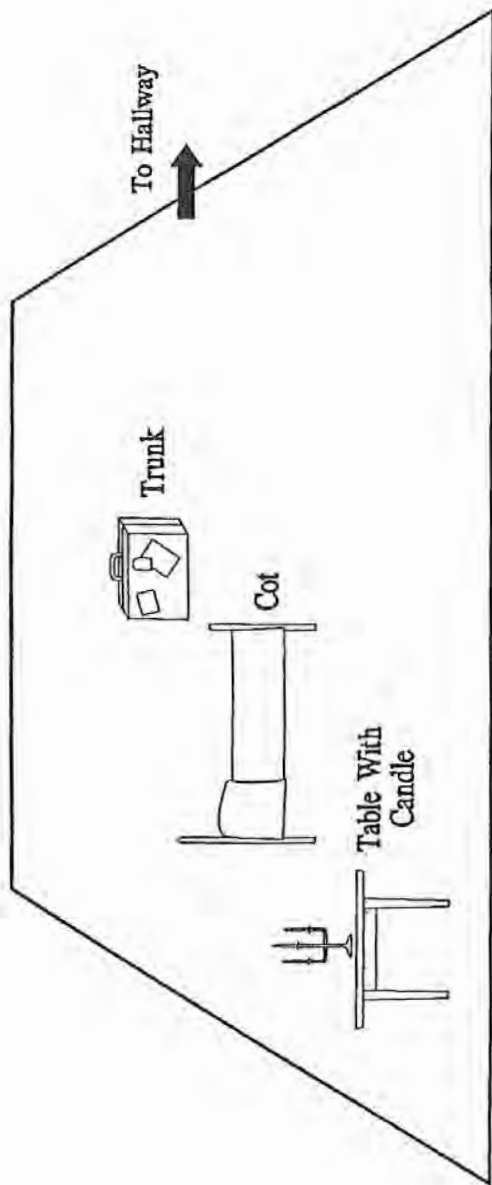
The monkey, of course, is simply a stuffed toy. Most of it will be hidden by SARA'S shawl. We need see only the head. SARA might move the head with her hand, which can be hidden by the shawl. A hand-operated "puppet" would look good, too.

Basic Floor Plan
"A Little Princess"
Classroom - Act One

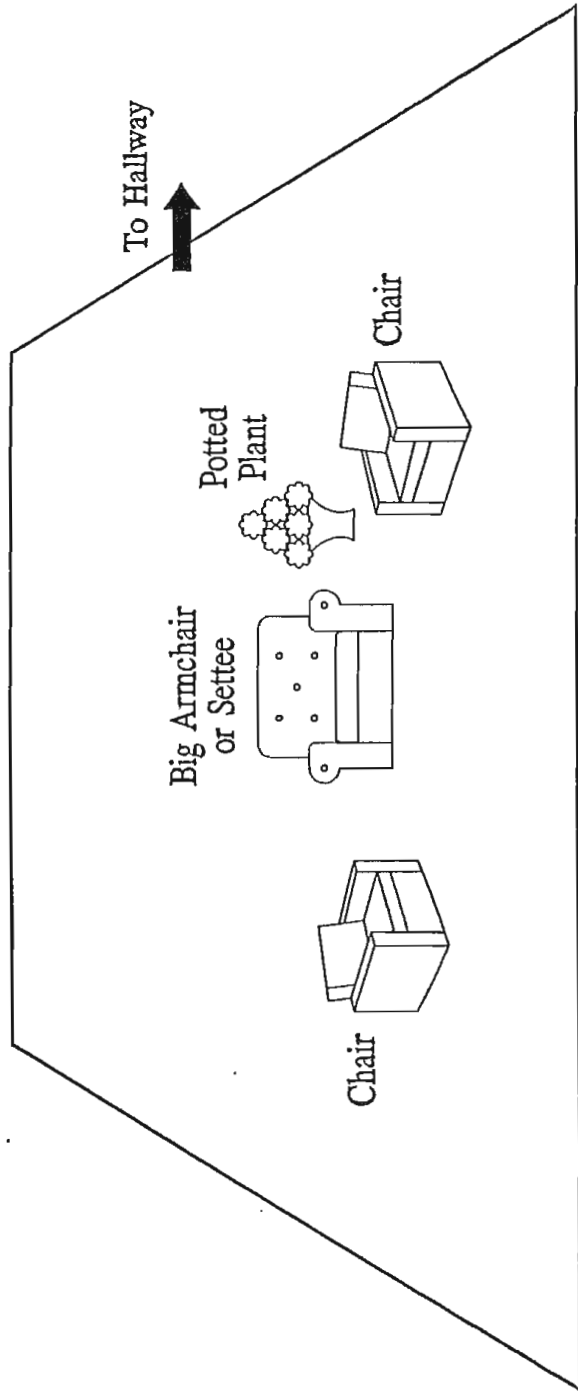


Don't overdo the monkey business. An audience is always fascinated by a monkey on stage. Naturally, a live monkey would be a special treat, but unless it can be controlled and is very tame, it's better to stick with the stuffed toy version.

Basic Floor Plan
"A Little Princess"
Attic Room - Act Two, Scene Two



Basic Floor Plan
“A Little Princess”
Carrisford’s House – Act Two, Scene Four



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