

## Character Breakdown

### **Mowgli**

Mowgli is a boy who gets along with everyone and who is very likable. He has a joyful and curious nature, and a twinkle in his eye. The child you cast should have a spark that can captivate the audience and should be a bit feisty. Choose a boy with a natural talent for acting and singing.

Gender: Male

### **Bagheera**

The role of Bagheera, the panther, is not gender-specific. You might consider casting a female to play this role to help balance the male-to-female ratio of the leading characters. Consider casting a child who might easily portray the physical attributes of a feline. Your Bagheera should be physically agile and uninhibited with good command of his or her body. The actor should also possess a natural talent for acting, singing and leading a story. Bagheera should act like an older brother or sister to Mowgli.

Gender: Both

### **Baloo**

Baloo, the bear, should be cast by someone who is exuberant with a great natural talent for singing and acting. Baloo provides much of the comedic relief in the story, so the actor must possess a natural sense of comedy. Consider casting a child who might easily have the physical traits of a big bear and who is not afraid to be wild and crazy and physically uninhibited. The actor should not be self-conscious and should enjoy the spotlight. Baloo's part in "I Wan'na Be Like You" demands a singer with a strong sense of rhythm.

Gender: Male

### **Kaa**

Kaa, the snake, supplies threat and danger to Mowgli's journey out of the jungle. Cast someone with flair and good vocal and movement skills to be the lead Kaa (the head of the snake). Cast five others as the body. Each of the actors in the scene has solo lines that are spoken and sung, so you will want to cast children with some natural acting and singing ability who can also dance.

Gender: Both

**Shere Khan**

Shere Khan, the tiger, is King of the Jungle. Consider casting someone who could be physically threatening, either in size, attitude, or both. It's better to cast a stronger actor than a singer for this role. He is the villain and the story depends on a good villain.

Gender: Male

**Colonel Hathi**

Colonel Hathi, the elephant, is in charge of the elephant brigade. but is also a little forgetful. He is good at giving commands but doesn't really understand what's going on around him. Cast someone who can sing well and act like a drill sergeant but also be a bit forgetful. This is a good role to feature someone who has talent but may not be ready for the leading role just yet.

Gender: Male

**Elephant Troupe**

The Elephant Troupe can have as many or as few children as you like, but cast enough to make it look like a brigade - at least eight. They don't need to be strong singers, but should be good movers/dancers so they can physicalize the behavior of elephants and march in and out of formation.

Gender: Both

**Baby Elephant**

The Baby Elephant can be cast with the smallest or youngest child. There is a solo line in the song as well as marching, so the child should have a sense of music and movement.

Gender: Both

**King Louie**

King Louie is King of the Monkeys. Cast an actor with strong comedic timing and good singing ability. Choose a child with flair that isn't afraid to act like a monkey.

Gender: Male

**Old Monkey**

Cast the Old Monkey with a strong actor over a singer. He or she should not be afraid to assume the physical traits of a monkey.

Gender: Both

### **Monkeys**

Monkeys should be strong dancers. "I Wan'na Be Like You" offers the chance to do great musical choreography. Consult your choreographer, if available, when casting your monkey troupe so that you have at least eight dancers. If necessary, cast additional monkeys so that the vocal performance is solid as well.

Gender: Both

### **Jungle Chorus**

The Jungle Chorus is your ensemble of singers, actors and dancers. These roles offer great opportunities to use your students' varied skills. Make sure each group of prickly pears, vultures, wolves, etc., has a few natural leaders the other actors will follow. Read through the script a few times to learn which of these roles require singing or acting solos so you can cast according to your students' strengths. The great thing about the Jungle ensemble is its flexibility: you can make it as large as necessary to include everyone. Do not feel pressure to cast the solo parts during auditions. Have a few rehearsals first to get a clearer sense of your company before you decide.

Gender: Both

### **Coconut Tree / Shanti**

Shanti is the girl who takes Mowgli to the village at the end of the story. She is hiding in the jungle the entire time disguised as a Coconut Tree. She should exude sweetness and kindness and have a natural ability for acting and singing. She has a couple of solos as the Coconut Tree.

### **Shanti's Family**

Shanti's Family is not seen, but represented by offstage voices. For fun, you might want to have a couple favorite teachers or the principal say these lines from offstage or from the back of the performance space. These should be the only "grown-up" voices in the show.

Gender: Both

