

KING (MALE able to play 50+)

Character: Cannot speak due to a curse. Expresses everything physically, and so pantomime and wonderful facial expressions are a must.

The King has a “talk” with Dauntless about the Birds & the Bees. All done in pantomime.

Stop, Look, Listen

Boy Flower. Girl Flower

Bee on Boy Flower

Boy flower dust gets on bee...

Bee flies to girl flower...

Dust touches girl flower.

Harry isn't getting it so King, frustrated, tries another way...

KING pantomimes the stork by placing his crown in his kerchief and dangling it from his teeth while standing on one leg and flapping is “wings”.

“Once Upon a Mattress” Audition Script

Prepare (no need to memorize) the reading(s) for the role(s) you are interested in. You may also be asked to do an additional cold reading from the script.

PRINCIPAL ROLES (Ages listed are the STAGE age)	
<input type="checkbox"/> MINSTREL (ANY AGE - MALE OR FEMALE)	Read page 5
<input type="checkbox"/> QUEEN AGGRAVAIN (50+ FEMALE)	Read page 2
<input type="checkbox"/> KING SEXTIMUS (50+ MALE) *MUTE +	Read page 8
<input type="checkbox"/> PRINCE DAUNTLESS (30+ MALE)	Read page 7
<input type="checkbox"/> SIR HARRY (20'S AND UP MALE)	Read page 6
<input type="checkbox"/> LADY LARKEN (20'S AND UP MALE)	Read page 4
<input type="checkbox"/> WINNIFRED (30+ FEMALE)	Read page 3
SUPPORTING ROLES	
<input type="checkbox"/> WIZARD (20'S AND UP MALE)	Read Minstrel p. 5
<input type="checkbox"/> JESTER (ANY AGE - MALE OR FEMALE)	Read Minstrel p. 5
<input type="checkbox"/> SIR STUDLEY OR SIR LUCE (TEENS & UP MALE)	Read Sir Harry p. 6
<input type="checkbox"/> KNIGHTS 1-3 (TEENS & UP MALE)	Read Sir Harry p. 6
<input type="checkbox"/> PRINCESS #12 (TEEN & UP FEMALE) – MAY BE DOUBLED)	Read Larken p. 4
<input type="checkbox"/> ROWENA, MERILL OR LUCILLE (TEENS & UP FEMALE)	Read Larken p. 4
<input type="checkbox"/> LADY 1 & LADY 2 (TEENS & UP FEMALE)	Read Larken p. 4
<input type="checkbox"/> ENSEMBLE (male or female – any age) Ladies in waiting, knights, soldiers, servants, townspeople	Read Minstrel p. 5
<input type="checkbox"/> PANTOMINE CHARACTERS (YOUNGER MALE/FEMALE) will also be in ensemble	Read Minstrel p. 5

Queen Aggravain (FEMALE able to play 50+)

Character: Fast-talking, overbearing, dominant mother and wife who periodically sets off on vicious monologues. Smart, self-centered and shrewish.

Speaks to Prince Dauntless who has asked again about getting married. Spoken quickly and clearly.

QUEEN Don't want you to get married? Don't *want* you to get married? Dauntless – don't you trust me?

Of course I want you to get married! How many times have I said to you, "I want you to get married?" Only this morning, I was saying to your father, I said "Sextimus, I want that boy to get married. It just isn't normal for a boy that age to stay single! And after all, he is the prince," I said, "Don't forget that. He's next in line to the throne. I mean we're not exactly the oldest people in the world; but on the other hand we're not going to live forever, and I just know that I'd feel much better, much easier and more relaxed in my mind if the boy were married, and settled and set!" And that is absolutely verbatim, *exactly* what I said to your father this morning.

He may be a mean, stupid, dreadful, selfish, rotten man, but he is your father and I want you to respect him. But, there is only one person who really cares about you.

You *are* a prince and you must marry someone suitable, someone who's good enough and smart enough, and fine enough for my nice, sweet, beautiful baby boy.

Prince Dauntless (MALE able to play 25-40's)

Character: Meek prince. Tied to his mommy's apron strings. A kind man who is well-liked by his kingdom. The long-frustrated prince, forever hopeful of finding a bride.

Princess Winnifred, who has just swum the moat, is ready to leave and go home thinking she's gone to the nuthouse!

DAUNTLESS No, wait! **I** am Prince Dauntless the Drab. Please don't go. I like you. Everybody does. *Queen scowls and laughs.* Well, almost everybody.

I really like you... You swam the moat! *Fred falls in the moat. Excitedly goes to Queen.*

You ought to see her swim, Mama. She's wonderful! I like her. She swam the moat – twice!

Can I marry her, Mama, can I? *No response.*

Mama, sometimes I get the funniest feeling that you don't want me to get married...

Harry (MALE able to play 20-30)

Character: *The most bold, handsome, and influential knight in the kingdom - and he knows it. He is desperate to find Dauntless a wife so he & Lady Larken can marry since she is pregnant.*

Enters with Lady Larken and speaks to the Queen

HARRY Madame, I have the honor to request a Perilous Labor. I wish to search for a true princess, a princess of the Royal Blood: one who will suit both Your Majesty and Prince Dauntless.

I plan to head North, over the mountains ... across the Badlands ... and into the marsh land where the beautiful Swamp Lily grows.

Turning to Lady Larken

Don't be afraid, little Larken. I'll bring back a princess who is not only a real princess, but one who will be able to pass the Queen's test. Don't be afraid. I shan't be away long.

Princess Winnifred (FEMALE able to play 20-30)

Character: *A kind, bold, bawdy, ungainly princess. Our heroine. Spirited and fun, gracious and friendly, with perhaps a quirk or two. Most of all, self-confident*

Winnifred wanders on stage counting sheep out loud. She has spent a sleepless night.

WINNIFRED 37,428...

(Responding to Queen's question) 37,429 sheep.

What do you stuff your mattresses with – jousting equipment? I mean that bed ought to be moved down to the torture chamber.

Sleep??? I never shut my eyes.

Responding to Dauntless who says she has passed the test. Fred draws herself up with her most noble and surprised but satisfied smile.

A pea under twenty mattresses? That was the test??? No wonder I'm black and blue!

Twenty mattresses? Dauntless, dear? I will leave the wedding arrangements up to you. You'd better start looking around for a small kingdom for us – I've got a feeling we aren't going to want to live with the in-laws.

Very delicately, she stretches out on the breakfast table and goes to sleep.

Lady Larken (FEMALE able to play 20-30)

Character: Beautiful, and pregnant - ingénue type who is deeply in love with Sir Harry

Speaking to Sir Harry

LADY LARKEN My darling, you missed the test. The latest princess was a failure.

(Hesitant) Darling... Do you remember the Royal Joust on Whitsunday? When you were called Sir Harry, the Fairest and Bravest Knight in all the Land, and everyone agreed that you had a brilliant future ahead of you; that you might someday become Prime Minister?

Do you remember the picnic we all had later on the green with the lovely cold pheasant?

And you and I wandered away from the others to climb the hill and watch the sun going down? Well.

(Pauses, takes a deep breath, then speaks) I'm going to have a baby.

(Harry is stunned). So you see, a princess for Dauntless *must* be found... and soon or I shall have to go somewhere.

Minstrel (Teen-Adult – MALE or FEMALE)

Character: The narrator of the story who also blends into the scenes. Charismatic & all knowing - as a narrator should be. Engages the audience. Lute playing a plus!

Addressing the audience:

MINSTREL There are many versions of this story; I sing them all. The one I have just shared is the prettiest, but it is not quite accurate. I happen to know the true story of “The Princess and the Pea” for the very good reason that I was there.

It was a small kingdom ruled over by a talkative queen and a mute king. The princess in the *true* story was not the only girl put to the test. Actually, she was one of the 13 girls – girls who came to the castle hoping to wed the Prince, but who, for one reason or another, more found to be unsuitable.

As a matter of fact, the day I arrived at the court, they were testing Princess Number 12. I wished her success. She was a pretty little thing

– But it was not to be.