

Musical Plot:

The Period

The Music Man takes place in River City, Iowa. The year is 1912, a period in United States history marked by optimism, patriotism, and a strong sense of community--particularly in smaller cities. World War I is still two years away. Arizona and New Mexico have just been admitted to the Union as the 47th and 48th states. The sinking of the Titanic in April would still be fresh in everyone's minds. A brand new Model T Ford could be purchased for \$575. It was the first year of the eight-hour work day for federal employees (though most laborers would continue to work 10-12 hour days for some time).

Act I

Scene 1

A train is en route to River City full of traveling salesmen. They spend a good deal of their traveling time arguing over the current and future state of their profession (***Rock Island***). One salesman in particular, Charlie Cowell, is upset because a certain salesman named Harold Hill has been giving the profession a bad name. Inspired by their discussion of salesmanship (and realizing that he might be in danger of a pummeling), Professor Harold Hill decides to "give Iowa a try" and leaves the train at the River City stop. His scam: to convince parents that the only way to keep their children occupied and out of evil's way is to get them involved in a boy's band. He, of course, is more than willing to organize such a band and to sell the parents the musical instruments, instruction books, and band uniforms they'll need.

Scene 2

In River City, the townspeople talk with great pride about their trademark stubbornness (***Iowa Stubborn***) and it is clear that strangers will not necessarily be altogether welcome in their fair city. We are also introduced to Mayor Shinn and his status-conscious wife, Eulalie. Harold Hill arrives in town to discover that Marcellus Washburn--an old friend and co-conspirator in past confidence operations--is now a resident of River City. He has apparently settled down and married, but this does not prevent Professor Hill from using Marcellus as a source of information about the city and its residents. Upon discovering that the city's billiard parlor has just received a pool table, Hill seizes upon the opportunity to gain the confidence of the townspeople by warning them of the evils of pool (***Ya Got Trouble***). Marcellus is careful to point out the librarian and music teacher, Marian Paroo, to Harold so that he can make sure she does not pose a threat to his plans.

Scene 3

Harold begins to pursue Marian, though not too successfully. He follows her down the street to her home but is abruptly cut off at every attempt to strike up a conversation with her.

Scene 4

At the Paroo home, Marian and her mother discuss Marian's lack of male suitors. Mrs. Paroo is certain that Marian's attitude and her "search for the perfect man" explains why she is still single. Their argument intersects with the piano lesson being given to Amaryllis, a young girl who is enamored of Marian's brother, Winthrop (***Piano Lesson***). Winthrop is a shy lad who speaks with a distinct lisp and appears to have some social shortcomings. A discussion about "boy troubles" between Marian and Amaryllis ends with a musical wish upon the evening star (***Goodnight My Someone***).

Scene 5

A Fourth of July celebration is afoot in the high school gymnasium. Residents of the town join the mayor's wife in a rousing rendition of ***Columbia, Gem of the Ocean***, and a number of special presentations are on the program. We are introduced to the four members of the school board, who appear to have a long history of bickering. We also meet Tommy Djilas, a young man from "the bad part of town" who has been branded a juvenile delinquent. As the festivities progress, Professor Hill sees an opportunity to sell the townspeople on his boy's band idea. (***Trouble Reprise***). He paints a picture of what it might be like to have such a band in their town and reminisces about a special day he remembers when hundreds of musicians converged on his town (***76 Trombones***). After whipping the townspeople into a frenzy, Professor Hill goes about recruiting Tommy to help him organize River City's band. He is also instrumental in getting Tommy interested in Mayor Shinn's oldest daughter, Zaneeta. Meanwhile, the school board has been charged with acquiring Professor Hill's credentials. He is able to momentarily distract them from their assignment by showing them how they can sing together as a quartet (***Ice Cream*** and ***Sincere***).

Scene 6

Professor Hill again pursues Marian through the streets of River City. This time she is a bit more forceful in her resistance. She brushes Harold off a second time and heads for the safe haven of her beloved library. Marcellus meets Harold on the street following his not-so-successful encounter with Marian. Harold fills in Marcellus one some of the details of his boy's band scam. Marcellus then offers to introduce Harold to his wife's sister. Harold gives Marcellus a comic lecture in song about the kind of woman he prefers (***The Sadder-But-Wiser Girl***) and then meets up with the ladies of the town who share with him some juicy gossip about Marian (***Pickalittle***). The four school board members again appear on the scene demanding the professor's credentials. He manages to avoid the subject by tricking them into singing a duet with the gossiping women (***Pickalittle*** and ***Goodnight Ladies***).

Scene 7

Harold has entered the sacred space of Marian's library and threatens to create a commotion amongst the kids who have gathered to study (and flirt) there. When she refuses his advances, he laments in song (***Marian The Librarian***) while the kids are distracted from their reading.

Scene 8

Harold and Tommy have been busy making rounds to the homes of River City and have had great success in making sales.

Scene 9

Professor Hill calls on a house only to discover that it is the home of the Shinns. He nearly sells Mayor Shinn on the idea of making his son into first-rate flugel horn player until the mayor realizes he has no son.

Scene 10

Harold is now hard at work winning over Mrs. Paroo, who is delighted by the idea that her son might join the ranks of famous Irish cornet players. Marian, on the other hand, is less than excited about the prospect while Winthrop seems most enthusiastic about the idea of wearing a band uniform. Once Professor Hill is a safe distance away, Marian and Mrs. Paroo have another exchange about her finicky nature where men are concerned. Marian tries to explain to her mother about the kind of man she would like to be with (*My White Knight*).

Scene 11

Tommy and Zaneeta have continued to see each other on the sly, meeting in places all over town to keep their relationship a secret from Mayor Shinn. Zaneeta's sister, Gracie, makes an announcement: the Wells Fargo wagon is on its way into town--at a most unusual time of day. Residents of River City gather in the streets to speculate about the possible reasons for such a special delivery (*The Wells Fargo Wagon*). Finally, Professor Hill and Tommy arrive with the wagon and distribute band instruments to the eager children. It seems that Marian is not quite sure what to make of Professor Hill, though the mayor remains convinced he's a slippery character who should be closely watched.

Act II

Scene 1

The ladies of River City, assembled at the behest of Professor Hill for the purpose of creating a classic Del Sarte dance, are rehearsing in the gymnasium. The school board is also present to rehearse (*It's You*). Marcellus and the kids burst on the scene eager to perform a dance Professor Hill has taught them (*Shipooopi*). It seems that Marian's resolve is weakening a bit as she joins Harold in the dance. Later, Mayor Shinn lectures Tommy about being seen with his daughter Zaneeta. The two teenagers both end up leaving in disgust. The ladies flutter around Marian to let her know how impressed they were with her dance with Harold (*Pickalittle Reprise*). They also share how much they're been enjoying the formerly-forbidden books they've been reading.

Scene 2

The members of the school board meet Professor Hill outside his hotel to once again demand his credentials. He manages to sidestep the issue by starting them to singing (*Lida Rose*). In a moment of self-reflection, Marian thinks of what her life was like before and about what the future may hold (*Will I Ever Tell You?*). The quartet and Marian finish out the scene in a duet intertwining the two songs.

Scene 3

On the Paroo porch, Winthrop is elated about his newfound friend, Professor Hill. He is particularly enthusiastic about a song Harold has taught him that has "hardly any etheth in it" (*Gary, Indiana*). A bit later, Charlie Cowell (the disgruntled salesman from Act I) arrives at the Paroo home looking for Mayor Shinn. He strikes up a discussion with Marian and she learns all about the professor's checkered past from Charlie (*Lida Rose Reprise*). Marian engineers it so that Charlie has no extra time to contact Mayor Shinn before catching his train out of town. Harold arrives at the Paroo home to call on Miss Marian only to discover that she has grown cold toward him. They engage in a discussion that begins uncomfortably but ends up with Marian agreeing to meet Harold at the footbridge.

Scene 4

Harold is awaiting Marian at the infamous footbridge. Marcellus arrives to let Harold know that he's definitely running out of time to get out of town in one piece before his scam is exposed. Marian arrives and the two share a tender moment as Marian sings about her love for Harold (*Till There Was You*). Marian then reveals that she has known about Harold's false credentials all along and he realizes that she has been protecting him.

Scene 5

Harold reminisces about where he has been and how he feels about Marian (*76 Trombones/Goodnight My Someone Duet*). Afterwards, Charlie bursts on the scene and threatens Harold with the information he has. Harold makes a quick escape, and just in time.

Scene 6

The townspeople have gathered at the sociable and are watching the ladies perform their stunning Del Sarte dance when Mayor Shinn and Charlie arrive to alert everyone to the wicked ways of Professor Hill. The event breaks up quickly as people scramble in every direction to try to find Harold. They eventually catch up to him and he is taken away.

Scene 7

An angry crowd is assembled at the high school. Mayor Shinn is making the most of the impromptu audience by telling them that he had tried to warn them all along about Hill. The constable brings Harold in to face his accusers. Shortly thereafter, Tommy brings in the kids, regaled in ill-fitting band uniforms and carrying their instruments. Marian intercedes and somehow manages to arrange it so that Harold can lead the "band" in a song to prove he was genuine from the start. The proud parents quickly forgive the professor as they listen to the strains of *The Minuet in G* performed by their very own children.

Character Information:

Character	Description	Gender	Acting Role	Singing Role	Voice
Harold Hill	A dynamic conman. Someone who is charismatic and charming, comfortable on stage, a great actor, singer, and dancer.	M	Major Lead	Major Singing	Baritone A flat- high F
Marcellus Washburn	This classic sidekick to Harold has been immortalized by comedic greats like Buddy Hackett. Marcellus' big number is Shipooi so the character has to act well, sing reasonably well and be able to dance.	M	Major Lead	Major Singing	Tenor G – high A
Marian Paroo	The character progresses greatly during the show, starting as an uptight librarian and transforming into a beautiful and trusting young woman. Marian must have a good voice, be an excellent actor, and be able to move well. She must also have an air of confidence that draws Harold and your audience to her.	F	Major Lead	Major Singing	Soprano Low G- High A
Jacey Squires	Judgemental School Board Member Barbershop Quartet – Looking for guys who are really good at harmonizing and can really hold their own part!	M	Minor Lead	Major Singing	Bass Voice
Edwart Dunlop	Judgemental School Board Member Barbershop Quartet – Looking for guys who are really good at harmonizing and can really hold their own part!	M	Minor Lead	Major Singing	Baritone Voice
Oliver Hix	Judgemental School Board Member Barbershop Quartet – Looking for guys who are really good at harmonizing and can really hold their own part!	M	Minor Lead	Major Singing	2 nd Highest Tenor Voice
Olin Britt	Judgemental School Board Member Barbershop Quartet – Looking for guys who are really good at harmonizing and can really hold their own part!	M	Minor Lead	Major Singing	Highest Tenor Voice
Mrs. Paroo	Marian's Irish Mother. Mrs. Paroo is the conscience of River City. She is a great mother, stands up for what she believes in, and gently pushes Marian to think of her future. The role requires an actress who can do a good Irish Brogue .	F	Minor Lead	Minor Singing	Soprano A flat- E flat
Amaryllis	Amaryllis is the slightly bratty girl who studies piano with Marian. Amaryllis should be a good actor, and roughly the same size as Winthrop and Gracie.	F	Supporting	Minor Singing	Alto C - E
Eulalie Mackecknie Shinn	Mayor Shinn's peacock wife. Everybody wants to play Eulalie. It's a role for a great comic actress.	F	Supporting	Minor Singing	Alto D - D
Winthrop Paroo	Marian's lisp ing baby brother. Winthrop should appear to be young, his voice must be unchanged and he should be a good actor. Winthrop also needs to be able to affect a believable lisp. Winthrop has to transform from a shy child to an outspoken child who not only sings but dances!	M	Supporting	Minor Singing	Alto C – E flat
Mayor Shinn	A blustery politician. The actor playing Mayor Shinn certainly needs a good sense of comic timing, but should be able to perform the role very seriously.	M	Supporting	Chorus	
Charlie Cowell	A rival salesman. A strong actor with a good loud voice who is a bit of a ham and likes being on the stage will make a great Charlie.	M	Supporting	Chorus	
Zaneeta Shinn	The mayor's daffy daughter. Zaneeta should be a good dancer. The role is often given dance features in both 76 Trombones and Shipooi. She gets to deliver the classic "Ye gads" line!	F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Gracie Shinn	Mayor's daughter, Zaneeta's little sister.	F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Alma Hix	One of the core members of the Pickalittle ladies, requiring girls with strong voices and a good sense of comedy.	F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Maud Dunlop	Gossipy wife of quartet member. One of the core members of the Pickalittle ladies, requiring girls with strong voices and a good sense of comedy.	F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Mrs. Squires	Gossipy wife of quartet member. One of the core members of the Pickalittle ladies, requiring girls with strong voices and a good sense of comedy.	F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Tommy Dijas	The town "bad boy". Tommy is the teen heartthrob in the show and should be able to act and dance. Tommy's love interest is Zaneeta.	M	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Ethel Toffelmier	The "pianola" girl and one of the solo Pick-A-Little ladies.	F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Constable Locke	The Constable is a quietly wise man who sees through Harold, but doesn't seem to mind.	M or F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Conductor	The conductor has the first line in the show, so make sure you are loud and energetic!	M or F	Small Speaking	Chorus	
Newspaper Readers		M and F		Chorus	
Traveling Salesmen		M and F		Chorus	
River City Townspeople		M and F		Chorus	
River City Children	Band Members	M and F		Chorus	