

The Little Mermaid

Summary of the story

The Little Mermaid takes place in a fantasy world under the sea. A mermaid lives with her five sisters and brother, the sea king. She likes to watch the ships and one day, she sees a handsome young man. He almost drowns when the ship sinks and she saves his life. Later, she wants to see him again and asks the sea monster for legs to go on land. The sea monster gives her something magic to drink, she goes on land, has legs and speaks to her young man. However he loves another woman. The Little Mermaid is unhappy. She goes back to her sisters and afterwards spends her time looking at ships.



Background to the story

Originally written by Hans Christian Andersen, and published in 1836, it has been retold in many languages and different versions. It was made into a cartoon by Walt Disney.

Topics and themes

The body. The description of the mermaids makes reference to parts of both human and animal bodies. The idea could be used as a springboard to work on this lexis and imaginative work where pupils invent other unusual beings which combine parts of different animals. The story can be used to introduce and familiarize pupils with the possessives. (The mermaid has a girl's body and a fish's tail).

Environment. The story includes references to a world under the sea. The ideas and illustrations can be exploited and used to introduce language

through project work on the sea and the seaside, language work can be combined with science.

Friendships. The story can be used to introduce discussion on love and happiness.

Hobbies. The story includes a section where the ship goes down and the prince needs help. The story could be used to highlight the importance of learning to swim and the dangers of water.

Magic. Her fish tail was changed into legs.

Monsters. The picture of the sea monster on page 9 can be used for this topic.

Making use of the Reader

Brainstorming. Give each pupil a blank piece of paper and a pencil. Teach them the words THE SEA. Write it in large letters on the board or on a piece of paper. Ask pupils to copy the words in the center of their page. Ask them to take a few minutes to draw all of the things they can think of related to the sea. Exhibit the pictures for all pupils to see. Talk about the things you can see in each picture in English.

What is missing. Make simple flashcards with photocopied pictures from the book on them to represent the most important nouns from the story. MERMAID, SEA KING, MONSTER, SHIP,

LEGS, TAIL, YOUNG MAN, WOMAN. Put them all on the table or on the board and go over the vocabulary with the pupils. Tell the pupils to close their eyes. Take away one of the flashcards. Tell the pupils to open their eyes and guess which one is missing. Repeat the process until they are familiar with the vocabulary.

Describe and draw. Draw a picture of a strange creature made up of different body parts of different animals and make enough copies for one per pair. Give one pupil in the pair a piece of paper and the other the picture. One pupil should describe the picture while the other draws it, e.g. It has got a fish's head. It has got an elephant's ears. When they have finished, pupils can compare pictures.



The Little Mermaid

Using the accompanying video and audio cassette

Watching or listening for specific information/post-reading/whole class.

Before watching or listening to the cassette (if the pupils have already read the book) elicit who the characters are from the story and write them on the board. Tell the pupils to, for example, stand up when the mermaid is on land.

During watching and listening – whole class prediction.

Play the video or audio cassette story through in its entirety. The second time through, stop just before a dramatic event in the story (for example, when the ship goes down, or the Mermaid drinks the monster's drink) and ask the pupils to tell you what happens next, then view or listen to see if they were right.

Simultaneous reading and listening in groups will help the pupils with pronunciation and intonation.

Notes on the activities in the factsheet

Activity 1. Pupils, in pairs or groups, should look for the five words from the story. They can underline or circle them when they find them.

Activity 2. Pupils draw a happy mermaid, not a sad one. Ask them to think about the colours to make the mermaid happy.

Activity 3. Pupils, in pairs, should see if they can decide if the statement is true or false. You may need to give them an example on the board before they start and talk each of the three statements through with them all.

Activity 4. Pupils join the picture to the matching word then colour the pictures.

Answers to the activities

In the back of the Reader

Ship (page 3); castle (page 1); king (page 1); mermaid (page 2); fish (page 2)

In the factsheet

Activity 1

m	e	r	m	a	i	d	c	s	t
a	k	l	p	s	o	m	n	z	w
n	v	b	c	h	x	r	k	l	q
d	i	s	w	i	g	h	n	b	c
o	t	y	l	p	a	s	c	h	a
z	p	u	y	w	e	d	s	c	s
f	i	s	h	x	q	p	e	a	t
u	m	z	a	s	g	k	a	n	l
d	k	i	n	g	h	g	f	t	e
w	s	q	k	o	y	e	c	z	x

Activity 2 Pupils read, draw and color their pictures.

Activity 3 1. False 2. False. 3. True

Activity 4 Pupils match the picture to the words with a line.



Level
1

The Little Mermaid

Name.....

Activity 1

Look at the pictures and find the words from the story



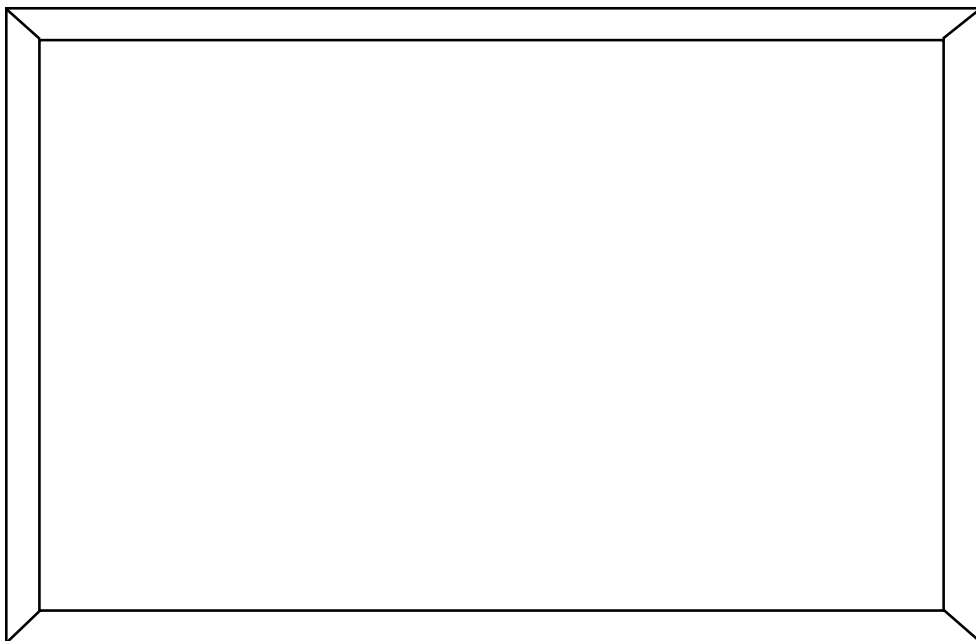
m e r m a i d c s t
a k l p s o m n z w
n v b c h x r k l q
d i s w i g h n b c
o t y l p a s c h a
z p u y w e d s c s
f i s h x q p e a t
u m z a s g k a n l
d k i n g h g f t e
w s q k o y e c z x



Activity 2

Read, draw and color.

Draw the mermaid as a happy mermaid. Make her smile.



The Little Mermaid

Name.....

Activity 3

True or False?

1. A fish can speak

2. A man has a long tail

3. A fish can swim

Activity 4

Match the name to the picture.

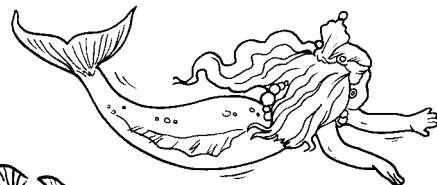
The mermaid



The ship



The king



The young man

