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*Dramatic Publishing*

# UNCOOL

Part of the River Ridge High Play Series

Book and Lyrics

by

VIN MORREALE, JR.

Music

by

DAWN and ERIC DEUSER



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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**For anyone who has ever been teased, picked on,  
called names, or felt left out in a crowd.**

**In other words, for anyone  
who has ever grown up, or gone to school.**

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

*UNCOOL*, and all the plays within the River Ridge High Series, are more enjoyable and effective if they appear current. Most of the dialogue contains original expressions created specifically for this play, and for that reason should never go out of date. However, I grant permission to directors to sprinkle in the latest phrases when and where desired, as long as the meaning of specific passages is not significantly altered in doing so.

This play can also be suitable for middle school or junior high school students. In those cases, producing directors should simply change any stated references to the school name to River Ridge Junior High.

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# UNCOOL

A One-act Play

For 3 Men, 6 Women, extras, if desired

## CHARACTERS

BETH ..... 16, the new girl at school  
JENNY .. 17, confident, attractive, fashionable and upbeat  
TODD ..... tall, athletic type  
BRITTANY..... 18, very bubbly, well-dressed  
TAMIKA.. short, energetic female with an abundance of smiles  
NICKY .. appears to be a throwback to the '60s flower child  
CURB ..... tall, black senior  
CHRIS > ..... Nicky's musician friends  
ALLISON >

and...

Cafeteria Lady, Stagehands; and Extra Students, if needed

PLACE: A hallway at River Ridge High School.

TIME: The present.

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# UNCOOL

**SETTING:** *A hallway at a high school. A row of working lockers line the back wall, along with a sign that proclaims RIVER RIDGE HIGH. In addition to this simple staging, various roll-in props will be used to set the scenes.*

**AT RISE:** *We hear the ring of a bell, signifying the beginning of school. BETH enters from R. She wears glasses and her short hair is combed in a mousy, unattractive way that looks like she is trying to hide her face, as much as adorn it. She is slightly overweight and wears worn, baggy clothes meant to hide that fact, but which actually reveal the opposite. She moves uncomfortably to C, clutches a stack of books to her chest and squints into the lights.*

**BETH.** “Cool.” Adjective. Meaning of low to moderate temperature.

*(JENNY, who is everything BETH is not, bounces on from L, carrying a single book. As soon as BETH sees JENNY, she surrenders C to her.)*



JENNY. "Cool." Adjective. A slang expression popularized by American jazz musicians in the 1920s and '30s. Cool is anything ... or anyone ... that exhibits a distinctive style.

*(JENNY retreats happily, as TODD enters, R. He wears his football jacket like a royal robe, and he saunters on the stage with the self-assurance of a popular guy who is used to being noticed.)*

TODD. "Cool" for a guy is being so tough, that nothing fazes you. *(He turns to smile at JENNY.)* "Cool" for a girl is something awesome, y'know? Like someone you want to get next to.

*(BRITTANY enters, also from R. She obviously spends a great deal of her parents' money on clothes. She throws a flirtatious grin at TODD, and moves right up next to him.)*

BRITTANY. "Cool." Objector ...

BETH *(helpfully)*. Adjective.

BRITTANY *(rolling her eyes)*. Like it matters ... *(She composes herself.)* Cool means maximum status points. If you're cool, you get to be part of the "way cool" crowd that rules the school!

*(Three other students, TAMIKA, NICKY and CURB, enter from different parts of the stage. NICKY has long, straight hair and wears bell-bottom jeans. Although CURB grew up middle-class, he loves to affect a "street" walk and patter. As they enter, everyone else moves to a D position.)*

TAMIKA. Cool is hot!

NICKY. Cool is wild!

CURB. Cool just is... You hear what I'm sayin'?

*(BETH moves to the front. The OTHERS look at her with disdain and annoyance.)*

BETH. Excuse me.

BRITTANY. Like there is an excuse for you...

*(BETH winces at the comment, then addresses the audience meekly.)*

BETH. "Uncool." Adjective. Derived from contemporary American slang. Meaning not trendy or fashionable. Unstylish.

JENNY. Uncool. Observation. Completely out of it.

TODD. Uncool. The *very* last thing you want to hang with.

TAMIKA. Uncool is boring.

NICKY. Uncool is hopelessly and totally dull.

CURB. Uncool is nowhere.

BRITTANY. Uncool is... *(Points to BETH.)* ...her!

*(BETH flushes with embarrassment and runs off, R. The OTHERS laugh, except JENNY, who lightly punches BRITTANY on the arm.)*

BRITTANY. Ow! Watch the mutilation, Jenny!

JENNY. That was a way cruel thing to say, Brittany.

BRITTANY. Yeah. Well, the truth hurts.

JENNY. So does stupidity, And you must be having an Extra-strength Tylenol day.

CURB (*laughing*). Ouch! Shot to the ego.

TODD. You go, girl.

BRITTANY. What's your damage anyway, Jenny?

NICKY. Yeah. What's your damage?

*(They begin to pull books and various items out of their lockers. BRITTANY has a mirror on the inside of her locker door, and fluffs her hair into it.)*

BRITTANY. You doing dweeb charity work these days? I mean, collecting for losers is so "tossed-calendar."

CURB (*mocking her*). It's soooo tossed-calendar.

JENNY. Give it a rest, Curb... I just think what Brittany said about the new girl was way harsh.

BRITTANY. Maybe... But I prefer to let my parents handle all the weep-and-sympathy cases.

TAMIKA. They must have lots of experience with you at home.

CURB. Ouch! Ouch! Brittany's down by two!

TODD. Girl fights. I love 'em. Maybe they'll escalate into mud wrestling.

JENNY. In your dreams.

TODD. How'd you know?

TAMIKA. I think what Jenny is trying to say is that we were being kinda brutal to the new girl.

BRITTANY. That Beth creature? *Puh-leeze*. I've seen more style on a worm farm.

JENNY. Give her a break. She's only been in school a week, and already you've sentenced her to the dork dungeons.

BRITTANY. Tried and convicted. It's not my fault. You've seen how she dresses.

TAMIKA. You can't judge people by their clothes. (*Smiling.*) If you did, we'd have to throw Curb to the wastrels.

CURB. You talkin' about me, girlfriend?

TAMIKA (*playfully*). I'm *always* talkin' about you, boyfriend.

CURB. Well, you'd best be limiting yourself to sweet words, or I might just haveta go spread myself around a little. (*He throws a playful arm around NICKY, who elbows him hard in the ribs.*)

TAMIKA. Spread yourself around? Like manure?

TODD (*snorts*). Good one, Tamika.

CURB. You know I'm just playing with you.

TAMIKA. Not now. Not ever. Your playing privileges have been shut down and canceled.

CURB. Awww, girlfriend. You know you're the sweetest thing at River Ridge High. You even make algebra worth sittin' through.

TAMIKA. Keep talking and I may forgive you.

CURB. You're my dream angel... My thought candy... My heart starter...my goddess of the hallways... (*Turns to TODD.*) How am I doing so far?

TODD. I'm all teary-eyed.

TAMIKA. It's time to shut up now. (*She pulls him into a kiss.*)

NICKY. Awww. A Kodak moment.

BRITTANY. Remind me to be ill.

*(The school bell rings again, signaling the start of classes. The GROUP gathers up their stuff quickly.)*

JENNY. All I'm saying, Brittany, is that maybe we should cut Beth some slack. She's new. Give her a chance to fit in. She might turn out to be pretty cool after all.

*(The OTHERS all turn and look at each other. Then with one voice, they say:)*

ALL *(except JENNY)*. Doubt it!

*(ALL laugh and walk off, leaving JENNY alone onstage. She turns to face the audience.)*

JENNY. High school kids can be soooo immature... y'know?

Anyway, that's the crowd I hang with here at River Ridge High. Usually, they're pretty cool. Even Brittany...though sometimes she acts like she's scamming votes for some cosmic Snob of the Year award. But, hey... They're my buds, and sometimes you gotta get your mind over what matters...or something like that.

I mean, bottom line is they are the coolest clan in the school. Todd is the quarterback of the football team. Tamika's class president. And Nancy's dad owns a Mercedes dealership. So, like major duh... Who else would I possibly want to hang with?

Anyway, things around here were skating pretty level until this new girl Beth showed up, looking like a walking kick-me sign.

Word is she got the slip and slide from some little red schoolhouse on the corner of Obscurity and Nowhere... About as back-woodsish as Honest Abe's cabin. The school rumor factory kicks into overtime...you know what it's like when somebody's new. She's homeless... She got tossed for dissecting the school mascot... She's in the FBI witness protection program... Since day one, she's River Ridge High's biggest rubbernecking attraction. The fact that she won't talk to anyone just pumps up the mystery factor ...

But after a week, she's as stale as leftover potato chips. She gets a major attack of "the borings" and the mystery factor shrivels around her like cheap make-up on a hot day.

Because she's yesterday's headline, nobody wastes a glance on her anymore. When they do speak in her vicinity, it's with a slam or a put-down.

*(BETH enters, R. She pretends not to notice JENNY, but walks with her eyes down to the stage, still clutching her books to her chest.)*

I kinda felt sorry for her, y'know? *(She turns to BETH, then back to audience.)* Oh, in case you're getting all panic-attacked, I'm not really cutting classes. See, I'm the narrator in this play, so I can totally crumple with time and space. Cool, huh? *(Turns back to BETH.)* Hey, Beth. Drop down a game level. I wanna talk to you.

*(BETH looks up at the other girl, unsure whether she is trying to be a friend or tormentor. She nods meekly in reply, then tries to walk away. JENNY runs in front of her.)*

How's it going?

BETH *(shrugs)*. Fine.

JENNY. I'm Jenny. Welcome to River Ridge High. *(No reply.)* It's okay. Words aren't antiques. You don't have to hoard them.

BETH. Sorry. I'm not much of a talker.

JENNY. Coulda fooled me. *(Still no reply.)* So, I hear you're from Alabama or something.

BETH. Utah.

JENNY. Same continent. So what do you think of our school?

BETH. Cold. Hostile. Rude. Unfeeling. Elitist...

JENNY. Good scoping. You caught all our good points!

BETH. Is that supposed to be a joke?

JENNY. Will it make you loosen up if it is?

BETH. I guess so.

JENNY. Great. Then it's a joke.

BETH. I have to go now.

JENNY. Heavy social calendar, huh? Look. I'm sorry about what my friends said earlier. They don't mean to be jerks, but they can't help it. It's in their blood. Emotional cholesterol. Too much cafeteria food, I think.

BETH. It's okay.

JENNY. They didn't like emotionally cripple you or anything, did they?

BETH. No... Not really... It's just a little tough adjusting to a new city. Every school has its own rules.