

The Cast

'Dragon!' was written for, and performed by, a cast of about thirty 9-11 year-olds. Larger numbers can easily be accommodated amongst the Courtiers, Villagers, Swampbeasts etc.

Apart from the King, Poppy, Arkamir, and Queen Idelia, any of the parts can be played by boys or girls - please adjust pronouns in the script accordingly!

Parts with solo singing:

King The kind but ineffectual King of Freenia. An important acting and singing part, with a solo verse in 'Hurry Home'

Poppy His feisty daughter. Lively acting and singing required. Solo in 'What Are We Waiting For?'

Arkamir The villainous knight. Needs to be a confident actor and singer. Sings solos in 'No Dragons Here' and 'Hurry Home'.

Rogil & Murk: Arkamir's servants. Comic characters; they sing together in 'No Dragons Here'.

Zebeck, the Dragonologist

Jed, the Gatekeeper

Ludo, the Wizard's Apprentice

Poppy's companions who join her on the quest. Each sings a section of 'What Are We Waiting For?'

Parts without solo singing:

The Piper A mysterious musician with magical powers. Your best recorder player!

Queen Idelia The spoilt, bad-tempered queen of neighbouring Wonderalia. A lively acting part.

Dragontamer Servant of Queen Idelia

Firehawk, the Dragon A small but central role.

Scientist At the King's court. Does some important scene-setting.

Vizier In charge of the Courtiers

Messenger Has some dramatic moments, particularly in scene 8 .

Chorus of Courtiers (7 speaking parts), **Villagers** (4 speaking), **Swampbeasts** and **Servants**.

(The same children can play the chorus parts - see notes on costume).

Extract from Scene 1

Poppy: No, no, no, no, no, no, NO!!

King: Really, dear -

Poppy: NO!!!!

King: I do apologise for my daughter's manners.

Arkamir: Think nothing of it. She is....irresistible.

King: Poppy, will you come here and listen to what Lord Arkamir has to say.

Poppy: I've heard it all before. I won't marry him, dragon or no dragon.

Arkamir: This is quite intolerable, your Majesty.

King: I know! I agree! But I can't do a thing with her! How long is it now since I killed the dragon?

Rogil: *(Panicking)* Now let me think. I know this one. Dragon? Dragon? Give me a moment- *(aside to Murk)* When did he kill that dragon?

Murk: A year ago.

Rogil: I knew that! Just checking.

Arkamir: Answer me, idiot!

Rogil: One year since you killed the dragon, sir.

Arkamir: *(to King)* The proper reward should be your daughter's hand in marriage *and* half your kingdom.

King: But I say, nobody offered you any kind of contract.

Arkamir: Ha! Thousands of years of noble tradition, and you're quibbling over contracts.

Poppy: Nobody asked you to kill the dragon in the first place. I liked it.

Arkamir: Yes, I can see you'd have a lot in common.

Poppy: Just get rid of him, Dad.

(Poppy and King argue quietly)

Arkamir: Pity I have to marry that stroppy madam. But it'll be worth it in the end.

Rogil: Why's that then?

Arkamir: Because I 'll get the whole kingdom for myself, you fool!

(Enter Messenger - whispers to King)

King: Send them in

(Enter Scientist, Zebeck the Dragonologist, and courtiers. Exit Poppy)

Messenger: Pray silence for the Scientist and the Dragonologist.

Scientist: Your Majesty, I have grave news. I have come from the Southern Swamps -

Zebeck: Once the home of the mighty Dragonus Magnificus.

Arkamir: Ah! The beast I destroyed in that heroic battle.

Zebeck: Oh, it was you, was it? Do you have any idea how few dragons are left in the wild?

Arkamir: Too many.

Scientist: Killing this dragon has sent the whole food chain into confusion. Look!

(She gets flip chart. Courtiers sit down to watch, reacting with oohs and aahs)

Scientist:: First - the swamp grass. *(Shows picture)* Second - the swampbugs who live on the grass. *(Shows picture)* Third - the swamp-rats. They eat the bugs. *(Shows picture)*

Arkamir: Very educational.

Scientist: Next- the swamp beasts. *(Shows picture - big reaction from courtiers)* They will eat anything, but especially swamprats.

Arkamir: Will we be tested on this?

Scientist: And who can tell me who USED to eat the swampbeasts?

Courtiers: The Dragon!

Scientist: Exactly! *(Shows final, spectacular picture. Courtiers applaud)*

King: So?

Scientist: You've taken out the top predator! Without the dragon, the swampbeasts are everywhere! *(Flips back through pictures)*

Zebeck: The poor old swamprats have all been eaten.

Scientist: With no swamprats the flies are multiplying! Spreading disease! Eating the crops!

Zebeck: And now the swampbeasts have left the swamps looking for other prey! They're big, mean and scary-

Scientist: - and only a dragon can keep them in check!

(Enter Poppy with rucksack and boots)

Poppy: I've made up my mind. We need a dragon; I'm going to find one.

King: But you don't know anything about dragons!

Zebeck: But I do! Will you need any scientific back-up?

Poppy: Oh yes. Do you know where any dragons live?

Zebeck: Er - no. But I can tell you all about their life cycle. And I've got my own tent!

Arkamir: This is madness!

Zebeck: *(To Arkamir)* And you'd better watch out. Once you've killed a dragon, all the others know about it.

Arkamir: Rubbish!

Scientist: Perfectly true. All dragons can identify a dragon slayer.

Zebeck: And they'll be after your blood.

(Arkamir reacts with horror and disbelief)

Poppy: Perfect!