

Parents Just Don't Understand: *The Musical!*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Are we there yet? The Stathem family is on a loooong car trip, giving everyone lots of extra time to reminisce about the past 12 months. Here is a collection of hilarious (and often too close to the truth) scenes and songs that all families are going to be able to relate to. This easy-to-stage comedy is a lighthearted look at a "greatest hit list" of classic family moments. Remember when Dad tried to teach you to drive? Or Mom decided that she would help pick out your wardrobe? The kids sing the "Back to High School Blues" only to have Mom and Dad sing "They Are Gone Gospel" the minute the kids are out the door. Grandma and Grandpa enjoy "Hippity Hop Grandma Rap," and the daughter watches her dreams of a sweet sixteen birthday bash get crushed while at the fish and game hall. Who knew Grandpa would *really* re-gift that "Best Grandpa Ever" mug? Using minimal sets and a very flexible cast and chorus, "Parents Just Don't Understand: The Musical!" will have your audience in stitches while also challenging your cast to not just play teenagers, but also adults. Full evening.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

*Minimum cast of 5 (With doubling.) 3 males and 2 females
Maximum cast: At least 12 males, 12 females and as big a chorus as you like!*

Son: Sometimes referred to as Jeffrey.

Daughter: Sometimes referred to as Brittany.

Mom or Mother: Sometimes referred to as Janet Stathem.

Dad or Father: Sometimes referred to as James Stathem.

Grandpa: Could be played by same actor as Father.

Grandma: Could be played by same actress as Mother.

Biker: Bit part, usually played by your drama teacher.

Spraky the Clown: Optional- line in one song.

A Note about Casting

These are generic stock characters. You can put on the entire show with a small cast where the daughter is played by the same actress in every scene, the son is played by the same actor in every scene, etc. Even Grandpa could be played by Father or Biker with a quick change and Grandma could be played by Mother.

The best way to run this show is with a large CHORUS of characters. All fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters dressed the same with soloists coming into specific scenes to play out the dialogue and lead singing roles. The CHORUS should always be present, either in the pit, on risers up on stage, or just off in the wings to enter at a moment's notice.

The idea is that we are seeing the same characters throughout but more students get a chance to act and sing. If you are short on male actors (as I often am), they can stick with the same roles for multiple scenes while the girls share roles.

The one consistent plot line revolves around the family car trip and the family looking back on the year that has passed. I would use the same actors for each scene in the car (beginning, middle, and end) so that there is a consistent flow. If you are going to be working with a cast of all teenagers make sure to dress the parent characters in boring, muted tones and the teen characters in typical street wear so that the audience can easily distinguish between the "adults" and the "young adults" in the scenes. Also, feel free to substitute new technology where lines may be dated.

Parents Just Don't Understand: The Musical!

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SCENES

ACT I

- 1 – Introductions
- 2 – The Long and Winding Road
- 3 – The First Day of School
- 4 – You're Driving me Crazy (No singing required.)
- 5 – Clothes Make the Man
- 6 – What Are You Thankful For? (No singing required.)
- 7 – Holiday Medley
- 8 – To Grandmother's House We Go
- 9 – Keep on Truckin'

ACT II

- 10 – On the Road Again
- 11 – Putting the "Fun" Back in Funeral
- 12 – It's My Party and I'll Cry if I Want To
- 13 – She Said, She Said
- 14 – The Talk
- 15 – Rest Stop
- 16 – Finale: You Can Pick Your Friends, But You Can't Pick Your Family
- 17 – Bows and Exit Music

SONG LIST

ACT I

- 1 – Parents Just Don't Understand
- 2 – Are We There Yet? (*Part 1 of 4.*)
- 3 – Back to High School Blues
- 4 – They Are Gone Gospel (*Part 1 of 2.*)
- 5 – They Are Gone Gospel (*Part 2 of 2.*)
- 6 – Shopping With Mom (*Part 1 of 2.*)
- 7 – Shopping With Mom (*Part 2 of 2.*)
- 8 – Holiday Medley
- 9 – Hippity Hop Grandma Rap (*Part 1 of 2.*)
- 10 – Hippity Hop Grandma Rap (*Part 2 of 2.*)
- 11 – Are We There Yet? (*Part 2 of 4.*)

ACT II

- 12 – Are We There Yet? (*Part 3 of 4.*)
- 13 – Putting the "Fun" Back in Funeral
- 14 – Sweet Sixteen
- 15 – She Said, She Said
- 16 – Le Tigre
- 17 – Are We There Yet? (*Part 4 of 4.*)
- 18 – Finale: You Can Pick Your Friends
- 19 – Bows and Exit Music

ACT I
Scene 1: Introductions

(CHORUS enters. Fathers in black slacks, white shirts, ties. Mothers in khaki slacks, blue tops. Sons in black t-shirts, jeans. Daughters in black slacks or skirts, pink t-shirts.)

SONG #1: Parents Just Don't Understand

SONS and DAUGHTERS:

PARENTS, THEY DON'T HAVE A CLUE.
I MEAN, COME ON. THEY WERE KIDS ONCE, TOO.
BUT SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED
WHEN THEY GREW FROM SHORT TO TALL.
'CAUSE PARENTS DON'T UNDERSTAND US KIDS AT ALL.

SONS:

I ASKED THEM FOR A PUPPY, GOT AN ANT FARM INSTEAD.
I TAUGHT THEM TO ROLL OVER. THEY ESCAPED AND ALL FLED.

DAUGHTERS:

I ASKED TO GO TO SUMMER CAMP.
THEY SENT ME TO AUNT DAISY.
SHE DRESSES UP HER EIGHTEEN CATS.
I THINK SHE'S GOING CRAZY!

SONS and DAUGHTERS:

OH! PARENTS, THEY DON'T HAVE A CLUE.
I MEAN, COME ON. THEY WERE KIDS ONCE, TOO.
BUT SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED
WHEN THEY GREW FROM SHORT TO TALL.
'CAUSE PARENTS DON'T UNDERSTAND US KIDS AT ALL.

(PARENTS enter, looking bedraggled.)

FATHERS:

CHILDREN ARE A BLESSING.
AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TOLD.
I'M SURE THINGS MUST GET BETTER.
SHE'S JUST 16 YEARS OLD.

MOTHERS:

ONE DAY SHE'LL LEAVE THE NEST WHEN SHE'S READY TO FLY.
BUT WHAT IF SHE NEVER LEAVES AND STAYS UNTIL WE DIE?

FATHERS:

OH, NO!

FATHERS and MOTHERS:

CHILDREN, YOU DON'T HAVE A CLUE
WHAT IT'S LIKE HAVING TO DEAL WITH YOU.
YOU ASK AND TAKE AND GRAB AND WANT AND
NEVER SAY THANK YOU.

DAUGHTER: *(Steps forward, snotty.) You made me do the dishes
once for free, I could've sued.*

SONS and DAUGHTERS:

PARENTS!

FATHERS and MOTHERS:

CHILDREN!

SONS and DAUGHTERS:

THEY DON'T HAVE A CLUE.

FATHERS and MOTHERS:

YOU HAVE NO IDEA!

SONS and DAUGHTERS:

I MEAN, COME ON.

FATHERS and MOTHERS:

ONE DAY YOU'LL HAVE KIDS, TOO.
AND THEN YOU'LL UNDERSTAND
ALL WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH.

SONS and DAUGHTERS:

WELL, WE'D LET OUR KIDS HAVE ANYTHING
WE'RE COOLER THAN YOU.

SON 1:

LIKE A PUPPY.

DAUGHTER 1:

A TRIP TO CAMP.

SON 2:

AN INGROUND SWIMMING POOL.

DAUGHTER 2:

A FERRARI.

SON 3:

AN AK-FORTY SEVEN WITH A SCOPE AND SOME HAND GRENADES
AND A TANK. LIKE A SMALL ONE, JUST SO WE'RE READY FOR
WHEN THE ZOMBIES ATTACK!

FATHERS and MOTHERS:

NO! THINGS ARE GETTING OUT OF HAND!

SONS and DAUGHTERS:

PARENTS!

FATHERS and MOTHERS:

CHILDREN

ALL: JUST DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND!

(Exit the stage as the "car" is set up.)

Scene 2: The Long and Winding Road

(A car. FATHER is driving, MOTHER is in the front passenger seat, SON is sitting on a stool behind Father, and DAUGHTER is sitting on a stool behind Mother. Mother is looking out the window, Father is singing a jaunty little song, Son is playing video games on a handheld device, and Daughter has her earbuds in as she listens to her iPod while texting on her phone. SPOTLIGHT on FATHER as he stands, walks DSC, speaking to audience.)

FATHER: Oh! Hello there! We're the Stathem (*Pronounced Stayth-em.*) family, and this is our annual summer car trip. Over there is Mother. Isn't she beautiful? Back behind me is my son, 14 years old and just like his old man. My daughter turned 16 this year and will be a senior in the fall. But for the next two weeks we don't worry about school, or work, or any of that stuff. It's family time!

DAUGHTER: (*Calling from the darkness.*) Who's driving the car?

FATHER: Whoops. (*To audience.*) Enjoy the show!

(FATHER rushes back and takes the wheel as the SPOTLIGHT shines over on MOTHER. She stands, walks DSC, addressing the audience.)

MOTHER: This is going to be the best trip ever! (*Big plastic smile.*) That's what I just keep telling myself. (*Smile drops.*) But seriously...if I can keep my husband from stopping at every tourist trap between here and Katmandu and prevent the terrible two in the backseat from killing one another, this will be a success. And if I can't...

FATHER: (*Yelling out in darkness.*) Best trip ever!

MOTHER: At least I can tell him "I told you so." (*Fake smile back on.*) Time to pass out granola bars and juice pouches.

End of Freeview

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