



Performance Notes for The Girl-Fish

THREE WAYS THAT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN UTILIZE THIS PLAY

- 1.** *Students can read the play aloud while sitting in the classroom.*
Ask the readers to skip all bracketed stage directions. You may prefer to rotate your actors to give all students a chance to read the speaking parts.
- 2.** *Students can perform the play in the classroom.* Clear an area that can be used as the stage. Have the audience sit on the floor in front of the stage. Students in the play can make simple costumes and/or sets as described below. When the scene change, the characters "on stage" simply walk to the back of the room where they wait until their next appearance "on stage."
- 3.** *Students can perform the play on stage.* Refer to the production notes that follow. Ask the actors to enter from the back of the room and move through the audience as they approach the stage.



COSTUMES

- NARRATOR— Simple, nice clothes.
- MOTHER— Long flowy skirt, white button-up blouse tucked in, an apron, and flats or sandals.
- FATHER— White button-up shirt, un-tucked, loose khaki pants, sandals.
- CASSANDRA— Black leggings and a tank top or leotard. CASSANDRA has a lot of costume changes, so a base costume is a good idea.
For Scene 1, a long flowy skirt and a sweater. These clothes will cover up her fish costume, which is revealed in Scene 3. Another option is to have her change quickly into the fish costume after Scene 2.



See below for details and images on the fish costume.

For Scene 6, she will quickly change offstage into a deer. To do this she can take off the fish costume, and add antlers, knee-high brown socks, and brown arm warmers (these can be made from cutting the feet off another pair of socks). Antlers can be made by attaching brown paper to a headband with hot glue.

For Scene 7, she will quickly change offstage into a parrot. To do this she will remove the antlers, the socks, and the leg warmers, and add a colorful hat, wings, and tail.

The tail can be made by attaching strips of blue, yellow, and red fabric to a sash or belt.

To make the wings, measure the actress' arm. Cut a piece of fabric that length at the top, and with an arch underneath- like a semi-circle.

Cut a small hole in the fabric near the wrist-end, another one near the elbow, and one more near the shoulder-end. Through each hole, stick a piece of yarn or fabric, and tie loops, which allow the actress' arm to fit through and be held fairly securely.

Feathers can be cut from felt or other fabric and hot-glued on.

Examples of different fabric wings



For Scene 8, she will quickly change offstage back into a fish. She removes the hat, wings, and tail and puts on the fish costume. When the “change” happens on stage, she takes off fish costume, and wears her base costume.

For Scene 9, she changes offstage into her skirt and sweater, or whatever she wore for Scene 1.

For Scene 10, an option would be to have her put on something “nicer”, such as a dress, for the visit to her parents' house.

- REGINA— Flowy skirt or loose slacks and a bright button-up blouse.



- LUCAS— Button-up shirt, loose black pants, and sandals.
- MIA— Flowy skirt or loose slacks and a bright button-up blouse.
- FISH #1-#3— Fish costumes. They can all be a different color fish, or all the same. See below for details and images.
- FISH QUEEN/QUEEN— Black leggings and a tank top for a base costume. Two-piece fish costume over that. See below for details and images.
When the “change” happens on stage in Scene 8, she will take off the fish costume and wears her base costume.
For Scene 9, she quickly changes offstage into a dress/gown and wears the crown.
- PRINCE— White button-up shirt, black vest, red cape if possible, black pants, boots.
- GIANT— Brown pants, white button-up shirt with a brown vest, and boots.
- KING— White button-up shirt, red robe if possible, black pants, black shoes, crown.

FISH COSTUME notes:

Fish costumes can be made out of long hooded sweatshirt (zip-up would be the easiest to take on and off for costume changes) on which you can paint, hot glue, or sew scales.

You can decide on a color scheme, for each fish. One example of this would be: CASSANDRA is blue, FISH QUEEN is aqua and purple, and FISH #1-#3 are orange/yellow.

If painting scales on, you can draw them first in sharpie and paint various shades within the color scheme, also using glitter.

If gluing or sewing, cut out scales (half circles) in various shades of the color scheme, and sew them overlapping to create a look of scales.

Note: Scales do not have to cover the entire surface of the shirt, but should cover the shoulder, stomach, and back. (See images below)

Another options is to cut the sleeved off of the sweatshirt and wear a long sleeve shirt underneath.

On either side of the hood, you can paint or sew large eyes.

Optional: you can attach a fin to the top of the hood.

See next page for images:



Examples of possible fish costumes:





PROPS

Scene 1

- A fish for FATHER to carry. This can be a plastic fish or cut from cardboard and painted.
- A fishing net for FATHER to carry and for CASSANDRA to grab. This can be an actual fishing net or any type of netting, such as mesh or a netted laundry bag.

Scene 2

- Fishing net for CASSANDRA to “mend”, same as in Scene 1.
Note: CASSANDRA can pretend to mend the net, or she can use a needle made from cardboard to pretend to sew it.
- A beautiful fish. This can be made from cardboard and painted with lots of bright colors, glitter, etc.

Scene 3

- N/A

Scene 4

- N/A

Scene 5

- N/A

Scene 6

- A rifle for PRINCE. This can be plastic or cardboard.

Scene 7

- Blue stone necklace. The blue stones can be round pieces of cardboard with holes punched into them. The cardboard can be painted a blue with blue glitter. When CASSANDRA makes the necklace, she can put a thin rope through the holes and either tie it or hook it together.
- A wooden bucket for the stars. This can be a plastic bucket painted light brown with dark brown vertical stripes to give the impression of wood.



- A crown for GIANT to give to CASSANDRA.

Scene 8

- A crown for CASSANDRA to give to FISH QUEEN. Same as in Scene 7.

Scene 9

- N/A

Scene 10

- N/A



SETS

Divide the stage into two sections – A cottage, on one side of the stage, and a riverbank on the other. There will be a few additional locations later. More on all sets below.

- Scene 1— Cottage. A sturdy table (will double as a bed in Scene 4) and three chairs are on one side of the stage.
- Scene 2— Riverbank. A long piece of blue fabric lays along the front of the stage, representing the river. This will later be held up by STAGE HANDS to be the ocean, so it should be the length of the stage and about 4 feet wide.
- Scene 3— Cottage, same as in Scene 1.
- Scene 4— Underwater – the river and the ocean. Two STAGE HANDS each grab one end of the blue fabric and stretch it along the stage holding it up as high as possible. The action will take place in front of the fabric.
Behind the fabric, other STAGE HANDS can add pieces to the cottage scene, to turn it into the GIANT'S room.
To do this, bring on a pillow and a blanket and set the table to look like a bed. The chairs can all be moved behind the bed or off stage for the scene.



- Scene 5— Underwater palace. Same as Scene 4, except that a throne is brought on for the FISH QUEEN. The throne can be a chair decorated in shiny fabric, the colors of “underwater”- blues, greens, and purples.
- Scene 6— Shoreline, near the mountains. STAGE HANDS drop the fabric to create a shoreline, off to one side of the stage, opposite the GIANT’S castle.
- Scene 7— Various places near the giant’s castle/Inside the giant’s room. There is a bed on stage, which is represented by the table. See Scene 4 for ideas on setting this up.
- Scene 8— Underwater palace, same as Scene 5. This time STAGE HANDS hold the fabric a bit lower, and the action happens behind the fabric. The idea is to keep the actors’ costumes hidden, so to keep the reveal a surprise. When it’s time for CASSANDRA and FISH QUEEN to turn into humans, STAGE HANDS will raise the fabric as high as they can, so that the two actors’ can remove their fish costumes without the audience seeing. Once they change, STAGE HANDS lower the fabric when it’s time for the reveal, to show that CASSANDRA and QUEEN are now human.
During this scene, another STAGE HAND removes the pillow and blanket from the table, and re-set the chairs around the table. The table can be covered in a nice tablecloth. It will act as the palace dinner table in Scene 9.
- Scene 9— Queen’s palace. STAGE HANDS remove the fabric. They bring another throne, for the King and place it next to the one already on stage. Both can be covered in a nice red or purple fabric.
There is also a table, with a nice tablecloth, and three chairs on stage. See Scene 8 description for transition ideas.
- Scene 10—Cottage, same as Scene 1 and 3.

