

**The Pirates of Penzance**  
**A U D I T I O N P I E C E S**

<b>Character</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>
Frederic	Act I No 7 Oh is there not one maiden breast	Act II p 33 “Upon my word --/-- at any price I will do my duty.
Major-General Stanley	Act I No 13 I am the very model (1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> verses only) Act II No 14 Sighing softly to the river (2 <sup>nd</sup> verse only)	Act II p 27 “why do I sit here? --/-- march against these scoundrels?”
Pirate King	Act I No 3 Oh better far to live and die	Act II p 33 “I’m afraid you don’t --/-- Not a word! He is doomed!”
Samuel	Act I No 1 Pour, oh pour the pirate sherry Act II No 12 With cat-like tread	Act I p 7 “Besides, we can --/-- you wouldn’t have us absolutely merciless?”
Sergeant of Police	Act II No 10 When a felon’s not engaged	Act II p 38 “This is perplexing --/-- It’s too late now.”
Edith and Kate	Act I No 5 Climbing over rocky mountain	Act I p 13 “What a picturesque spot --/-- and paddle.”
Mabel	Act I No 8 Poor wandering one	Act II p 38 “Sergeant approach --/-- go ye and do yours.”
Ruth	Act I No 2 When Frederic was a little lad	Act I p 9 “Oh take me with you --/-- lost, lost, lost.”

# The Pirates of Penzance

## AUDITION PIECES

### NOTES FOR AUDITIONEES

Thank you for taking the time to prepare for and to show an interest in this production.

Keep in mind that *The Pirates of Penzance* is a comedy!

Our obvious task is to evaluate your performance and assess your potential to do justice to the role.

There will be some performers whose work is already familiar to one or another of the production team, which makes it easier to gauge their potential to deliver a final polished performance.

For those who are complete newcomers to the Society, we say – “this is your chance to impress.” We can only make a decision on what we see here, so do your best – and enjoy it!

The factors which have a bearing on our decision are –

- Physical attributes.
  - Those which are specified in the text as well as those which the director deems desirable.
- Vocal abilities
  - Singing technique
  - Delivery of dialogue
  - Diction
  - Text interpretation.
- Deportment.
  - Ease of movement about the stage.
- Blend
  - Where we aim to achieve an ideal mix for the production, endeavouring to cast performers who will physically and vocally best illustrate the story.

Please do not be disappointed if you miss out on a role. We are keen to foster your talent. If you do not think it too “demeaning” you may choose to accept an understudy, and/or work in the chorus – and we **do** mean “work”. Gilbert and Sullivan is not as easy to sing as some people think!

An understudy or “cover” is often seen as an onerous position. That person must be prepared to attend all the principal rehearsals required for the character, and be fully capable of going on in the role – but doesn’t get to appear unless the principal is absolutely incapable of doing the performance – not a great incentive is it? But great training! Many a principal performer today got their chance through being an understudy.

Are you ready? We are looking forward to your audition.

Ron Pidcock  
*Director*

and

Trevor Henley  
*Musical Director*

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

FREDERIC

- FRED:** Upon my word, this is most curious – most absurdly whimsical. Five and a quarter! No one would think it to look at me!
- RUTH:** You are glad now, I'll be bound, that you spared us. You would never have forgiven yourself when you discovered that you had killed two of your comrades.
- FRED:** My comrades?
- KING:** I'm afraid you don't appreciate the delicacy of your position. You were apprenticed to us –
- FRED:** Until I reached my twenty-first year.
- KING:** No, until you reached your twenty-first birthday, and, going by birthdays, you are as yet only five and a quarter.
- FRED:** You don't mean to say you are going to hold me to that?
- KING:** No, we merely remind you of the fact, and leave the rest to your sense of duty.
- FRED:** Don't put it on that footing! As I was merciful to you just now, be merciful to me! I implore you not to insist on the letter of your bond just as the cup of happiness is at my lips!
- RUTH:** We insist on nothing; we content ourselves with pointing out to you your duty.
- FRED:** (*after a pause*) Well, you have appealed to my sense of duty, and my duty is only too clear. I abhor your infamous calling; I shudder at the thought that I have ever been mixed up with it; but duty is before all – at any price I will do my duty.

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

PIRATE KING

**KING:** I'm afraid you don't appreciate the delicacy of your position. You were apprenticed to us -

**FRED:** Until I reached my twenty-first year.

**KING:** No, until you reached your twenty-first birthday, and, going by birthdays, you are as yet only five and a quarter.

**FRED:** You don't mean to say you are going to hold me to that?

**KING:** No, we merely remind you of the fact, and leave the rest to your sense of duty.

**FRED:** *(after a pause)* Well, you have appealed to my sense of duty, and my duty is only too clear. I abhor your infamous calling – but at any price I will do my duty.

**KING:** Bravely spoken! Come, you are one of us once more.

**FRED:** Lead on, I follow. *(Suddenly)* Oh, horror!

**KING:** What's the matter?

**FRED:** Ought I to tell you? No, no I cannot do it; and yet, as one of your band –

**KING:** Speak out, I charge you by that sense of conscientiousness to which we have never yet appealed in vain.

**FRED:** General Stanley, the father of my Mabel –

**KING:** Yes, yes!

**FRED:** He escaped from you on the plea that he was an orphan!

**KING:** He did!

**FRED:** It breaks my heart to betray the honoured father of the girl I adore, but as your apprentice I have no alternative. It is my duty to tell you that General Stanley is no orphan!

**KING:** What!

**FRED:** More than that, he never was one!

**KING:** Am I to understand that, to save his contemptible life, he dared to practise on our credulous simplicity! *(Frederic nods as he weeps)* Our revenge shall be swift and terrible. We will go and collect our band and attack Tremorden Castle this very night.

**FRED:** But – stay –

**KING:** Not a word! He is doomed!

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY

- GEN:** Why do I sit here? To escape from the pirates' clutches, I described myself as an orphan, and, heaven help me, I am no orphan! I come here to humble myself before the tombs of my ancestors, and to implore their pardon for having brought dishonour on the family escutcheon.
- FRED:** But you forget, sir, you only bought the property a year ago, and the stucco in your baronial hall is scarcely dry.
- GEN:** Frederic, in this chapel are ancestors: you cannot deny that. With the estate, I bought the chapel and its contents. I don't know whose ancestors they were, but I know whose ancestors they are, and I shudder to think that their descendant by purchase (if I may so describe myself) should have brought disgrace upon what, I have no doubt, was an unstained escutcheon.
- FRED:** Be comforted. Had you not acted as you did, these reckless men would assuredly have called in the nearest clergyman, and have married your large family on the spot.
- GEN:** I thank you for your proffered solace, but it is unavailing. I assure you, Frederic, that such is the anguish and remorse I feel at the abominable falsehood by which I escaped these easily deluded pirates, that I would go to their simple-minded chief this very night and confess all, did I not fear that the consequences would be most disastrous to myself. At what time does your expedition march against these scoundrels?

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

SAMUEL

**SAM:** Besides, we can offer you but little temptation to remain with us. We don't seem to make piracy pay. I'm sure I don't know why, but we don't.

**FRED:** I know why, but, alas! I mustn't tell you; it wouldn't be right.

**KING:** Why not, my boy? It's only half past eleven, and you are one of us until the clock strikes twelve.

**SAM:** True, and until then you are bound to protect our interests.

**FRED:** Well, then, it is my duty, as a pirate, to tell you that you are too tender-hearted. For instance, you make a point of never attacking a weaker party than yourselves, and when you attack a stronger party you invariably get thrashed. . . . then, again, you make a point of never molesting an orphan!

**SAM:** Of course: we are orphans ourselves, and know what it is.

**FRED:** Yes, but it has got about, and what is the consequence? Every one we capture says he's an orphan. The last three ships we took proved to be manned entirely by orphans, and so we had to let them go. One would think that Great Britain's mercantile navy was recruited solely from her orphan asylums – which we know is not the case.

**SAM:** But, hang it all! You wouldn't have us absolutely merciless?

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

**SERGEANT OF POLICE**

**SERG:** This is perplexing.

**POLICE:** We cannot understand it at all.

**SERG:** Still, as he is actuated by a sense of duty –

**POLICE:** That makes a difference, of course. At the same time we repeat we cannot understand it at all.

**SERG:** No matter; our course is clear. We must do our best to capture these pirates alone. It is most distressing to us to be the agents whereby our erring fellow-creatures are deprived of that liberty which is so dear to all – but we should have thought of that before we joined the force.

**POLICE:** We should!

**SERG:** It is too late now!

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

**EDITH**

**KATE:** What a picturesque spot! I wonder where we are!

**EDITH:** And I wonder where papa is? We have left him ever so far behind.

**ISABEL:** Oh, he will be here presently.

**KATE:** But how thoroughly delightful it is to be so entirely alone! Why, in all probability we are the first human beings who ever set foot on this enchanting spot.

**ISABEL:** Except for the mermaids – it's the very place for mermaids.

**KATE:** Who are only human beings down to the waist!

**EDITH:** And who can't be said strictly to set foot anywhere. Tails they may, but feet they cannot.

**KATE:** But what shall we do until papa and the servants arrive with the luncheon?

**EDITH:** We are quite alone, and the sea is as smooth as glass. Suppose we take off our shoes and stockings and paddle?



The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

**KATE**

**KATE:** What a picturesque spot! I wonder where we are!

**EDITH:** And I wonder where papa is? We have left him ever so far behind.

**ISABEL:** Oh, he will be here presently! Remember poor papa is not as young as we are, and we come over rather difficult country.

**KATE:** But how thoroughly delightful it is to be so entirely alone! Why, in all probability we are the first human beings who ever set foot on this enchanting spot.

**ISABEL:** Except for the mermaids – it's the very place for mermaids.

**KATE:** Who are only human beings down to the waist!

**EDITH:** And who can't be said strictly to set foot anywhere. Tails they may, but feet they cannot.

**KATE:** But what shall we do until papa and the servants arrive with the luncheon?

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

**MABEL**

**MABEL:** Sergeant, approach! Young Frederic was to have led you to death and glory.

**POLICE:** That is not a pleasant way of putting it.

**MABEL:** No matter; he will not so lead you, for he has allied himself once more with his old associates.

**POLICE:** He has acted shamefully!

**MABEL:** You speak falsely. You know nothing about it. He has acted nobly.

**POLICE:** He has acted nobly!

**MABEL:** Dearly as I loved him before, his heroic sacrifice to his sense of duty has endeared him to me tenfold. If it was his duty to constitute himself my foe, it is likewise my duty to regard him in that light. He has done his duty. I will do mine. Go and do yours.

The Pirates of Penzance  
AUDITION PIECES

RUTH

- RUTH:** Oh, take me with you! I cannot live if I am left behind.
- FRED:** Ruth, I will be quite candid with you. You are very dear to me, as you know, but I must be circumspect. You see, you are considerably older than I. A lad of twenty-one usually looks for a wife of seventeen.
- RUTH:** A wife of seventeen! You will find me a wife of a thousand!
- FRED:** No, but I shall find you a wife of forty-seven, and that is quite enough. Ruth, tell me candidly, and without reserve, compared to other women – how are you?
- RUTH:** I will answer you truthfully, master – I have a slight cold, but otherwise I am quite well.
- FRED:** I am sorry for your cold, but I was referring rather to your personal appearance. Compared with other women, are you beautiful?
- RUTH:** (*bashfully*) I have been told so, dear master.
- FRED:** Ah, but lately?
- RUTH:** Oh, no, years and years ago.
- FRED:** What do you think of yourself?
- RUTH:** It is a delicate question to answer, but I think I am a fine woman.
- FRED:** Thank you, Ruth, I believe you, for I am sure you would not practise on my inexperience; I wish to do the right thing, and if – I say if – you are really a fine woman, your age shall be no obstacle to our union! (*chorus of girls heard in the distance.*) Listen! Surely I hear voices! Who has ventured to approach our all but inaccessible lair? Can it be Custom House? No, it does not sound like Custom House.
- RUTH:** (*aside*) Confusion! It is the voices of young girls. If he should see them I am lost.
- FRED:** (*looking off*) By all that's marvellous, a bevy of beautiful maidens!
- RUTH:** Lost! Lost! Lost!