



# CHARACTERS

Name	Description	No. of lines	Singing	Scenes
<b>Ammonite</b>	Fossil and Narrator. Sweet and earnest, tries to keep the other fossils in check. Written as female, but can be any gender.	22	Ensemble only	All
<b>Ichthyosaur</b>	Fossil and Narrator Good-looking, big-headed and a bit of a show-off, but a good friend. Written as male but can be any gender.	26	Solo singing 1 verse Song 6	All
<b>Coprolite</b>	Fossil and Narrator A big character – cheeky and clowning. Fun to be with, but also a bit of a big-mouth. Written as male (preferable) but can be any gender.	25	Solo song Song 6	All
<b>Mary Anning</b>	A competent young fossil-hunter. Very talented and clever, but poor and under pressure. Warm with her friends, but can be sharp and sarcastic when frustrated.	49	Ensemble only	1, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>Joseph Anning</b>	Mary's older brother. Sensible and enthusiastic.	12	Ensemble only	1, 3, 5
<b>Tray the Dog</b>	Mary's dog: faithful and protective, with a comical ability to use dog noises as English words. When Tray speaks, he shouldn't try to sound like a dog but just pronounce the dog words in a loud, characterful human voice. Male, but can be played by any gender.	8	Ensemble only	1, 3
<b>Quarryman 1</b>	An experienced quarry-worker strong and reliable. Knows and supports Mary.	8	Ensemble only	1, 3
<b>Quarryman 2</b>	An experienced quarry-worker strong and reliable. Knows and supports Mary.	7	Ensemble only	1, 3
<b>Quarryman 3</b>	Strong quarry-worker with a sense of humour. New to the area.	7	Ensemble only	1



Name	Description	No. of lines	Singing	Scenes
<b>Quarryman 4</b>	Strong quarry-worker, enjoys bantering with Quarryman 3.	3	Ensemble only	1
<b>Urchin 1</b>	Young, ragged and poor. Knows everything about everyone in Lyme Regis. Any gender. Both Urchins have the potential for background acting and joking around in the scenes but this shouldn't detract from their speaking roles.	4	Ensemble only	1, 3
<b>Urchin 2</b>	Young, ragged and poor. Enjoys playing and laughing. Any gender.	4	Ensemble only	1, 3
<b>Elizabeth Philpott</b>	Well-educated, fairly posh, enthusiastic (especially about fossilised fish). A good, solid friend with a clear head.	34	Solo / group verse in Song 4	1, 5, 6
<b>Mr Marron</b>	A member of the Geological Society. Smart and well-dressed.	3	Group song Song 3	2, 4, 6
<b>Cedric</b>	Mr Marron's son. Young, well-dressed, nerdy, likeable and enthusiastic.	2	Group song Song 3	2, 4, 6
<b>Louisa</b>	Mr Marron's wife. Well-dressed.	3	Ensemble / join small group verse in Song 4	2, 4, 6
<b>Henry de la Beche</b>	Rich, posh, well-educated and clever. A tremendous friend to Mary.	39	Group song Song 3	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>Thomas James Birch</b>	Trusty, posh, rich and steadfast. A friend of Henry's and supportive of Mary. Ex-military.	36	Group song Song 3	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>Edward Williamson</b>	Rich, clever, well-educated and posh, but uses it all for his own selfish and greedy gain. Very sceptical of Mary.	16	Solo verse in Song 5	2, 3, 4, 6
<b>Wilhemina Williamson</b>	Edward's wife. Supportive and conniving. Selfish, using other people to get power and influence. Doesn't like Mary.	45	Solo / small group verse in Song 4	2, 3, 4, 6



Name	Description	No. of lines	Singing	Scenes
<b>Lady Harriet Sylvester</b>	Rich, posh, not very educated but clever. Hasty and hot-headed, not afraid to say what she thinks. A loyal friend to Mary.	45	Small group or solo verse in Song 4	2, 3, 4, 6
<b>Albert de la Balbert</b>	Foolish and bumbling, despite being rich and posh. But he faces up to his previous mistakes, and becomes key in Edward's demise.	24	Group song Song 3	2, 4
<b>Barbara de la Balbert</b>	Albert's wife. A comical and initially ridiculous character who discovers that she does have a brain and courage, and can use them for good.	23	Ensemble only	2, 4, 6
<b>Geological Society Secretary</b>	Official and competent. Likes doing things properly.	6	Group singing Song 3	2, 6
<b>Molly Anning</b>	Mary and Joseph's mother. Very poor, and preoccupied with being able to provide for her family.	11	Optional solo / duet verse in Song 6	3, 5
<b>Tess</b>	Townswoman / friend of Molly. Plainly dressed, solid, sensible and kind.	3	Ensemble only or duet verse in Song 6	3
<b>Geological Society Member</b>	Pompous and judgemental	1	Ensemble only	4
<b>Geological Society Treasurer</b>	Official, competent and good with money.	3	Group song Song 3	6
<b>The Coprolettes</b>	Glitz, glamorous and gorgeous backing singers. Female, or could be any gender. Four or more.	16	Song 7 Backing vocals	5
<b>Humphrey Hopeful</b>	Curator of the British Museum. Official, competent and a perfectionist. Always likes to do things according to the rules.	3	Ensemble only	6
Total number of speaking and singing parts:		30		
Total recommended cast size:		30 to 50		



## Ensemble actors / non-speaking parts

In Scenes 3 and 5, in Lyme Regis, there can be a number of townsfolk — men, women and children — who are milling around, perhaps looking at the fossil stall, patting Tray the dog and reacting to some of the action. Between five and twelve of these would be recommended.

In Scenes 2, 4 and 5, ensemble actors can be well-to-do members or supporters of the Geological Society, sitting or standing around in the lobby and singing either *Geological Society* or *On the Sidelines* with the main characters. Between three and six of various genders would be recommended — again, stand them in groups.

The Secretary and Treasurer of the Geological Society, as well as the Curator of the British Museum, could have a uniformed Clerk each who walks with them or at their side and holds their large book, bunch of keys, or some other official-looking prop.

## To create more speaking/ solo singing parts

- Have two Ammonites – split the lines between two characters, thus four fossil-narrators in all;
- Have different urchins in Scene 1 and Scene 3 – creates two more small speaking parts;
- Have a new character, a friend of Henry De La Beche, who is the one who has made the 'Age of Reptiles' drawing rather than Henry. He would appear just in Scene 5, introduced by Thomas – so instead of saying, 'And in the meantime, Henry has something to show you', Thomas would say, 'And in the meantime, this is our friend, Samuel Cricket, who has something to show you!' – then Samuel says Henry's lines until 'share the credit and the money.' He should address Mary as 'Miss Anning' since he doesn't know her well. Creates one more speaking part, with 5 lines.
- Lady Harriet Sylvester could be transformed into sisters – they take half her lines each, and sing together.
- In Scene 6, create a few new lines for ensemble actors who are observing the goings-on as Edward meets his demise. These would be simple exclamations which react to the action – for example, 'What on earth is going on?!" when Albert and Humphrey arrive; 'This is quite extraordinary!' when Humphrey has described the crime; 'Shame on you!' when Edward and Wilhemina are found out; 'Good riddance, Geology has no need of crooks like you two!' when they are leaving, 'I can't bear the tension!' when the Secretary and Treasurer are checking the rules in their book, 'Come on Albert, do your duty!' when Albert is about to vote. This could create 6 new single-line parts. These people could also be given specific physical actions in the tableau in Scene 4.
- Increase the number of Coprolettes – 4 works well, but can be any number at all.
- Both verses of 'Hold on to your Friends' could be solos or group verses – by townsfolk or other friends of Molly/Tess – could create up to 8 new group singing parts.

This would create up to 11 more small speaking parts (41 in total), and 12 more group singing parts.

## To produce the play with fewer actors

- Quarrymen can also play Geological Society Secretary / Treasurer.
- Joseph, Molly or Tray can also play Humphrey Hopeful.
- Quarrymen can also play Mr Marron and Cedric.
- Take out the part of Louisa and give her lines to Mr Marron.
- The Coprolettes can be doubled-up with any other characters except fossils (though they might need a quick change before Scene 6)
- Quarryman 1&2 can be combined into one person.
- Quarryman 3&4 can be combined into one person.
- The Geological Society Member's line can be said by Mr Marron.

The minimum number of actors is then 18.