

AMERICANS ALL (ABRIDGED)

A MUSICAL IN ONE ACT

Book, Music and Lyrics by Judge James P. Gray

Music Arranged by Susan Boettger

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CAST OF CHARACTERS
(7 MEN, 7 WOMEN, FLEXIBLE)

TEACHER (m)Mr. Jim Gray.

STUDENTS

AMIR (m).....Popular and of Arab heritage.

BRAD (m).....Nerdy “smart guy.”

JENNY (w).....Popular and from the South.

JOSE (m).....Quiet and reserved.

J.T. (m).....Excellent basketball player.

JULIA (w).....Dancer and of Arab heritage.

KATE (w).....Spunky and bright.

KIM (w)Dancer and contemplative.

MARIA (w).....Inquisitive and of Hispanic heritage.

MICHAEL (m).....Gets along with everyone; of Jewish heritage.

PARDIS (w)Realistic and well-grounded.

RITCHIE (m)Social and a flashy dresser.

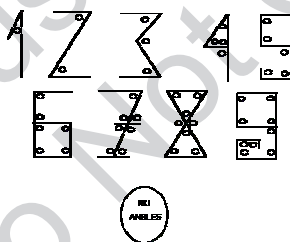
SALLY (w)Slow and emotional, but loveable.

PROPS

- Teacher's desk and chair
- Students' desks and chairs
- School blackboard or whiteboard with chalk or marking pen
- American flag on pole and in a stand
- Horn-rimmed glasses for the "smart guy" Brad
- Basketball jersey for J.T.
- Hand calculator for Brad

PRODUCTION NOTES

1. The piano accompaniment may effectively be joined by a bass and drums.
2. Teacher wears a shirt and tie or skirt and blouse.
3. Students wear (khaki) pants/skirts and white shirts/blouses.
4. On the classroom black/whiteboard is written the following:



1. CITIZENSHIP
2. RELATIONSHIPS
3. COMMUNITY
4. EDUCATION

PROJECT PRO-JECT
ESCHEW MEDIOCRITY

5. When words are underlined in the lyrics of the songs, they are to be spoken by half of the class for accent and sung by the other half.

AMERICANS ALL (ABRIDGED)

6. The players are welcome to use their own first names for their own character parts. All characters may be either male or female, except for the boy and girl singers in “Every Day.” The size of the cast may be increased or decreased as desired and the singing and speaking parts may be rearranged to fit the numbers and abilities of the cast members.
7. No students are to speak in class except when called upon, pointed to, or otherwise recognized by the teacher.
8. In the song “Pick It Up,” about half the class will position their hands like shovels when they say/sing “Pick it up!” or otherwise act out the picking up of some trash, a friend, etc.
9. Every class has a “smart guy,” and so does ours. Dress him/her like a “nerd,” with horn-rimmed glasses.
10. It is not necessary for the Hispanic, Jewish or Arab students actually to be of those heritages. The Hebrew and Arab-language verses in the Jewish and Arab songs are written phonetically, but may be omitted for time or language restraints.
11. An American flag should be posted in the corner of the classroom, and held up when the class sings to “salute” the red, white and blue in the song “Americans All” and unfurled behind the students at the very end of the show.
12. The composer wishes to acknowledge the following people and programs for their inspiration: his wife, Grace Walker Gray; his clerk, Yvonne Hyatt, and his bailiff, Joe Betancourt, for their advice and enthusiasm; the “Stay in School” program from Orange County, California and its founder Judge Jack Mandel; Mr. Abdul AbuTayi; Mr. Fawzi Halaka; Rabbi Marc Rubenstein; U.S. District Judge Andrew J. Guilford; Reach’s Rules, by Robert K. Cooper, Ph.D.; the Irvine High School Choir and its great director, Richard Messenger; and, most of all, the highly talented arranger of this music, Ms. Susan Boettger, a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music.
13. This musical presentation is unabashedly meant to help expose our youth to life and to expand their horizons, as well as to have some fun along the way. I hope that this work is approached and accepted in that spirit. Pro-ject!

*Dedicated to the loving memory of my parents,
ELIZABETH POLIN GRAY
and
JUDGE WILLIAM P. GRAY*

MUSICAL NUMBERS

SONG #1	JUST A LITTLE PLUCK	Instrumental
SONG #2	HOW CAN I HELP THEM TO BE?	Teacher
SONG #3	PICK IT UP!	All
SONG #4	YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE	All
SONG #5	EVERY DAY	Girl and Boy Student
SONG #6	HATE SPOILS THE SAUCE	Jenny
SONG #7	VIVA EL TRABAJO Y LA PAZ	Maria
SONG #8	LIVE, LOVE, LAUGH, SHALOM	Michael
SONG #9	SALAM	Julia and Amir
SONG #10	HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY	All
SONG #11	AMERICANS ALL	All

AT RISE:

**SONG #1: JUST A LITTLE PLUCK
(INSTRUMENTAL)**

Teacher on stage fills out black/whiteboard as set forth in the production notes.

**SONG #2: HOW CAN I HELP THEM TO BE?
(TEACHER, 5 STUDENTS)**

This song is sung reflectively by TEACHER off to the side, while STUDENTS are coming into the stage/classroom individually and in small groups and preparing for the day's class. They interact with each other, except with BRAD, whom they either ignore or slightly tease.

TEACHER:

THERE'S SO VERY MUCH OUT THERE,
IT'S A STRAIN TO CONCEIVE.
THERE IS HIST'RY AND ALGEBRA,
THEY'LL BE SWAMPED, THEY'LL JUST LEAVE.

I CAN FORCE FEED THEM FROM BOOKS,
STUFF THEM TILL THEY CAN'T BREATHE.
THOUGH THERE'S TESTS AND GRADES,
THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO ACHIEVE.

SCHOOL COUNTS JUST A FRACTION,
I WANT TO HELP THEM SEE.
LIFE'S GOAL IS SATISFACTION;
THEN ONE'S SOUL IS SET FREE.

HOW CAN I HELP THEM TO BE?
HOW CAN I HELP THEM TO BE?

STUDENT 1:

OUR TIME ON THIS PLANET IS SO SHORT, IS SO SWEET.

STUDENT 2:

WE CAN'T WASTE IT JUST EXISTING,
THE SAME CHORES TO REPEAT.

STUDENT 3:

TAKE YOUR UNCLE TO FISH,
PLAY BALL IN THE STREET.

STUDENTS 4 AND 5: (*Dancing.*)

LEARN THE JOYS OF CREATING,
FEEL THE STAGE UNDER YOUR FEET.

TEACHER:

HOW CAN I HELP THEM TO BE?
OH, HOW CAN I HELP THEM,
HELP THEM TO SEE?

IF I CAN PUSH THEM TO WONDER,
FAN THEIR SPARKS INTO FLAME,
HELP THEM TO SEE THAT THEIR LEARNING
IS MORE ENRICHING THAN FAME.

IF I CAN EXPAND THEIR HORIZONS,
THEIR CREATIVE MINDS SET FREE,
THEN I'LL HAVE FOUND MY EXISTENCE
AND MY ETERNITY.

FOR I WILL HAVE HELPED THEM TO BE.
SO HOW CAN THEY NOW START TO SEE?
HOW CAN I SHOW WHAT I FEEL FOR THEM?
HOW . . . CAN I BEST . . . MAKE IT REAL FOR THEM?

REAL FOR THEM?
HOW CAN I HELP THEM TO BE?

TEACHER: (*Enters.*) Good morning, class.

ALL STUDENTS: (*Mumbling something, except BRAD, who stands up and says.*) Good morning.

TEACHER: Good morning, class!

ALL STUDENTS: (*With BRAD more audible.*) Good morning.

BRAD sits down.

TEACHER: I'm sure you're all anxious to begin your assignments today on Project Pro-ject. (*Long "o."*) This means that anytime any of us does something, we are going to do it right; we are going to Pro-ject. We are going to earn the reputation that if people know we did something, whether it's playing basketball, doing an assignment, or even taking a visitor on a tour of our school, we are going to do it fully, enthusiastically, and do it the best we know how. In this we will cover four sections, which I have written on the board. As you can see, they are CITIZENSHIP, RELATIONSHIPS, COMMUNITY, and EDUCATION. (*Pointing to the black/whiteboard.*)

Now let's started. What does it mean to have good citizenship?

Several students raise their hands. TEACHER points to SALLY.

SALLY: To be a good citizen.

TEACHER: Yes, but let's try to define the word without using it in its own definition. Anyone else? Julia?

JULIA: To volunteer for the underprivileged.

TEACHER: Jose?

JOSE: To vote in elections?

While TEACHER is talking, SALLY, who is easily visible to the audience wads up some paper, looks around, and lets it fall to the floor.

TEACHER: Yes. And . . . (*Directly looking at the dropped paper on the floor, and then looking questioningly at SALLY.*) . . . Sally?

SALLY: (*Begrudgingly.*) Not to litter, and not to pollute our environment.

TEACHER: Certainly so. We can start as good citizens by not polluting the area around us by littering - - here in the classroom or anywhere. Get the feeling! Get the spirit! Get the attitude! Get the pride! It carries over into everything else you do in life. Let me put it this way:

SONG #3: PICK IT UP!
(ALL)

TEACHER:

WHEN YOU SEE SOME DIRT AND TRASH AROUND
THAT'S MESSING UP OUR SPACE
AND THE LITTER IS CROWDING US
TILL THAT CLEAN WE JUST CAN'T TRACE.

DON'T LOOK AWAY,
DON'T LET IT SIT LIKE SCARS UPON OUR FACE.
JUST STEP RIGHT UP AND SHOW YOUR LEAD
AND PUT TRASH RIGHT IN ITS PLACE.

PICK IT UP!

STUDENT 1:

JUST STAND UP TALL BY BENDING DOWN
AND DOING WHAT IS BEST.

ALL:

PICK IT UP!

STUDENT 1:

WE'RE NOT THE TYPES THAT TOLERATE
THE FOULING OF OUR NEST.

ALL:

KEEP IT CLEAN!

STUDENT 2:

JOIN THE TEAM AND GET ON BOARD
AND BE IN THE RIGHTFUL GAME.

ALL:

DRESS IT SHARP!

ALL OF US CAN DO OUR PART
OR AT LEAST IMPROVE OUR AIM.

STUDENT 3:

AND IF YOUR TEAMMATE TAKES A SHOT
BUT IT FAILS TO HIT THE RIM.

STUDENT 4:

YOU CAN SHOW THAT YOU ARE ON THE TEAM
BY BEING THERE TO TIP IT IN.

ALL:

PICK IT UP!
SHOW YOUR STUFF!

TEACHER:

AND THE SAME IS TRUE WHEN YOUR WALK AND TALK
ARE STARTIN' A BIT TO

ALL:

DRAG.

TEACHER:

AND THE FUEL IS LOW DOWN IN YOUR TANK,
AND YOUR SMILE BEGINS TO

ALL:

SAG.

TEACHER:

REMEMBER THIS: NO ONE CAN GET YOU DOWN.
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT CALLS YOUR

ALL:

SHOTS.

TEACHER:

AND YOU'RE THE ONE THAT DICTATES
IF YOUR WAY IS COLD OR IT IS

ALL:

HOT.

TEACHER:

PICK 'EM UP!

STUDENT 5:

YOUR WALK AND TALK ARE YOU
KEYS TO FEELIN' FINE.

ALL:

DRESS IT SHARP!

STUDENT 6:

SO STRUT YOUR STUFF,
DO YOUR BEST,
YOU WILL START TO SHINE.

ALL:

PICK IT UP!

STUDENT 7:

NO ONE CAN HOLD YOU DOWN
IF UP IS WHERE YOU'LL BE.

ALL:

BE IN CHARGE!

STUDENT 8:

WHEN YOU HOLD YOUR SPIRITS UP,
THEN UP IS YOUR DESTINY.

TEACHER:

SO WHEN LIFE IS FACING SEVERAL CLOUDS
AND GLOOM IS ON YOUR TRACK,
JUST FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE
AND GOOD WILL COME RIGHT BACK.

STUDENT 9:

YOUR WALK, TALK AND SPIRITS
ARE ALL IN YOUR CONTROL, NOT MINE.

STUDENT 10:

IF YOU ADJUST YOUR ATTITUDE,
THEN YOU WILL BE JUST FINE.

TEACHER:

AND WHEN YOU SEE YOUR BROTHER
KIND OF SAD AND KIND OF LOW,
AND ALL HE SEES ARE DIRT AND TRASH
AND SEES NO OTHER PLACE TO GO,

THAT'S THE TIME WHEN YOU HELP HIM
STAND UP TALL AND FACE THE WORLD.
AND HOW HE CAN FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES.
HE'S NOT ALONE, YOU'RE WITH HIM NOW!

ALL:

PICK HIM UP!

STUDENT 11:

GOOD THINGS CAN'T GROW UP TALL
UNLESS YOU PLANT THE SEED.

ALL:

STAND HIM TALL!

STUDENT 12:

IT WILL SHOW THAT ONCE AGAIN A FRIEND
IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED.

ALL:

PICK HIM UP!

STUDENT 13:

HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS
TAKEN ONE ON THE CHIN.

ALL:

BE IN CHARGE!

STUDENT 1:

HE CAN COME FROM BEING DOWN
TO BE THE BEST HE'S EVER BEEN.

TEACHER:

SO IF YOU CATCH MY MEANING,
IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT,
YOU WILL SEE THERE IS NO DOUBT.
THAT STRAIGHT'NING UP YOUR ATTITUDE
IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT.

WE DO OUR PART TOGETHER
WE'RE NOT ALONE WHEN WE'RE A FRIEND.
AND WITH YOUR HEALTHY ATTITUDE,
YOU'LL BE ON TOP RIGHT TO THE END.

STUDENT 2:

SO IF YOU PICK UP YOUR WALK AND TALK
AND KEEP YOUR SPIRITS TRUE,
YOU WILL PICK UP YOUR FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY
AND BE AMAZED WHAT YOU CAN DO.

ALL:

SO PICK IT UP,
NO MATTER WHAT HARD KNOCKS MAY COME YOUR WAY.
YOU'LL BE ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THE GAME,
AND THROUGH IT ALL BE HEARD TO SAY:

PICK IT UP!

STUDENT 3:

THE TRASH IN YOUR LIFE.

ALL:

PICK IT UP!

STUDENT 4:

YOUR WALK AND TALK.

ALL:

PICK IT UP!

YOUR SPIRITS.

PICK IT UP!

YOUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

PICK IT UP!

YOUR LIVES.

PICK IT UP!

PICK IT UP!

PICK IT UP!

TEACHER: So that's the spirit of citizenship and hard work. You get this spirit and you will never be the same. And neither will the people around you. If you see something around you that isn't right, work to change it. And don't tolerate a second-rate job - - in yourselves or in your future children or in the people that work for you. Do the very best you can every time. You know why? "If you give the world the best you have, then the best will come back to you." That's one of Reach's Rules. In fact if you want that thought in a slogan, here's another one that says basically the same thing (pointing to the black/whiteboard): "Eschew mediocrity." What does that slogan mean to you?

SALLY: Does it mean to chew up mediocre people?

Drummer gives a rim shot.

TEACHER: No, although it sounds like it should. (*BRAD holds up his hand, and waives it wildly.*) Brad?

BRAD: Well, “eschew” means to repel or not to accept something. And mediocrity means average, dull or ordinary. So eschew mediocrity must mean to repel and not to accept the ordinary.

TEACHER: Right you are. In a way, it means to establish a reputation for excellence for yourself. To have people say (*Looking around to each person.*) that if Brad, Sally or Ritchie did this job, then everyone knows it will be done well.

RITCHIE: Well, okay. It sounds like good citizenship can pay off. But I think what really attracts people - - especially the ladies (*Or guys, if played by a female.*) - - is how you look and how you walk and talk. Now, you like fancy words, like “eschew.” How about this one? What puts you ahead in this world is your “aura.” If you’ve got that flash, then you’ll get the cash - - now that’s a real pay-off. Can I put some color on the horse?

TEACHER: (*Shrugging.*) Tell us more.

SONG #4: YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE (ALL)

RITCHIE:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE,
YOU GOTTA HAVE FLOW.
YOU GOTTA LIVE THAT CONFIDENCE,
YOU GOTTA SHOW YOU JUST KNOW.

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE,
FROM YOUR HEAD TO YOUR FEET.
YOU’RE WHAT’S IN, IN JUST EV’RY WAY,
GOT THE FEEL, GOT THE BEAT.

FEMALE STUDENT:

WHEN YOUR MOVE’S GOT THAT FLAIR,
WHEN YOUR STRUT’S GOT THAT FLASH.
WHEN YOUR STUFF REALLY STOPS THE SHOW,
THERE’S NO WAY YOU CAN CRASH.

AMERICANS ALL (ABRIDGED)

BOTH:

THEN YOU KNOW THAT YOUR SONG'S IN TUNE,
AND YOUR SONG IS A SMASH.
YOUR STYLE IS WHAT GOT YOU THERE,
AND YOU'RE LEADING THE CLASS.

TEACHER:

AND WHEN YOUR OWN LIFE
MAY NOT BE WHAT IT SHOULD,

STUDENT 3:

AND YOU'RE ANGRY AND UNDERPAID
AND FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD.

STUDENT 4:

WHEN IT CAME TO SUCCESS,
YOU JUST MISSED BY A MILE.

TEACHER:

YOUR FRIENDS SHAKE THEIR HEADS AND SAY,
"WELL, AT LEAST HE HAD STYLE."

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

THIS MIGHT BRING YOU TO EARTH.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA HAVE FLOW.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

YOU MIGHT THINK ME A JERK.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA LIVE THAT CONFIDENCE.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

THIS MIGHT COME AS A SHOCK TO YOU.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA SHOW YOU JUST KNOW.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

BUT IT'S STYLISH TO WORK.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

AT THE END OF THE DAY,
IT SOUNDS DUMB BUT IT'S TRUE.
WHAT YOU'VE GOT WAY DOWN DEEP INSIDE,
THAT'S THE STYLE THAT'S IN YOU.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

YOUR STYLE IS YOUR PEACE.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA HAVE FLOW.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

IT'S AS CLEAR AS IT SEEMS.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA LIVE THAT CONFIDENCE.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

YOUR STYLE IS IN WHO YOU ARE.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA SHOW YOU JUST KNOW.

TEACHER:

YOUR STYLE IS YOUR DREAMS.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE.

TEACHER:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE,

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT 2:

SHOW YOUR NEIGHBORS THE SCORE.

TEACHER:

BUT YOUR STYLE IS YOUR PRIDE.

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT 2:

YOU GOTTA SHOW EV'RYTHING.

TEACHER:

YOUR STYLE IS IN WHAT YOU ARE,

RICHIE AND FEMALE STUDENT 2:

AND A LITTLE BIT MORE.

TEACHER:

YOUR STYLE IS INSIDE.

HALF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE.

TEACHER AND OTHER HALF OF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE.

HALF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA HAVE FLOW.

TEACHER AND OTHER HALF OF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA HAVE FLOW.

HALF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA HAVE CONFIDENCE.

TEACHER AND OTHER HALF OF THE CLASS:

OH YES, YOU GOTTA LIVE THAT CONFIDENCE.

HALF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA JUST KNOW.

TEACHER AND OTHER HALF OF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA JUST KNOW.

HALF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE.

TEACHER AND OTHER HALF OF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA HAVE STYLE.

HALF THE CLASS:

SHOW YOUR NEIGHBORS THE SCORE.

TEACHER AND OTHER HALF OF THE CLASS:

SHOW YOUR NEIGHBORS THE SCORE.

HALF THE CLASS:

YOU GOTTA SHOW THAT EV'RYTHING.

STUDENTS 3 AND 4:

AND A LITTLE BIT MORE.

TEACHER:

YOU GOTTA SHOW EV'RYTHING.

RICHIE: (*Thoughtfully.*)

AND A LITTLE BIT MORE.

TEACHER winks.

TEACHER: I hope you agree, our style comes from who we are, our character. And character is determined by what we do when no one else is watching. So what you do matters, and it also matters to others.

MICHAEL: So if you do something that is really good, and really special, like getting an "A" in your class, (*Laughter.*) you're saying that it not only reflects well on me, it also reflects positively upon the people who care about me!

TEACHER: You got it. (*Class is a little amazed by TEACHER's response and gets serious - - they get it.*) Your family, your friends, your school, and even your country are affected by what you do. But the opposite is also true. If you cheat on exams, shoplift, ditch school, hurt another student, or simply act like a jerk, then that also brings discredit and even shame upon those who care about you.

J.T.: But this is just in school, right? Our personal life is still our personal life.

TEACHER: Okay, let me get personal. Girls, this is from a man's perspective. If you want to share your bodies with a guy, you can have all of the temporary boyfriends you want. But if what you want is a guy who will take you seriously and treat you with respect and eventually be a loving and caring husband and father of your children, then treat yourself and your body with respect. Every day. If you treat your body as superficial, the guys in your life will be more likely to treat you as superficial as well. Respect isn't just a word. Respect yourself, every day, and the boys you are with will be more likely to respect you too.

RITCHIE: Boy oh boy, did he tell them!

TEACHER: And you guys. From my way of thinking, the biggest and most lasting gift you can give to your future children is to love their mother - - every day. In my view, there is nothing you can do more to help your children to grow up into well-adjusted, happy and stable people than to love their mother.

There is so much more. . . (*TEACHER keeps talking and gesticulating to his students, but his voice trails off to nothing. While he continues to disseminate his "pearls of wisdom," a girl student and a boy student get out of their seats and go to opposite sides of the stage as if they are daydreaming. While they sing, the may class hum in accompaniment.*) Now I understand you are all in school right now and only care about your assignments for tomorrow, (*Piano accompaniment begins.*) but one of these days you will contribute to the community, and hopefully. . .

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