

Our Town Character Descriptions

Stage Manager – Typically male. Must be a good story teller, able to command the stage and engage the audience. Loves people, easy going and grounded with a clear wisdom. This character is the all-knowing narrator who may be speaking for the author. The Stage Manager literally sets the stage, describes the action and introduces the actors. Steps in and out of the action as other characters: a minister, a drug store owner, a neighbor lady passing by.

Emily Webb – female. Goes from age 16 to 20. In 1901 the age 16 was more sincere and innocent than today. The love story with her and George is the spine of the action of the play. She has the strongest love of life and enthusiasm. Emily appears in Act 3 after her death, and she desires to relive everything that was so wonderful, but finally comes to a bittersweet wisdom about the fleeting state of living.

Mr. Charles Webb – male age between 30 and 55 or so. He is highly educated and is the editor and owner of the only local newspaper. Has a strong connection with his daughter.

Mrs. Myrtle Webb – female age between 30 and 55 or so.

Wally Webb – young boy age 11 to 13.

George Gibbs – male. Goes from age 16 to 20, (and is 32 in the final act appearance). It is a 16 of 1901 which is a sincere and naïve age. He is an idealist and a romantic. The love story with him and Emily is the spine of the action of the play. He strongly and sincerely desires to be the best person he can be for the love of his life.

Dr. Frank Gibbs – male age between 30 and 55 or so. He is a doctor and family man. Romantic and in love with his wife.

Mrs. Julia Gibbs – female age between 30 and 55 or so. Mother of George & Rebecca. Strong love for her family. A romantic who dreams of visiting Paris. Strong connection with her son.

Rebecca Gibbs – young girl age 11 to 13. Has a strong sense of energy and wonder about the world. Amazed at the stars and the earth's place in the galaxy. Has a strong & important short speech about this at the end of Act 1.

Joe Crowell – male age 14 or so. Delivers the newspapers and sets up important sense of friendliness among the neighbors of the small town.

Si Crowell— Joe's younger brother, also a paperboy. Si's assumption of his brother's former job contributes to the sense of constancy that characterizes Grover's Corners throughout the play.

Howie Newsome – male (or female) age 14 or so. Delivers the milk, leading the horse and wagon. Sets up an important sense of friendliness among the neighbors of the small town.

Simon Stimson – adult (usually male) unspecified age. Leader of the church choir, but has deep problems and a clear drinking problem. Attitude is acerbic, he/she is possibly depressed. Stimson's drinking is the town's scandalous gossip.

Constable Warren – adult male, age unspecified.

Mrs. Soames – adult female, age unspecified. Sings in the choir and loves to spread gossip.

Professor Willard—A professor at the State University who gives the audience a report on Grover's Corners. Professor Willard appears once and then disappears. His role in the play is to interact with the audience and to inform theatergoers of the specifics of life in Grover's Corners. His reference to Native Americans reflects Wilder's understanding that the European ancestors of the current population in Grover's Corners replaced and extinguished the existing Native American populations.

Joe Stoddard— The town undertaker. Joe prepares Emily's grave and remarks on how sad it is to bury young people. This statement emphasizes a theme that grows ever more apparent throughout the play and receives its most explicit discussion in Act III: the transience of human life.

Sam Craig— Emily Webb's cousin, who has left Grover's Corners to travel west, but returns for her funeral in Act III. Though originally from the town, Sam has the air of an outsider. His unawareness of the events that have occurred in Grover's Corners during his absence parallels the audience's own unawareness.

Additional Ensemble— Woman in the balcony, Man in the auditorium, Lady in the box, Baseball players, choir, Woman among the dead, man among the dead, and optional assistant stage managers.