

Four Types of Conflict in the Little Mermaid

- 1) **Man versus man (external)** – The character struggles against another character or characters. In *The Little Mermaid*, Ariel struggles against King Triton and Ursula.
- 2) **Man versus nature (external)** – The character struggle against the forces of nature. Prince Eric struggles against a storm.
- 3) **Man versus self (internal)** – The character has an internal struggle. Ariel struggles with her desire to see the surface despite having “treasures” of the surface world in her room under water.
- 4) **Man versus society (external)** – The character struggles against an authoritarian system. Ariel’s father, King Triton, also represents the authority of the mermaid culture. In defying her father, Ariel is also defying society.