

THE LITTLE MERMAID SYNOPSIS

A mermaid dreams of going to the surface world to see what life among humans is like, thanks to her octopus friend who tells her all kinds of fantastic stories about what he has seen on his excursions up there. She finally decides she has to go see for herself, and when she does go up, she spots a handsome prince and immediately falls in love with him.

After returning back to the bottom of the sea, she can't stop thinking about the prince, so she decides to go back up and find him. She goes to see an old sea hag who magically changes her into a human, but the catch is that she can't talk anymore.

She goes back up and finds the prince, becoming his friend. But she is disturbed to learn that he is planning to marry someone else. The evil sea hag appears and tells her to murder the young woman the prince is about to marry. But instead, she decides to leave the kingdom and go find a new life somewhere else. (Note: In the original version, she dies in her grief.)

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

1. What name did H.C. Anderson give the Little Mermaid in his story? (*He did not give her a name.*)
2. What common objects did you spot in the show? What things were being used as something else? (*Ironing board for a ship; toilet seat and rulers for steering wheel; tennis racket for porthole*) See if you can name more.
3. **Manatees to Mermaids** According to one theory, stories about mermaids got started when sailors spotted manatees, perhaps when they could not see them very well. Find a picture of a manatee. Do you think it's possible this theory could be true?
4. **Recycling** The Little Mermaid and Otto find a bag of garbage from the surface world. Did you know plastic bags and other plastic garbage thrown into the ocean kill as many as 1,000,000 sea creatures every year? Learn more about garbage, its effects on the ocean and what you can do about it. Here is one web site to get you started http://library.thinkquest.org/CR0215471/ocean_pollution.htm

THINGS TO DO

PANTOMIME

The Little Mermaid loses her voice in the story and has to communicate with the Prince by using only gestures. See if you can get your ideas across by playing a game of charades. Here are some rules if you have never played <http://www.scholastic.com/titles/abbyhayes/brainwaves/charades.htm>

Another effective way to communicate is with American Sign Language (ASL). But this only works if both people know the signs. Check out books and look for videos on YouTube.com to share with your family and friends. ASL is easy to learn, look for books in the 419 section at your library.

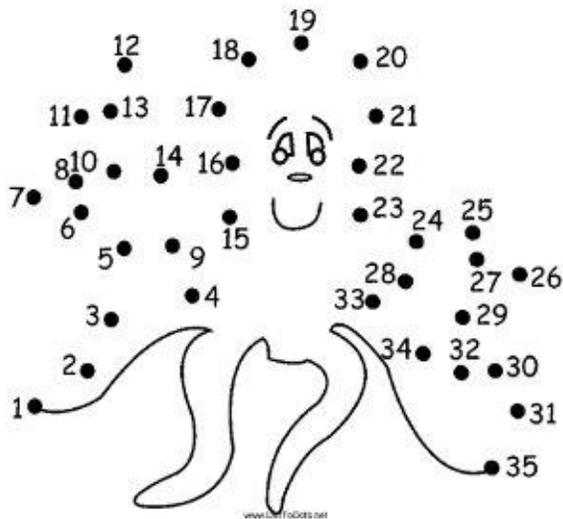
BOOKS TO READ

Hans Christian Anderson lived in Denmark from 1805 to 1875. Read the original story and discuss the differences in the book, the Disney movie and the show. Here are some other stories by Hans Christian Anderson. Look for them at your library in the 398 section

- The Little Match Girl
- The Red Shoes
- The Ugly Duckling
- The Emperor and the Nightingale
- The Emperor's New Clothes
- Thumbelina



OTTO DOT-TO-DOT



BLOW BUBBLES

This is the first time we've used bubbles in one of our shows, and we think it's fun. You don't have to buy bubble solution to blow your own bubbles. Chances are you already have what you need at home. You can blow some pretty good bubbles just by mixing dishwashing soap with water. Try about 10 to 12 parts water with one part soap to start with—you can experiment with different proportions. For better results add about one fourth part glycerin (if available) or substitute corn syrup. For colored bubbles, add food coloring.

FISH CRAFT

The Little Mermaid has lots of sea-creature friends. You can make one of her fish buddies from a paper plate, here is how:

- Cut a wedge out of a paper plate. The wedge will be the fish's tail; the hole will be the fish's mouth.
- Glue (or use tape or a stapler) the tail to the end of the fish.
- Glue a googly eye on the fish (glue on two eyes if you want a flounder) or simply draw eye(s).
- Decorate! Color in the fish, drawing scales, lips, and so on. Add glitter or bits of colored paper if available.

THE CAST (THE ACT!VATED ACTORS)

- Kimberly Goza: The Little Mermaid
- Dennis Goza: Otto the Octopus, Prince, Sea Hag
- Zephyr Goza: voice-over narrator

Music by Dennis and Zephyr; sets and costumes by Kimberly; props by Dennis and Kimberly. The Sea Hag costume was designed by 13 year old Meckenzie in Virginia, winner of our costume design contest. Here is the original drawing →

