

LION KING CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

Rafiki: is a wise mandrill who acts as a healer of the Pridelands and guides Simba on his journey home. She is an omniscient character, evincing an air of mystery. Rafiki has significant solos and leads the African chants throughout the show and must have a strong singing voice and can convey both the character's wisdom and humor.

Mufasa: is the strong, honorable, and wise lion who leads the Pridelands. Mufasa should command respect onstage and also show tenderness with his son, Simba. Mufasa must convincingly portray the authority of a king.

Zazu: is Mufasa's anxious yet loyal assistant who is always busy trying to serve the king. Bound by an unfailing sense of duty, Zazu appears uptight but never wavers in trying to protect Young Simba. Zazu must have good diction and comic timing to help convey their worried, rule-following nature in contrast to the more playful cubs.

Scar: is the antagonist of the show, overcome with jealousy of his brother, Mufasa, and nephew, Simba. Coldhearted and wickedly intelligent, he will stop at nothing to become king of the Pridelands. The actor has to portray Scar's villainous dark side while handling his sarcastic sense of humor.

Young Simba: the protagonist of the story, is an adventurous and endearing cub who can't wait to be king of the Pridelands. Young Simba is playful, energetic, and naive, but after his father Mufasa's death, he struggles with shame and questions his destiny. Must be a confident singer and a dynamic, high-energy performer for this role.

Young Nala: is a courageous lion and Young Simba's best friend who is not afraid to speak her mind. Must be a strong, spunky performer who can portray this confident cub.

Simba: having grown from a cub to lion, is carefree on the surface while wrestling with guilt over his past. He must portray the complex moments as Simba reunites with Nala, mourns his father, and finds the strength to confront Scar.

Nala: has grown into a brave, empowered lioness who is fiercely protective over her pride and homeland. Must be a strong actress and singer who can embody Nala's courageous, determined nature.

Timon: is an outcast meerkat who lives in the jungle with his best friend Pumbaa. This anxious mammal pretends to be the confident, relaxed leader of the duo but is actually afraid of their own shadow. Timon is one of the funniest characters in the show and should be played by a charismatic actor who understands comic timing.

Pumbaa: is a kindhearted, sensitive warthog who enjoys his simple life of grubs and relaxation. Must be able to portray this lovable and loyal friend to Timon and Simba with deadpan humor.

Sarabi: is a featured lioness and Simba's mother. Sarabi should have the warmth and command of a queen.

Banzai: is a slick yet childish hyena who works for Scar. Banzai is the closest thing this lazy group has to a leader, and must be an outgoing and confident actor who can portray nastiness and gruffness.

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Shenzi: is one of Scar's hyenas who plot to take over the Pridelands. She is the most brazen one of the trio and is always looking out for herself. With Banzai and Ed, she should be able to laugh loudly and long, as well as be menacing to Young Simba and Young Nala.

Ed: is the third member of Scar's trio of lackeys. Ed's loud, cackling laugh is this hyena's only form of communication. Ed should be able to laugh unabashedly and communicate through physicality and facial expressions rather than words.

The Ensemble: plays various inhabitants of the Pridelands, such as giraffes, elephants, antelopes, wildebeest, and other creatures. They even become part of the environmental landscape, portraying the swaying grasslands and leafy jungle.