

Cast of Characters

The characters of this story are based on film noir archetypes from the 1940's. While it is not essential that the characters directly imitate the actors I list, I think it would be helpful to Google them and get a sense of the style parodied here.

Puzzle Puppy

Puzzle Puppy is the main character. He is a Phillip Marlowe style detective, conceived in the style of Dick Powell or Humphrey Bogart. His voice needs to contain some weary sarcasm, both understated and dry. We used a dog costume pattern from a fabric store (basically like footie pajamas with a head piece). A loosely tied necktie is also a nice touch.

Pixie Poodle

Pixie Poodle is a send up of the *femme fatale*, a strong Barbara Stanwyk type. She is beautiful and knows it. She is no-nonsense and will get what she wants. Her costume was made from a fabric store pattern, a pink poodle. Adding some kind of sparkly jewelry is also helpful.

Cat

Cat is a send up of the nervous gangster, a James Cagney or Peter Lorre type who needs to speak in stereotypical movie gangster accent... over the top! The costume was a cat pattern from a fabric store pattern.

Police Dog

Police Dog is a helpful, competent law officer. As I wrote the character, I imagined a stereotypical movie cop with an Irish accent. The accent is certainly optional. We used yet another fabric store pattern for his costume.

Mole

Mole is the villain who freely admits this proclivity with pride. While not based on specific actor, Mole is stereotypical bad guy who likes to talk about himself. The pattern for his costume was a bit of a challenge to find, but there is a craft store mole pattern out there.



An Alternate Way to Cast and Present the Show

The traditional method of casting children in the lead parts who are old enough to memorize and deliver lines and sing solos is a great way to present this show. At my school, however, we use an alternate method. We cast one group of performers to read the dialogue and sing the solos (not memorized) into microphones on stands off to the side. We cast a separate group of performers to wear the costumes and pantomime (not lip-sync) the action as the readers speak the lines. For very young actors, we have adults who are 'movement coaches' sitting on the floor in front of the stage cueing them to gesture when the reader of their dialog is speaking. It may sound out of the box, but it DOES work, especially for very young children! This method employs twice as many performers in special parts. It also means that every word spoken will be spoken into a microphone without having wireless microphones for every actor. It has also been my experience with elementary performers that frequently the best readers aren't comfortable on the stage while some of my most outgoing costumed performers aren't necessarily excellent speakers. This way, the performers can play to their strongest talent.





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Projection 2: Puzzle Puppy Office Interior (Clear Night)



Enter Puzzle Puppy

(Puzzle Puppy enters, standing near desk)

Puzzle Puppy: In a city of problems, I'm a dog who sniffs around until they are solved. They call me Puzzle Puppy, and this is my theme song...

Accompaniment



Puzzle Puppy Theme

Straight Eighths $\text{♩} = 100$

mf

Chorus

mf

5

Who is on the case? _____ Puz - zle Pup - py! _____

9

Who is on the case? _____ Puz - zle Pup - py! _____





13

Bad guys, be - ware when he is there!

17

He is the sleuth who'll sniff out the truth! Woof! Woof!

21

mf Puz - zle Pup - py! — *mp* Puz - zle Pup - py! —



Puppy Treats

Funky! (straight eighths) ♩=120

Pixie
mf

Pup - py treats, I love my

4 pup - py treats and when I get them I sing — this — song! —

7 Pixie and Chorus
Pup - py treats, I love my pup - py treats, a dog with pup - py treats can't go —



Projection 5: Puzzle Puppy Office Interior (Stormy Night)

Puzzle Puppy: Puppy treats, got it. Then what happened?

Pixie: Oh, the horror! I went back to get my yummy puppy treats later... and... and...

Puzzle Puppy: *And...?*

Pixie: And... they were *GONE!!*



Accompaniment

5

Drama

♩=120

Chorus
mf ————— *f*

Bum! Bum! Bum!

(Puzzle Puppy and Pixie look around confused and shrug to audience)

Pixie: So, you see...you simply *must* help me, Puzzle Puppy!

Puzzle Puppy: I can see there's no point in arguing with you.

Pixie: You don't know the half of it. Oh, and one more thing. I found this clue at the scene.

(Pixie hands Puzzle Puppy a large jingle bell)

Puzzle Puppy: What is it?

Pixie: It's a bell. Like one you might find... *on a cat's collar!*

