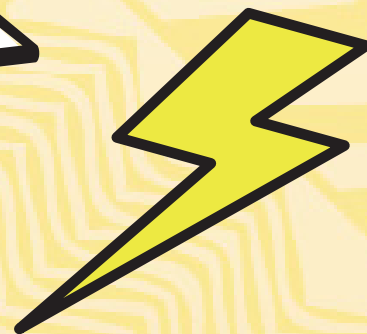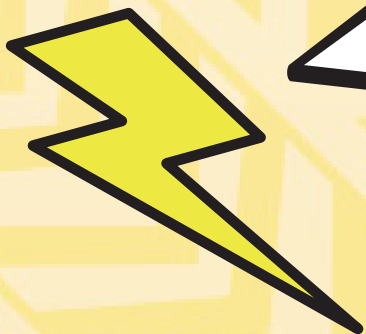# BECAUSE OF
RUTH CARTER

AGES 5-8

IDEATE! EXPLORE! CREATE!
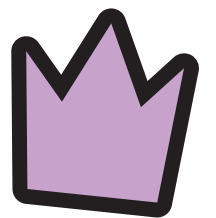
RUTH CARTER

MAKING MOVIE MAGIC

Instructions: Read the sections about Ruth Carter's life, then answer the questions using the images to help guide your answers.

Have you ever played dress up and made an amazing **costume** for one of your adventures? Well, how about doing that as a career? Not actually designing for yourself but for actors in a movie? Well, Ruth Carter does just that. She is a movie costume designer who is especially known for winning an **Academy Award** in 2019 for Marvel's *Black Panther,* making her the first Black person to win for the best costume design category! She had also been **nominated** for many awards for her costumes before then.

Ruth Carter was born in Springfield, Massachusetts. For a short time, she thought about an acting career – but after not getting the part in a few auditions she was asked to do some costume design, because she could sew. She then fell in love with costume design while she was a student at Hampton University (an HBCU in Hampton, Virginia). Spike Lee, a Black male filmmaker known for his movies about the Black experience, gave Ruth Carter her first **opportunity** when she worked in his film *School Daze*. She worked with Lee on many films after that.

Ruth Carter has designed thousands of costumes for over 60 films. She loves using them to help the films, the characters, and stories really come alive. She believes that costumes tell important and powerful stories just like films do. Her work is very important to her – and one of the reasons why she is so successful is that she takes the time to do research and to talk to historians when designing her costumes.

READ & RESPOND

1. What is Ruth Carter best known for?

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2. What led Ruth Carter into costume design?

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3. When you look at the second image, what does that tell you about Ruth Carter and her work?

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BOTWC
BUILDERS
CLUB

IDEATE! ※ EXPLORE! ※ CREATE!

THINK ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER...

Instructions: When designing costumes, the designer has to think about the characters they're dressing and the story the character is living in. Things like the time they live in, the place they're from, and the kind of work they do are all considered when designing a costume! In this exercise, we'll think hard about the details that make a character, and help make the costume!

Step 1: What is your favorite book or movie? What is it about?

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Step 2: Write a little about the character that you want to design for. What are they like? What are their favorite colors? Think about what their style would be and write some notes below.

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Step 3: What year does the story in the book or movie take place?

_____

_____

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_____

GLOSSARY

Costume - the clothes that are worn by someone (such as an actor) who is trying to look like a different person or thing

Academy Award - an award given by part of the U.S. film industry to the best actors, directors, etc., of the year

Nominated - formally chosen as a candidate for a job, position, office, etc.

Opportunity- an amount of time or a situation in which something can be done : a chance
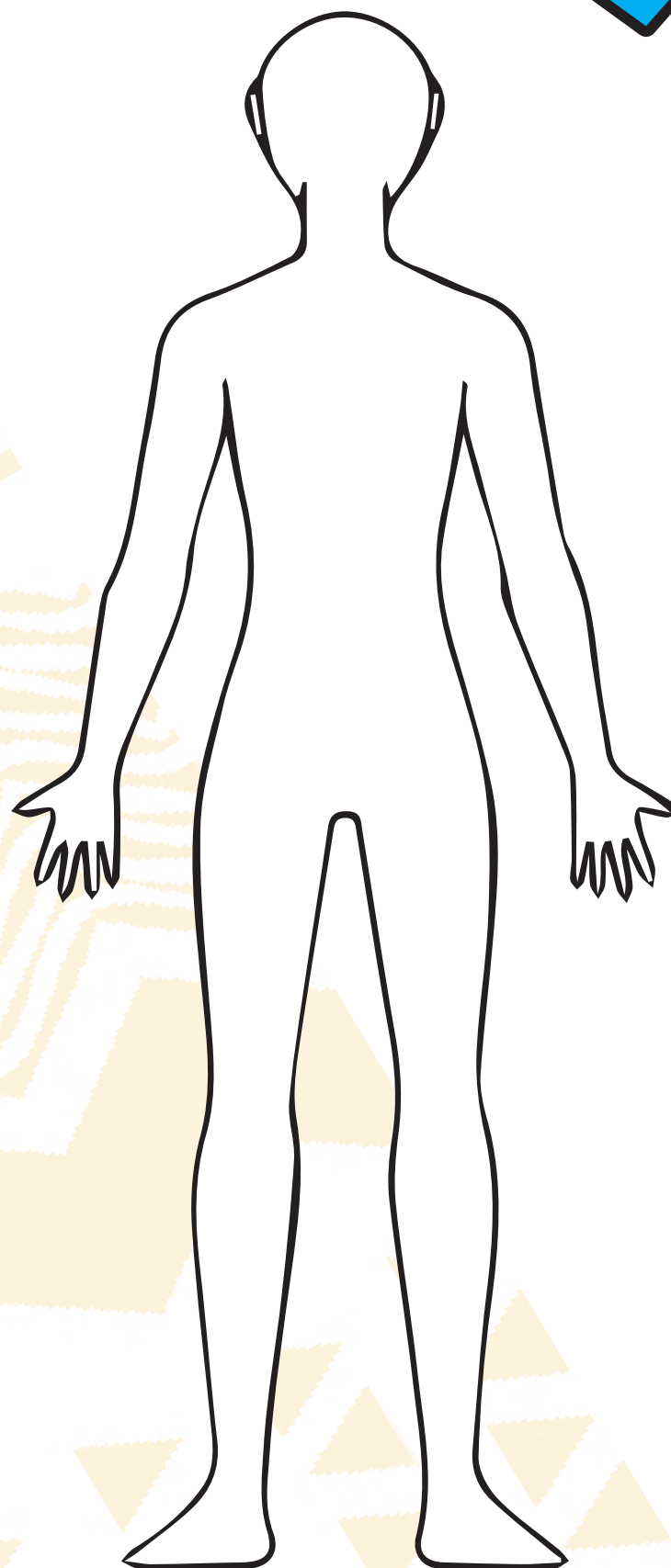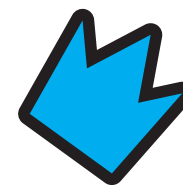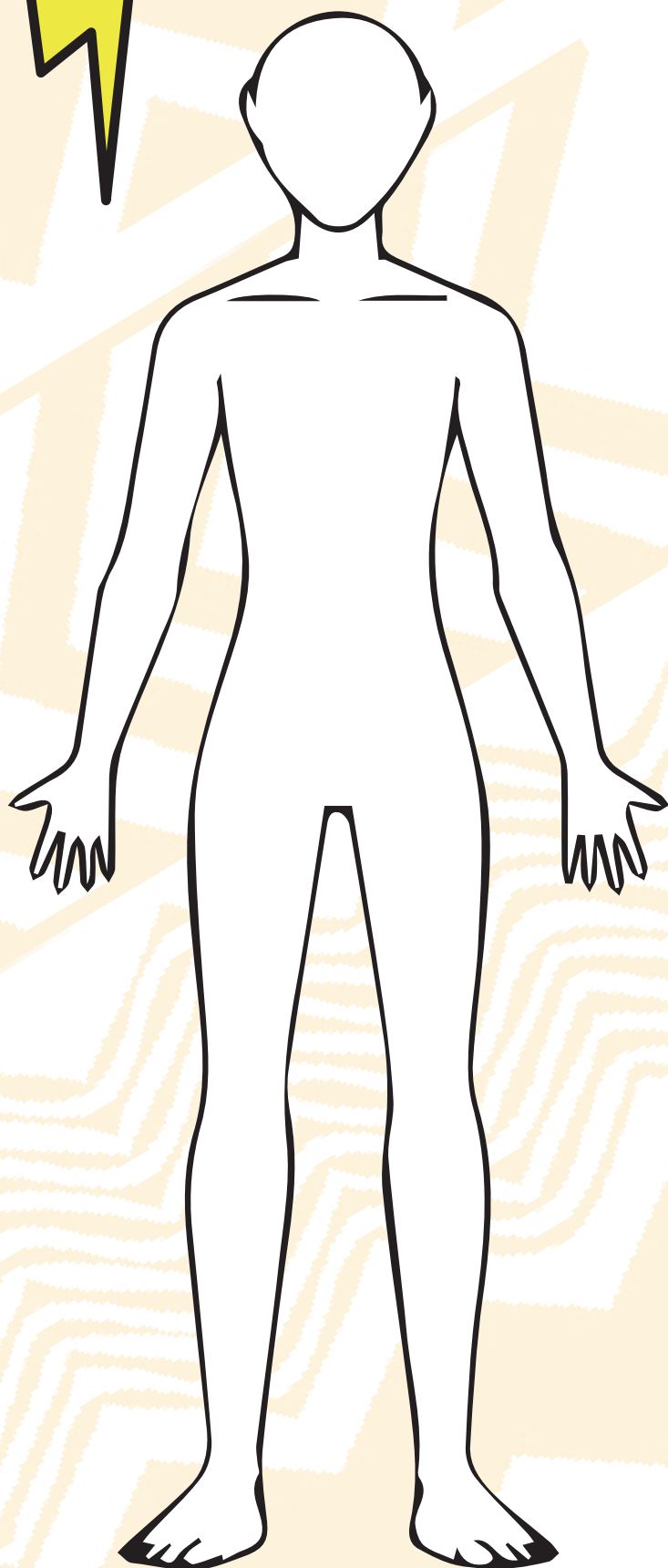
Successful - having gotten or achieved wealth, respect, or fame

Historian - a person who studies or writes about history

... AND DESIGN THE COSTUME!

Step 4: Using all the information you have written down, think about a costume you want to create for your character. You will make a sketch (or sample drawing) of your costume in the image below.

Step 5: Show off your costumes!

KNOWLEDGE + CREATIVITY = STYLE

Fashion designers actually use a good amount of math in their work. Think about creating an outfit from start to finish – you will need math to measure the right amount of fabric, to sew or cut in the right places for the look you want, to determine your cost for materials, to work out how much money you will make – and so much more. In the task below you will answer some questions that a fashion designer might have! Do you have the right skills and ideas to create a winning style?

1. You are designing a look for a red carpet event and now you are ready to buy some fabric. You cut a piece of fabric that is 8 feet long and 10 feet wide – how much is that in square feet??

2. Now that you have the fabric, you need to find out how much it is going to cost you. The price of the fabric is $2 per square foot. How much will the amount of fabric you need cost you?

3. You have paid for your fabric and you have a budget of $200. Did you meet your budget? Why or why not?

ANSWER KEY: (1) The piece you have cut is 80 square feet (you find this by multiplying 8 x 10). **(2)** The fabric will cost $160 (to find this you multiply $2 x 80). **(3)** Yes – the amount you spent ($160) is under your budget of $200.