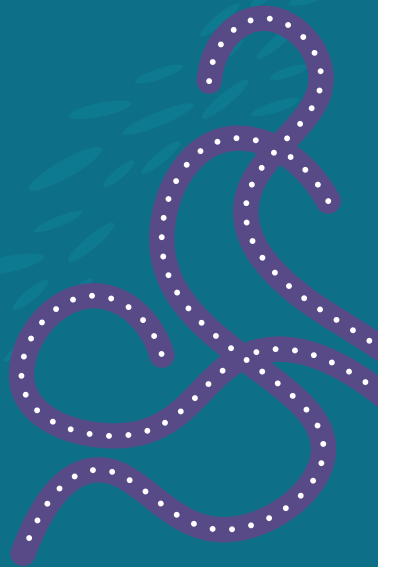


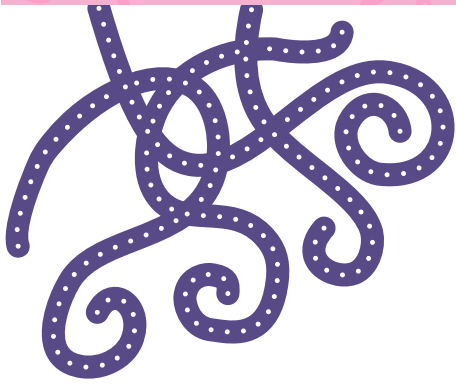


DISNEY'S *The* **LITTLE**
Mermaid

STUDY GUIDE | K-4



COLORADO SPRINGS
Fine Arts Center
at COLORADO COLLEGE



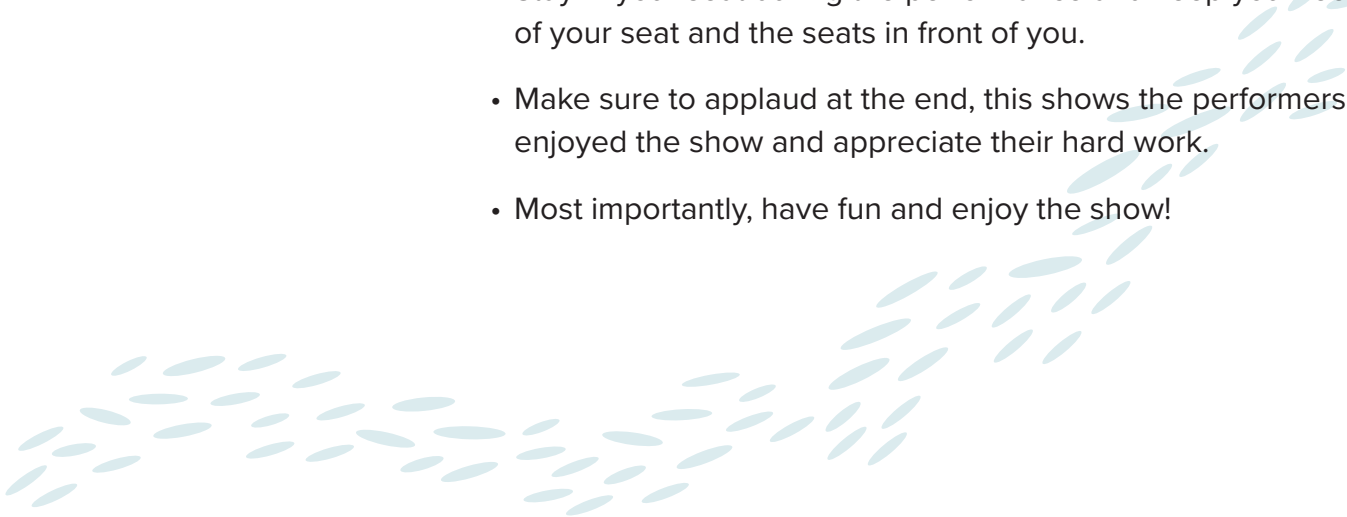
HELLO!

We are so excited to welcome you to the FAC for our production of “The Little Mermaid”. We can’t wait for you to enjoy every moment of this fantastic show. Please use the following to help prepare for your time with us.

Enjoy the show!

THEATRE ETIQUETTE

- Make sure you go to the bathroom before the show starts.
- Show your respect to the actors by giving them your complete attention and refrain from talking during the performance. Remember that the actors can see and hear you, even if you speak quietly or whisper to your neighbor.
- Make sure that all electronic devices are turned off completely and put away. Recording and photography is not allowed.
- The actors welcome and even crave appropriate responses to their performance. Laugh when it’s funny, cry when it’s sad, and listen to the actors tell their story.
- Pay attention to the lighting, scenery, costumes and music as all of these elements help provide more details to tell the story in an interesting way.
- Stay in your seat during the performance and keep your feet off of your seat and the seats in front of you.
- Make sure to applaud at the end, this shows the performers you enjoyed the show and appreciate their hard work.
- Most importantly, have fun and enjoy the show!



SYNOPSIS

In a magical kingdom beneath the sea, the beautiful young mermaid, Ariel, longs to leave her ocean home to live in the world above. Ariel, King Triton's seventh and youngest daughter, wishes to pursue the human Prince Eric in the world above, bargaining with the evil sea witch, Ursula, to trade her tail for legs. But the bargain is not what it seems, and Ariel needs the help of her colorful friends, Flounder the fish, Scuttle the seagull and Sebastian the crab to restore order under the sea.

CHARACTERS

Leading Characters

Ariel: a strong willed teenage mermaid who longs to be human. She is very curious, especially about the world above. She has a big heart and is more accepting of others' differences than most of her underwater friends.

Prince Eric: an adventurous prince who captures Ariel's heart. Charming and sensitive in nature, there is also a stubborn side to the Prince, who is determined to do whatever it takes to get what he wants - including finding the girl with the mysterious voice.

Ursula: an evil Sea Witch who is sister to King Triton. She will stop at nothing to get her brother's throne. She uses her cunning nature to get Ariel to give up one of her most prized possessions.

Sebastian: The choirmaster of King Triton's court who has a flair for the dramatic. Overly cautious, Sebastian is ever-anxious, whether he's conducting a concert premiere or protecting Ariel from Ursula.

Supporting Characters/ Ensemble

Supporting Characters are important characters that are not the main characters, but still contribute to moving the story forward in some way.

Some of the supporting characters you will see in the production are: Flounder, Scuttle, King Triton, Grimsby, Flotsam and Jetsam, Chef Louis, and Ariel's Mersisters.

Ensemble members are the group of actors, dancers and singers who support the main characters and storyline in a production. Often considered triple threats, they may play multiple roles in a show all of which may include singing, dancing and acting.

You will see the ensemble work together in this production in numbers like:

Under the Sea, Kiss the Girl, Positooty and She's in Love

TYPES OF THEATRE: WHAT IS A MUSICAL?

There are many different types of live shows you may see on stage: Opera (the story is told through singing only), Dance (the story is told through movement only), and Plays (the story is told through talking only). A musical is where the performers use singing, dancing and acting to tell the story (sometimes all at the same time). You will see scenes where they talk to each other, singing in solos and groups and dance numbers with dancing and singing. Each of these help to move the plot and story along. To be a musical theatre performer, you have to be skilled in all of these areas, it's certainly fun, but also a lot of hard work.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Shows like this don't come together overnight. The company has been in rehearsal for over a month before opening. There is a huge team in the background and backstage to make everything come together. Here's a few of the jobs that help to bring everything to the stage:

It starts with the Playwright/Composer/Lyricist, they dreamed up and write the script and songs for us to perform.

Then our creative team starts to dream:

- **Director, Choreographer, Music Director** – help create and teach the blocking (movement in a scene), dance steps and music during the rehearsal process.
- **Designers for Costumes/Set/Lights/Sound/Wigs and Props**

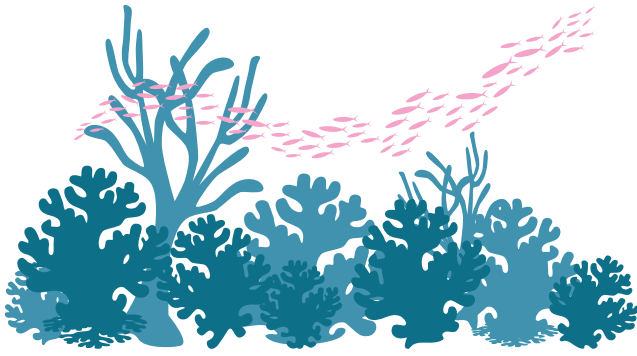
Once they dream up their amazing ideas we get to work creating what is needed for the show:

- **Carpenters and Scenic Painters** – create and build the set and set pieces
- **Wardrobe/Wigs** – make our costumes and wigs and keep us looking great

Then the Actors and Crew come in to bring it all to life:

- **Performers**, perform the songs and scenes for the show
- **Stage Manager, Assistant Stage Manager and Deck Crew** – all of these people ensure our safety, keep everything organized, and get us from scene to scene moving sets, props and even walls.
- **Sound and Light board operators** – make sure lights and sounds happen when they should during the show
- **Orchestra** – the musicians that bring the music to life during each show; for this show we have about 10 musicians in the pit.
- **Front of House Staff** – sell tickets and make sure everyone finds their seats
- **YOU** – the audience - we wouldn't have a show if you were not here!

All of these people come together to create a show, and if one piece is missing, it won't work as it should. Every single person is integral to the show whether you see them on stage or not.



SETTING

Under the Sea

Ariel and her family and friends live under water. This will be created with lighting effects, movement and imagination.

The Water's Surface

Ariel ventures to the water's surface many times. Scuttle meets Ariel and Flounder here as they talk about the human world and meet Eric for the first time.

On Land

Prince Eric's world, we find ourselves in the palace of his kingdom.

PUPPETS

Our production of the Little Mermaid will be using over 50 puppets to tell the story. Keep your eyes peeled to see if you can catch them all. We use puppets in this show to allow us to show the different sizes and varieties of under sea creatures that we can't show with just a person in a costume. They also help to show a better representation of how that animal might actually move inside of their world.

WYNOT Productions fabricated all of the puppets you will see. Each character is individually designed and created by hand. The puppets feature 3D printing, fabric work and foam work, and materials of all kinds. Each puppet is unique just like each actor in our production.

The enclosed pages are direct renderings from the WYNOT team of the actual puppets you will see on the stage. Please print them off and color to your heart's content.

GENRE: MYTHS/FOLKTALES

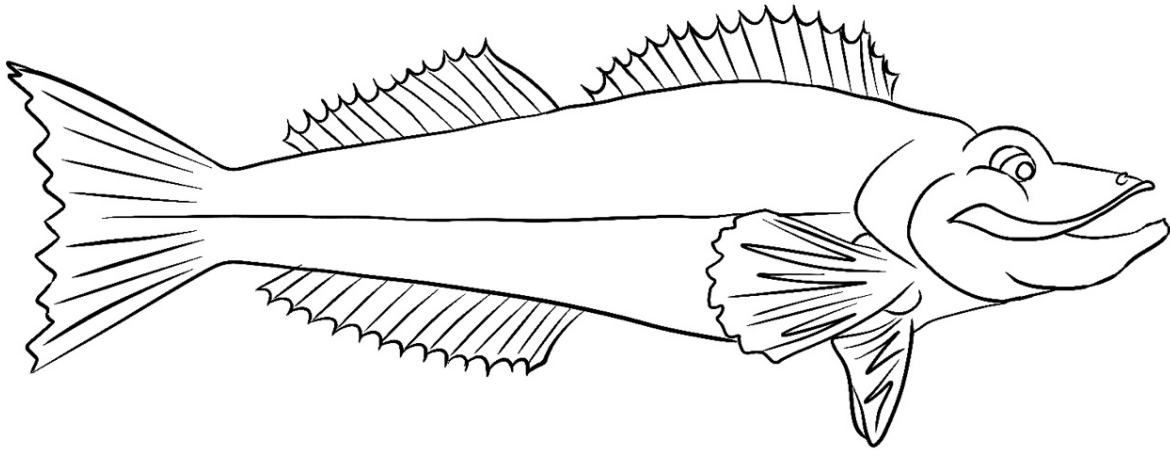
Myth:

A myth is a classic or legendary story that usually focuses on a hero or event and explains mysteries of nature or the universe with no true basis in fact. They are traditional stories about a culture's beliefs about life. Myths exist in every culture; but the most well known are part of Greek and Roman mythology. Characters in myths are often gods, goddesses, warriors and heroes and are often responsible for the creation and maintenance of elements of nature and human life—like King Triton and the oceans in our story.

Folktales:

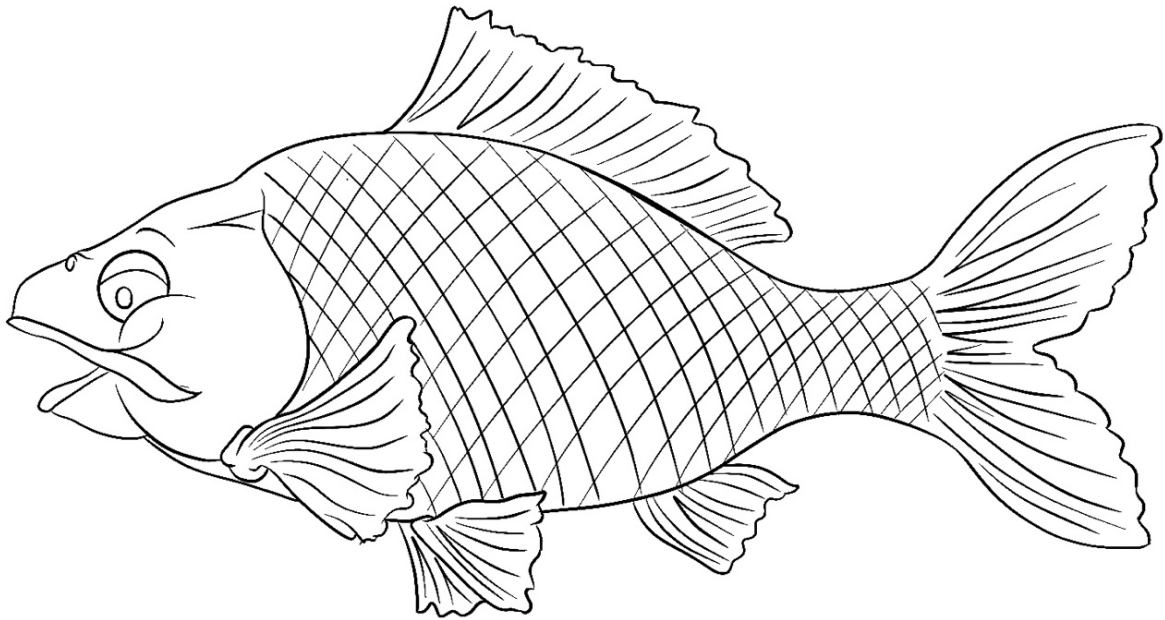
A story that gets passed on from generation to generation. Because folktales don't have a singular author and develop over time as they are told, they are creations of "the folk" or the people. Modern authors will write their own versions (like Hans Christian Andersen did) in fairy tales and fables. Folktales tell about many different parts of life, they may tell about joys and sorrows, animals and magic beings, and heroes and villains. They may teach a lesson or just be entertaining.

LING



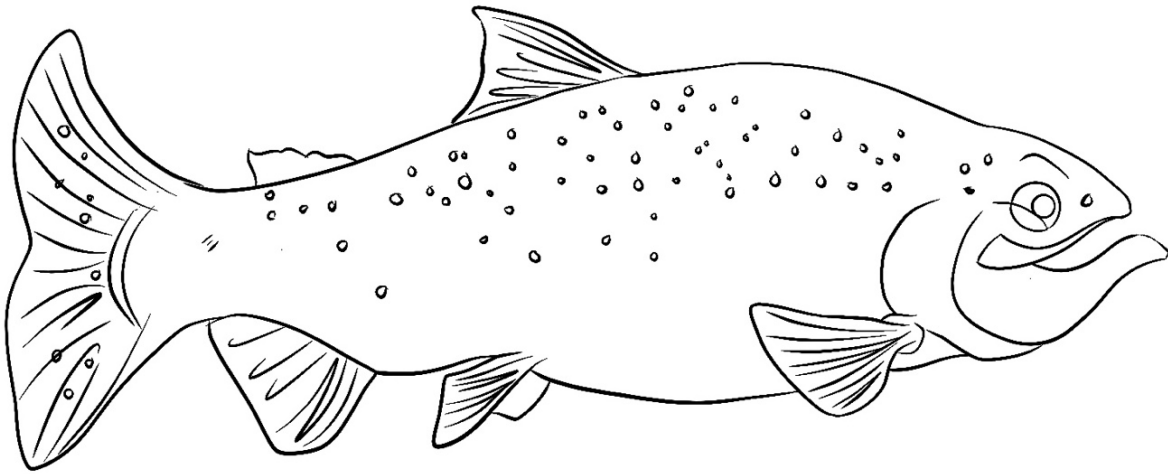
Sammy @
'24

CARP



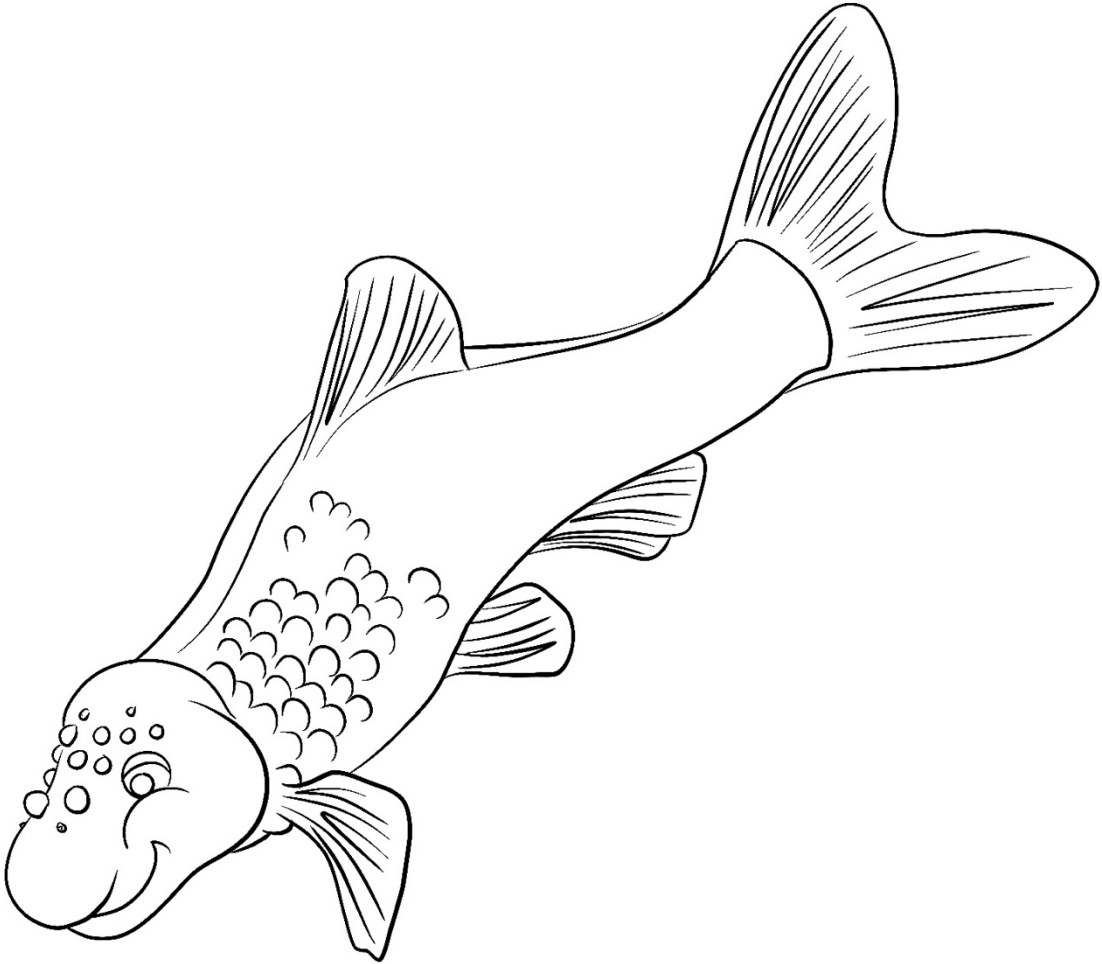
Sammy
'24

TROUT



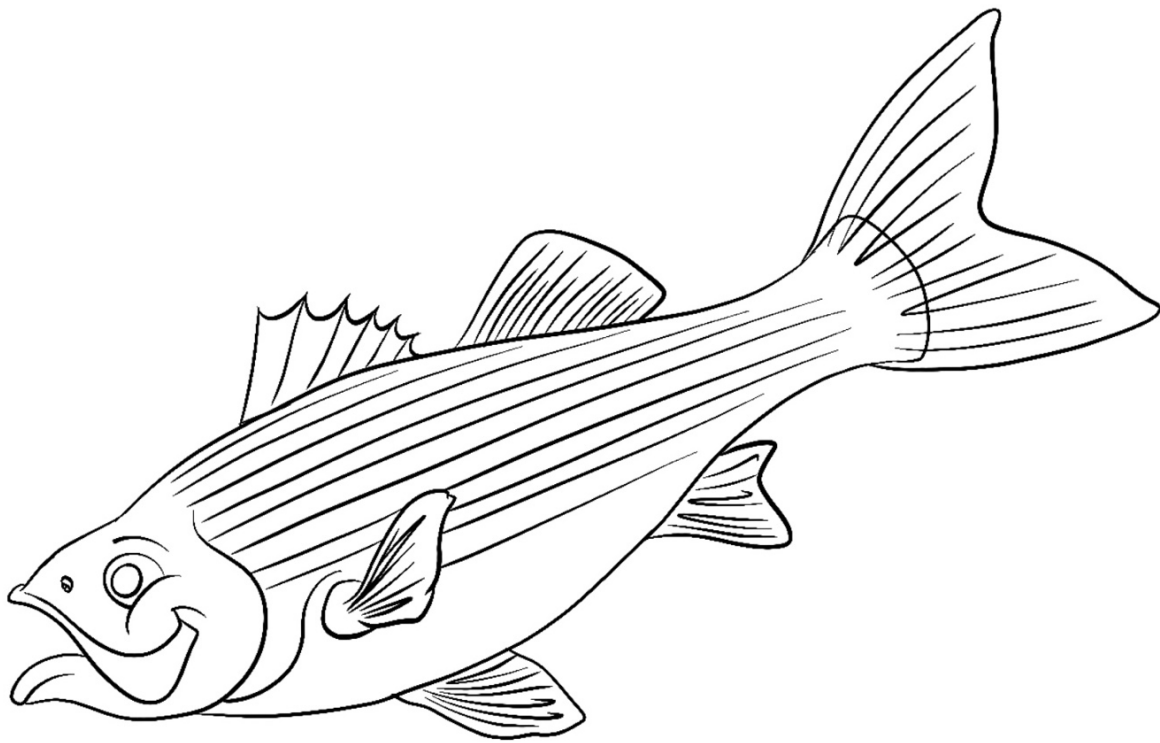
Sammy De
24

CARP



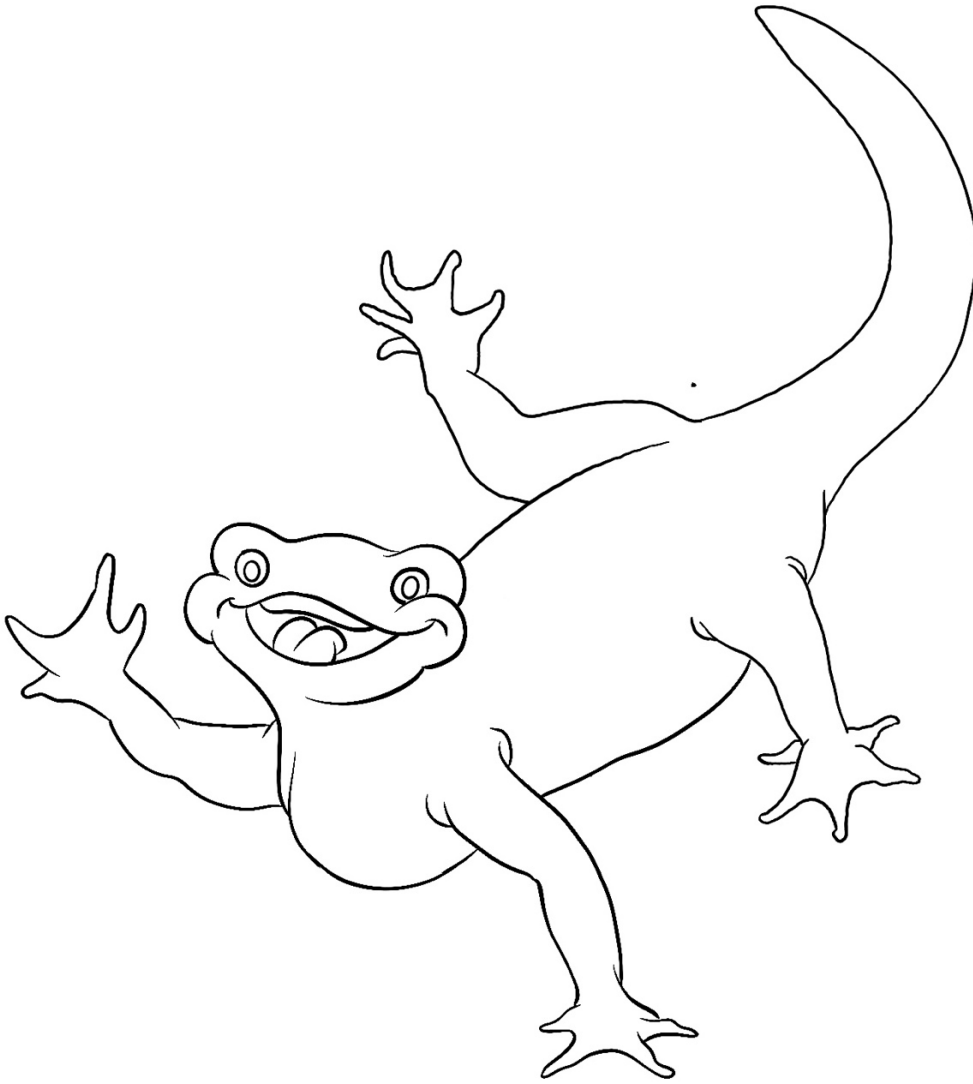
Sammy
'24

BASS



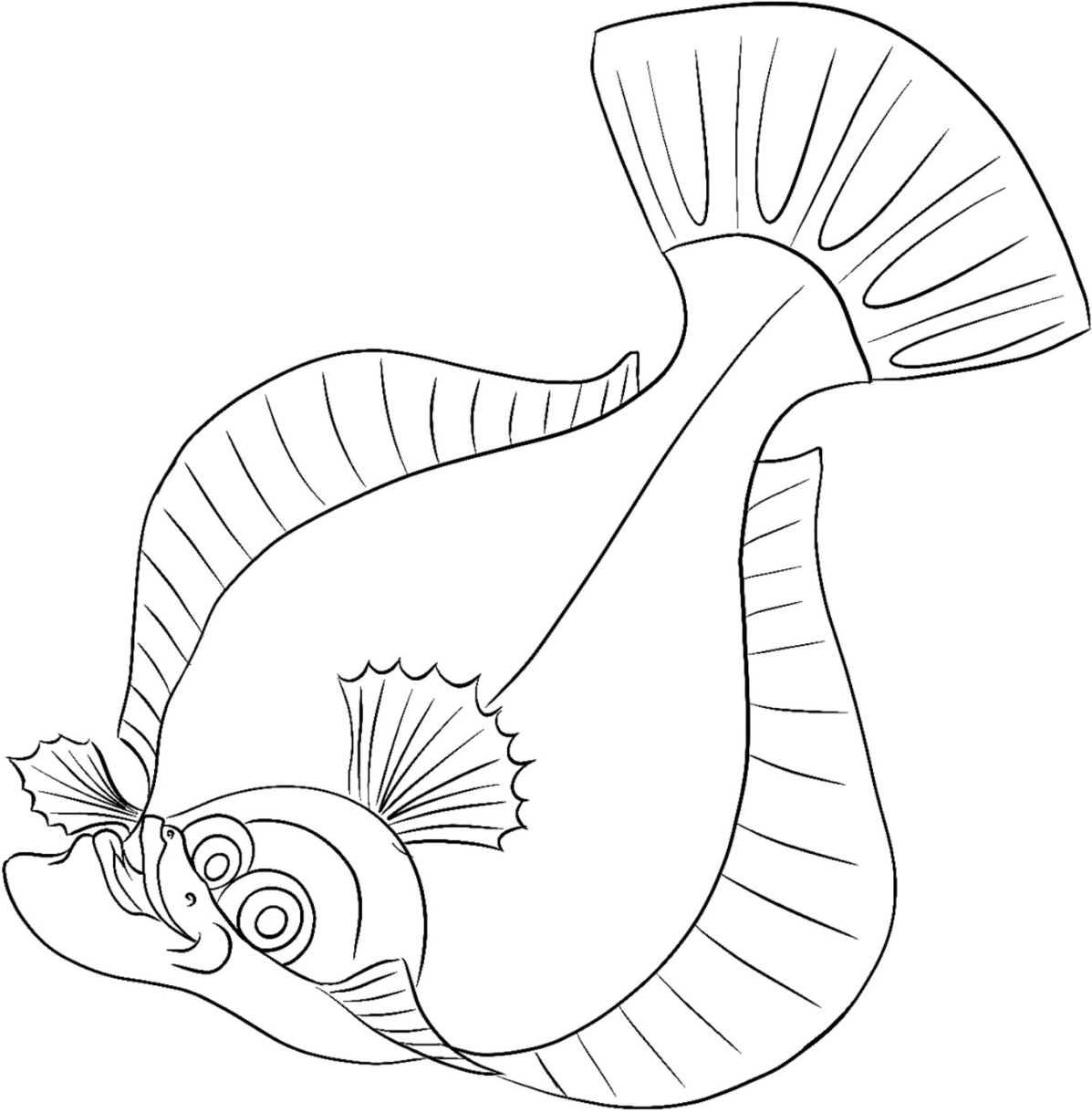
Sammy Q
'24

NEWT



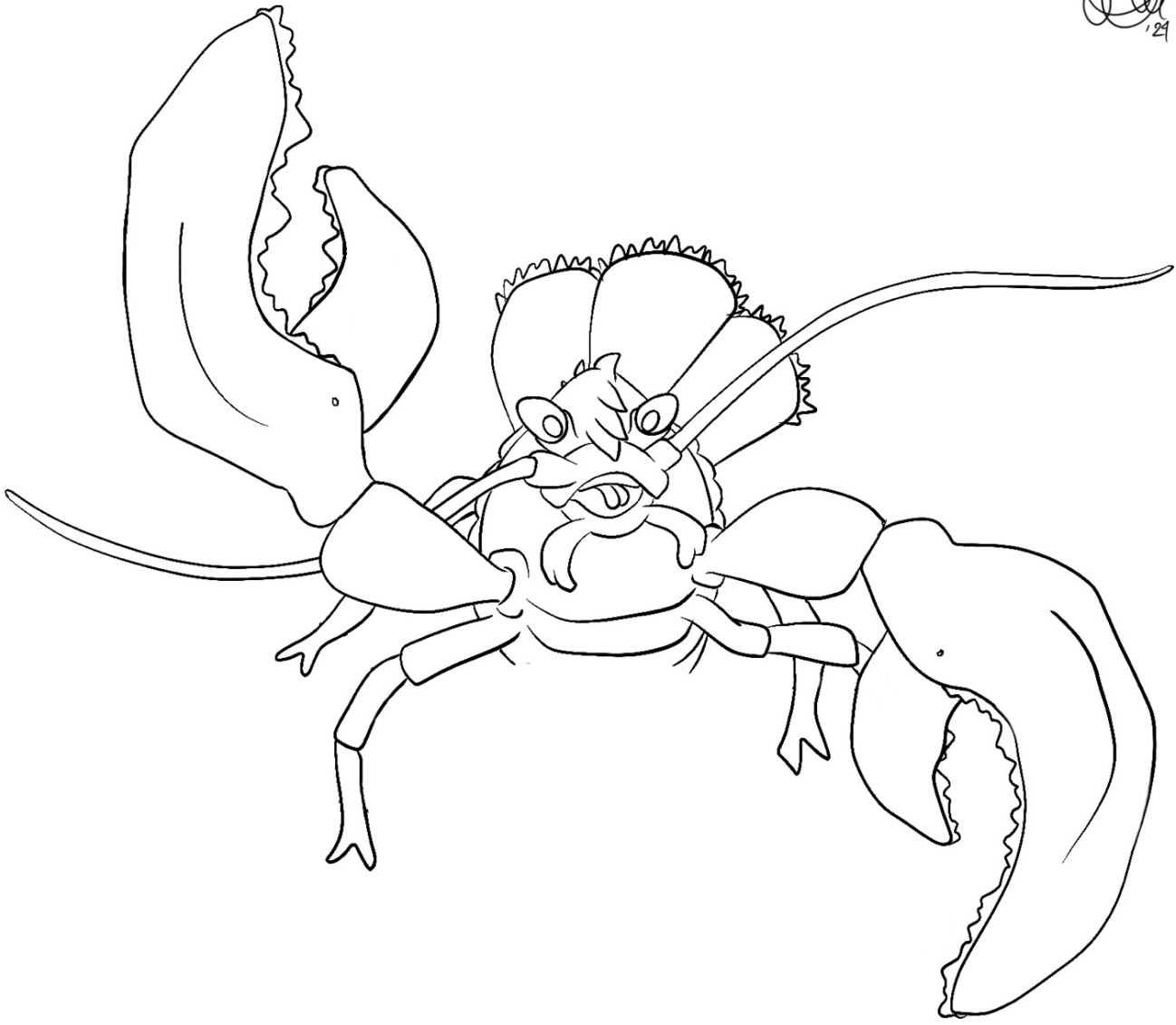
Sammy
'24

FLUKE



Sammy  '24

Sammy
'29



CRUSTACEAN BAND LOBSTER

ADAPTATIONS

Original Story | 1836

You may have seen the original Disney animated feature of the Little Mermaid, but did you know the story goes back much farther than that?.

Hans Christian Andersen (a Danish writer best remembered for his 156 literary fairy tales) wrote the original story in 1836. His story was much darker than the versions we know and love, and it was one of his most popular stories. It has been published in almost 150 languages and has inspired many books and films since its first publication.

Disney Animated Film | 1989

In 1989, Disney released their uplifting adaptation of Andersen's famed tale in animated form. This was Disney's 28th animated feature and helped to pave the way for future films like *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*. The success of the film created two sequel movies, a TV show, video games and even this musical.

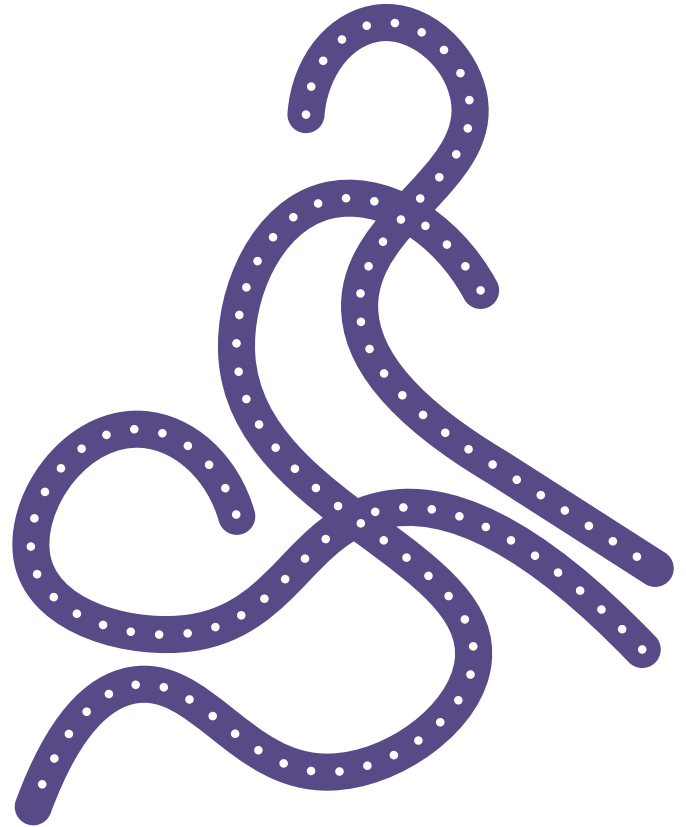
Disney's Stage Musical | 2008

Since the animated version was initially structured like a Broadway show, it was a perfect candidate for the next big Disney Stage Musical. Disney Theatrical group came together to create an undersea world onstage, adding new songs to augment the film's score. The Broadway production opened on January 10, 2008, running for 685 performances before closing on August 30, 2009. The Little Mermaid continues to charm audiences around the globe in performances just like this one.

Disney's Live Action Film | 2023

A live-action reimagining of the beloved 1989 animated film. Updates to the original lyrics and three new songs were written for the show. Alan Menken returned for the score and music alongside Lin-Manuel Miranda.

****There are countless stories, books, plays and films that are based on the original story by Hans Christian Andersen. These are just a few of the most well known adaptations.***





PLAYWRIGHT/COMPOSER/LYRICISTS



Playwright (*The person that writes the text and script for the musical*)

Doug Wright (Book) is an American Playwright, librettist and screenwriter. Known for his extensive work in the American theatre in both plays and musicals, he has received numerous accolades including the Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award

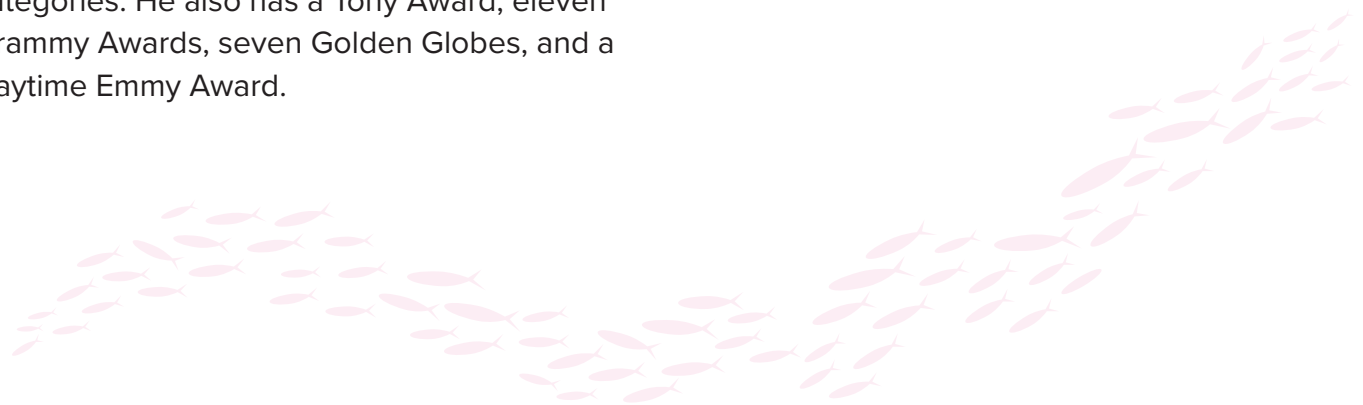
Composer (*The person that writes the music and melodies heard throughout the show*)

Alan Menken (Music) is an American composer and conductor, best known for his scores and songs for films produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and Skydance Animation. Menken's contributions to *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin* and *Pocahontas* won him two Academy Awards for each film. He also composed numerous scores and songs for musicals like *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Newsies*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules* and *Tangled*. His accolades include winning eight Academy Awards—becoming the second most prolific Oscar winner in the music categories. He also has a Tony Award, eleven Grammy Awards, seven Golden Globes, and a Daytime Emmy Award.

Lyricists (*The people that writes the words for the songs*)

Howard Ashman (Lyrics) was an American playwright, lyricist and stage director. He is most widely known for his work on feature films for Walt Disney Animation Studios, for which Ashman wrote the lyrics and Alan Menken composed the music. Ashman has been credited as being a main driving force behind the Disney Renaissance. His work included songs for *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*.

Glenn Slater (Lyrics) is an American lyricist for musical theatre. He was nominated for three Tony Awards for Best Original Score for the Broadway version of *The Little Mermaid*, *Sister Act* and *School of Rock*. He has also worked on film shows like *Tangled* for which he won a Grammy award and ABC's *Galavant*. He has also won a Daytime Emmy Award for Original song in *Rapunzel's Tangled Adventure*.



PRE/POST QUESTIONS

Pre:

- What are you most excited about?
- How do you think the actors/design team will portray being under water?
- What are things that movies can do that live stage shows can not? What about the other way around?
- What is something new you think you might see?
- Who do you think your favorite character will be?
- What do you think will be the same/different than other versions you have seen?

Post:

- What did you like about the show? What didn't you like about the show?
- Did anything surprise you in the show?
- What do you think the moral(s) of the story is?
- What character did you relate to the most?
- Who was the villain in the story?
- What was your favorite song?
- Who ended up being your favorite character?
- What do you think might happen next for each of the characters? What lessons did they learn (or not)?

- Ariel trades her beautiful voice for legs. Is there anything you can imagine trading your most precious asset for? What circumstances would convince you the trade would be worth it?
- If you colored a sea creature, were your colors the same or different from the puppet you saw on stage?

UPCOMING FAC THEATRE

- **City Dog, Prairie Dog:** Now through November 24th
- **In Her Bones:** February 13th–March 2nd
- **Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed: The Rock Experience** February 28th–March 30th
- **Sister Act:** May 1st–May 25th

If you enjoy the show and your time at the FAC, please let us know, send letters and communication to the FAC at:

30 West Dale St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Don't forget to look at our Summer Theatre Camps—Registration Open NOW!

RESOURCES:

MTI Production Handbook

https://www.mtishows.com/sites/default/files/littlemermaid_production_handbook_0.pdf

Alan Menken

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Menken

Doug Wright

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doug_Wright

Howard Ashman

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howard_Ashman

Glenn Slater

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenn_Slater

Live Action Adaptation

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Little_Mermaid_\(2023_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Little_Mermaid_(2023_film))

<https://movies.disney.com/the-little-mermaid-2023>

Myths/Folktales

<https://literaryterms.net/myth/>

<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/folktale/399460>

