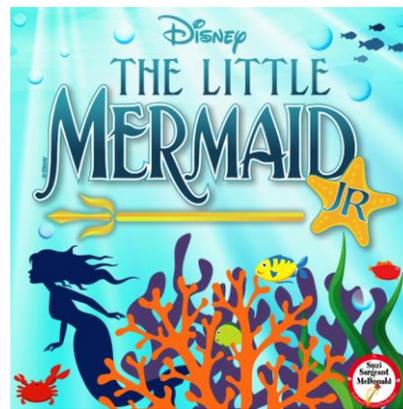


# PLAYTIME POPPY AUDIENCE GUIDE



**Kennedy High School  
NOV 29 - DEC 1, 2018**

**ADULTS:** *This guide is designed to...*

- ✓ Assist you to **ENGAGE & INSPIRE** your students as they prep for attending the performance
- ✓ Provide guidance afterwards to **REFLECT** on what students saw and heard at the theater
- ✓ Be a **MENU** of possible lessons/activities to choose from to fit the needs of your students
- ✓ Connect with **IOWA CORE** standards and **NATIONAL CORE ARTS** standards

*Enjoy the Learning!*

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Websites & Books

## **THEATRE ETIQUETTE**

*Attending the theatre is different than watching a movie or television. The actors and audience share the experience together. Being a good audience member involves showing respect for the actors' hard work – AND enjoying your experience to the fullest!*

- Arrive at the theatre on time.
- Visit the restroom before the performance begins.
- Silence cell phones to minimize disruptions to the actors and other audience members.
- Applaud! It's welcomed and encouraged at appropriate times to show your appreciation of the performers' choices.
- Participate (sing, speak, move etc.) when the performers invite you to do so.
- Be a good listener and keep your focus on the performance. You won't want to miss any of it!



## PART 1: KNOW ABOUT THE PLAY



### Disney's *The Little Mermaid, JR.*

Music by Alan Menken

Lyrics by Howard Ashman and Glenn Slater

Book by Doug Wright

(Based on the Hans Christian Andersen story and the Disney film)

Music Adapted and Arranged by David Weinstein

### Synopsis:

In a magical underwater kingdom, the beautiful young mermaid, Ariel, longs to leave her ocean home – and her fins – behind and live in the world above. But first, she'll have to defy her father, King Triton, make a deal with the evil sea witch, Ursula, and convince the handsome Prince Eric that she's the girl whose enchanting voice he's been seeking.

#### Cast of Characters

Pilot  
Sailors  
Prince Eric  
Grimsby  
Merfolk & Sea Creatures  
Seahorse  
King Triton  
Sebastian  
Aquata  
Andrina  
Arista  
Atina  
Adella  
Allana  
Ariel  
Flounder  
Scuttle  
Gulls  
Ursula  
Tentacles  
Flotsam  
Jetsam  
Carlotta  
Chef Louis  
Chefs  
Lagoon Animals  
Princesses



#### Scenes

1. The Ocean Surface
2. King Triton's Court
3. The Beach
4. Ursula's Lair
5. King Triton's Court
6. Ariel's Grotto
7. The Ocean Surface
8. The Beach
9. King Triton's Court
10. Ariel's Grotto
11. Ursula's Lair
12. The Beach
13. The Palace Kitchen
14. The Palace Hall
15. The Lagoon
16. The Palace Hall
17. Ariel's Grotto
18. Ursula's Lair
19. The Ocean Surface
20. The Beach

#### Show vocabulary

Bemoan: to express grief or distress

Conch: these spiral shells are often used as horns

Coterie: an exclusive group or clique

Crustaceans: include crabs, lobsters, shrimp, and barnacles; they have a hard shell, a segmented body, and jointed appendages.

Fathom: unit of length to measure the depth of water, (6 feet or 1.8288 meters)

Flotsam: the floating wreckage of a ship

Fricassee: a dish with pieces of meat served in a thick white sauce

Headstrong: determined to have one's own way

Inexhaustible: something which cannot be used up; infinite

Jetsam: cargo thrown overboard to lighten a ship in danger.

Melee: confusion, turmoil

Steward: a guardian or protector

Torso: the human body excluding the head and limbs

Transmutes: to change from one nature to another

#### Theatre vocabulary

For a list of theatre terms and vocabulary, visit:

<https://quizlet.com/42804/theatre-vocabulary-flash-cards/>

## PART 2: LEARNING ACTIVITIES

**Pre-show prep...** Help children make deeper personal and learning connections to the performance by exploring key themes, engaging in the creative process, and making predictions!

### Myths of the Sea (RL.3.2)

- When Hans Christian Andersen wrote *The Little Mermaid*, he included details from myths that had been told about the sea for hundreds of years. The first stories about mermaids appeared in 5000 B.C. and variations have appeared in cultures across the globe. Sailors have reported seeing mermaids and many believed that mermaid songs could calm the sea or bring terrible storms. Triton was a Greek God of the Sea who usually appeared with his trident, a three-pronged spear.
- Research sea myths from different cultures. Compare stories – what is similar or different? Are there common themes across stories? Why do you think so many cultures have developed stories about sea creatures?

### A Fish Out of Water (W.3.1, W.3.3, TH:CR1.1.3.c)

- Ariel longs to live among humans. Prince Eric wishes to be an adventurer rather than a king. Have you ever wanted to be something other than you are?
- If you could magically transform (to an adult, a mermaid, an animal, etc.) would it you do it? Write an opinion piece stating why you'd choose to transform or not.
- Write a narrative about a character that transforms into something else. Then act out your story, determining how the character's voice and movements would change.

### Movie to Stage (W.3.8, TH:Cr1.1.3.b)

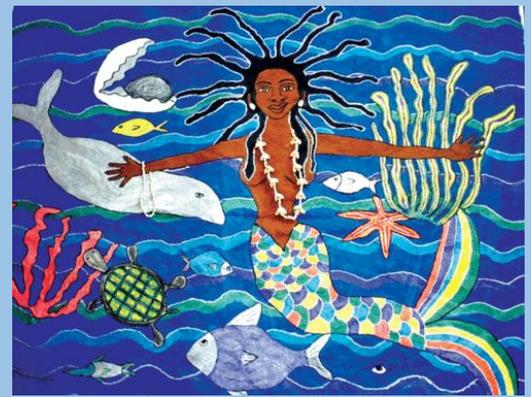
- The Disney movie, *The Little Mermaid*, uses animation to create the underwater scenes and magical moments. But how can the scenes and special effects happen on the stage using real life materials? Make predictions about what you might see at the Playtime Poppy production.
- Gather information from print or digital sources about sea life. Organize key ideas that will help you imagine and design a theatrical set.



### **Mermaid myths from various cultures:**

- Mami Wata, an African water spirit often shown as a mermaid, can bring good luck, or if crossed, may cause fatal drowning!
- The Aboriginal people of Australia told tales of the Yawkyawks, who would grow legs and walk among humans at night.
- The Native American Shawnee people believed that a half-man, half-fish with two tails had led their ancestors across the water from Asia to North America.
- Irish mermaids, called merrows, were able to live underwater by wearing magical caps.

*(From Disney's The Little Mermaid Study Guide prepared by the Disney Theatrical Production Education Department)*



- Imagine and design a set that creates an underwater world. What objects would you see? What kind of lighting could create a watery feeling? What kind of materials would you use?
- Imagine and design costumes for mermaids or sea creatures. Think about how sea creatures move... how could the costumes help actors appear to be floating or swimming? What kind of fabric would create the texture of the sea creatures?

## PART 2: LEARNING ACTIVITIES (cont.)

**After the show...** Reflection is a key part of learning! Try these ideas to help children connect their theatre experience with life and learning.

### Write a Letter! (W.2.8, TH:Re7.1.2.a)

- Write a review of the performance or thank you letter and send it to the Kennedy High School Drama Department, and/or Playtime Poppy Children's Theatre. Include key details by describing what you saw, heard and thought. What choices did the actors or tech crew make that you liked?

### Do Some Reflecting (SL.3.2, TH:Re7.1.2.a)

- Discuss and take notes on your answers to the following questions after you see the performance:
  - 1) *Name the main characters. How did the actors use their voice and body to portray them?*
  - 2) *Where does the story take place? How did the set design create the feeling of that place?*
  - 3) *What conflicts/problems happened? How were the conflicts/problems solved?*
  - 4) *What was your favorite set or prop used in the play?*
  - 5) *Was there any music in the play? If so, how does it affect the mood of the story?*
  - 6) *Were there any surprises in the play?*
  - 7) *What was the best part of going to the performance?*

### Prop Transformation (TH:Cr1.1.3.b)

- When Scuttle refers to a pipe as a "snarfblatt," he incorrectly informs Ariel that it is used to make music.
- Standing in a circle, pass around everyday objects and provide new names and functions for the items (i.e. a stapler might be called a "cruncher" used for cracking nuts). Anything goes, but students cannot repeat names or functions already described.

*(From Disney's The Little Mermaid Study Guide prepared by the Disney Theatrical Production Education Department)*

### Stage Directions Tell the Story (W.3.3, TH:Cr3.1.3.b)

Because Ariel loses her voice, she must use body language to communicate to Prince Eric. In a play, the actor reads stage directions that gives ideas about how to move. Read the scene below and notice how Ariel's stage directions (*in italics*) communicate her feelings.

**PRINCE ERIC:** I'm sorry. You don't speak at all, do you? For a moment, I mistook you for someone else.

*(Frustrated, ARIEL stands and tries to pantomime the truth - she's the one!)*

**PRINCE ERIC:** What is it? You're hurt? No, no... you need help?

*(Suddenly, all the excitement - and her new legs - take a toll on ARIEL. She wobbles and falls right into PRINCE ERIC's arms.)*

Read the passage below and fill in the stage directions for Ariel. Remember that her actions should demonstrate her feelings. Then perform for the class! *(From Disney's The Little Mermaid Study Guide prepared by the Disney Theatrical Production Education Department)*

**PRINCE ERIC:** You should see the princesses that Grimsby drags to dinner. So prim, so boring. But you...why, you were practically swinging from the chandeliers!

**ARIEL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINCE ERIC:** So – if you don't mind my asking – what was it? An accident, when you were small? Or maybe goblins stole your voice away in the middle of the night?

**ARIEL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINCE ERIC:** I'm sorry, I didn't mean.... Who needs words anyway? A smile says just as much sometimes.

**ARIEL:** \_\_\_\_\_

## PART 3: RESOURCES

### WEBSITES:

#### Playtime Poppy Children's Theatre

<http://www.playtimepoppy.org>

#### Kennedy High School Drama Department

<http://kenn.cr.k12.ia.us/fine-performing-arts/theatre/>

#### Kids' Drama and Puppet Activities

<https://dramaresource.com/drama-games/>

<http://www.kidactivities.net/post/drama-introduction-and-menu.aspx>

<http://www.kinderart.com/drama>

<https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/tipsheets/five-easy-drama-games>

<http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/66700/26-puppets-kids>

<http://wonderteacher.com/teaching-with-puppet-power/>

#### Cultural and Thematic Resources

[www.disney.go.com/theatre/thelittlemermaid/index.html](http://www.disney.go.com/theatre/thelittlemermaid/index.html) - The official web site for the Broadway production of The Little Mermaid.

[www.HowDoesTheShowGoOn.com](http://www.HowDoesTheShowGoOn.com) - Official website for Thomas Schumacher's book, providing an interactive guide to the inner workings of theater and what goes on behind the curtain.

[www.surlalunefairytales.com/littlemermaid/index.html](http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/littlemermaid/index.html) - An annotated version of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale.

[www.strangescience.net/stsea2.htm](http://www.strangescience.net/stsea2.htm) - An extraordinarily detailed page, with information and images of sea monsters through the ages.

[www.keeptoceansclean.org](http://www.keeptoceansclean.org) - A kid-friendly site of the Oceans Awareness campaign. Ariel is the mascot!

### BOOKS:



*Hans Christian Andersen: A Biography* by R. Nisbit Bain (Univ Press of the Pacific, 2002)

*Mermaids Most Amazing* by Narelle Oliver (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2001)

*OCEAN: The World's Last Wilderness Revealed* by Robert Dinwiddie (DK Adult, 2006)

*Song of the Sea: Myths, Tales and Folklore* by Ann Spencer (Tundra Books, 2001)

*The Annotated Hans Christian Andersen* by Hans Christian Andersen, edited by Maria Tatar (WW Norton, 2007)

*The Book of Mermaids* by Patricia Saxton (Shenanigan Books, 2005)

# SPECIAL THANKS TO:

## Kennedy High School Drama Department

Directors: Caleb Marner and Nick Hayes

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## Playtime Poppy Board of Directors & Volunteers



Don't forget to learn the  
**Playtime Poppy Song!**

*"I love to sing  
and dance and  
play..."*

*-Playtime Poppy*

For the lyrics and music go to:

<http://www.playtimepoppy.org/about/playtime-poppy-song/>

*Since 1951, Playtime Poppy Children's Theatre has presented educational theatre programming for children and families in our community. In partnership with Jefferson, Kennedy, and Washington High Schools, Playtime Poppy presents three children's theatre productions annually. Playtime Poppy provides educational theatre experiences through the Summer Theatre Adventure, Operation Backstage, One Great Line, and special matinee performances for elementary-school aged children and those with special needs. For additional information about Playtime Poppy, please visit [www.playtimepoppy.org](http://www.playtimepoppy.org) or follow us on Facebook.*