“Life is pandemonium” in this zany, fast-paced, irreverent, comedic hit. The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee follows an eclectic group of middle schoolers as they fight for the title of regional spelling bee champ – and all the glory that comes with it. This playful and witty Tony Award-winning musical is an unforgettable experience that chronicles the joy, heartache, and passion of those who love to compete.

THE PURPOSE OF A PRODUCTION PREVIEW GUIDE:

Many people have different ideas about what material is appropriate, both for themselves and their families. This production preview guide is provided to give you the necessary information to determine if the content of our production is suitable for you and your loved ones. Please be aware that this document is provided with the intent of full disclosure, and therefore contains plot spoilers. Also, because all of our productions are locally produced, there may be cases where minor changes occur as the director prepares the show for the stage. In such cases, this guide will be updated accordingly. Once the show is open and on stage, there will be no further changes.

SCRIPT CONTENT DETAILS:

PLEASE NOTE: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee is a scripted musical that also relies heavily on improvisation, meaning that no two performances are the same. The below guide represents the best information we have regarding possible responses and situations.

Language

Mature language is used occasionally throughout the show. There is one use of “shit,” four uses of “damn,” and two uses of “hell.” The language also includes three uses of “Goddamn”, one use of “Jesus Christ”, and four uses of “Oh God”. There are several instances of ableist language, including “dumb,” “moronic,” “idiots,” “lame,” “stupid,” and “crazy.”

The words used in the spelling bee vary from performance to performance, and the production may include language like “crap”, “hell”, and additional uses of the word “shit”. There may also be references to crude bodily functions.

Violence

When Logainne asks to hear the word “strabismus” used in a sentence, the example given mentions a child named Billy being beaten by bullies. After seeing the disappointment of the kids when they spell words incorrectly, the comfort counselor Mitch Mahoney says: “I just want to beat them up a little, so they understand that pain has degrees, and this is nothing.” When Schwarzy asks for multiple definitions of “sluice,” Panch gets upset and has to be physically restrained by the other adults.
Sexual Content

In the song “My Friend the Dictionary,” Schwarzy says that she heard Olive is, “pro-choice, though still a virgin.” Chip sings a song called “My Unfortunate Erection,” which includes lyrics like “I don’t blame my brain, but I do blame my penis,” and, “my stiffy has ruined my spelling.” In the epilogue, there is a callback to “My Unfortunate Erection” where it is revealed that Chip “in the course of time came to appreciate his erection, as did many others.”

Drugs/Alcohol

This production may or may not contain any drug or alcohol-related content, depending on the words used for the spelling bee during each performance. There is one word that references opium in its definition and example sentence, and another example sentence that references marijuana.