



Build A Fish

Create your own fish out of paper and discover the different parts of a fish!

Materials Needed:

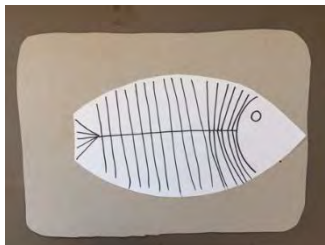
Build A Fish printables (or draw your own), colored paper (or 1 side of a recycled cereal box), scissors, glue or tape, coloring materials (crayons, paint, markers, etc.)



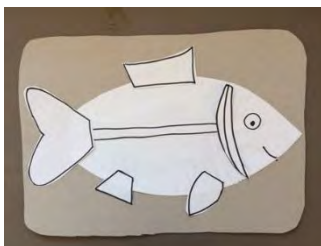
Instructions:



Step 1: For very young children, cut out the fish parts from the printout or your drawing. Every fish looks different, and shapes do not need to be perfect! If your children can use scissors, let them cut out the fish parts, helping them if needed.



Step 2: Glue the fish parts on the paper or cardboard. Begin with the skeleton. Cover with a fish body, then add the fins, eyes, and gills. Use the [Guide to Building a Fish](#) (below) to help your child glue the parts of the fish in the right places. You can also create a made-up fish together!



Step 3: Color and decorate your fish. Make it look realistic, or use your imagination! Use any craft supplies you have available (crayons, paint, markers, ribbons, sequins, tissue paper, etc.).

Guide to Building a Fish

Choose a skeleton: That's right, fish have bones! They are vertebrates.

Choose a body shape: Draw scales to cover your fish.

Choose one fin for the top of your fish (dorsal fin).

Choose fins for the bottom of your fish (pelvic and anal fins).

Choose a fin for the side of your fish (pectoral fin). Your fish has another fin on the other side of its body, but we can't see it from here.

Give your fish a tail (caudal fin).

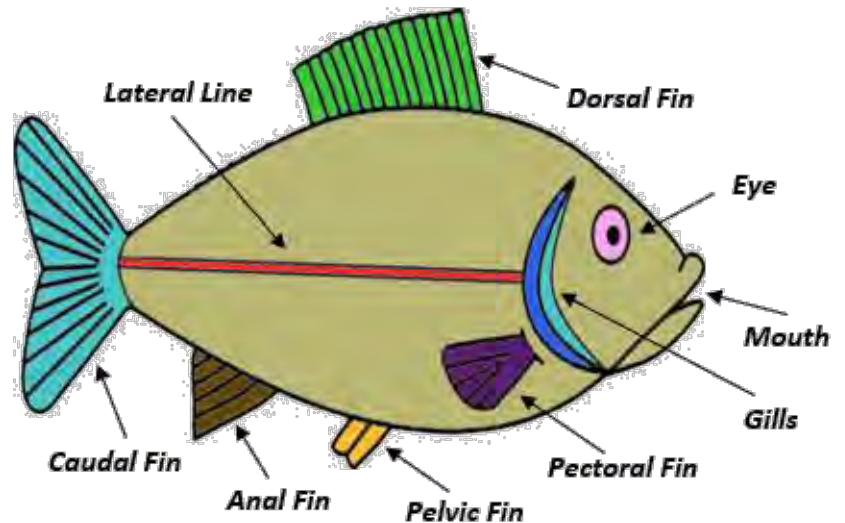
Your fish needs to see... **Give it an eye**. It has two eyes, but we can only see one from this side. Some flatfish, like halibut, have both eyes on the same side!

Your fish needs to breathe... **Give it gills**. Fish don't have lungs; instead, they use gills to get oxygen out of the water.

Your fish needs to feel things in the water... **Give its body a lateral line** (this line of tiny tubes help the fish sense vibrations in the water).

Your fish needs to eat! **Draw a mouth**.

"Fin" facts: Different fish species can have different types and numbers of fins. They can have several of the same kinds of fins (e.g. 3 dorsal fins!) and fins of all different shapes! Angler fish have a modified dorsal fin that is shaped like a fishing line and hook. Salmon have an extra kind of fin on their back, called an adipose fin.



Discover Alaskan Fish!

The color of **coho salmon** changes from silver to red as they migrate up the river to spawn.

Image: Oregon Department of Forestry, via Wikimedia Commons.



Can you see the **halibut**? It's well camouflaged! Halibut have both their eyes on the same side.

Image: Wikimedia Commons.

The **Alaska blackfish** can breathe in both water and air! It can survive in small tundra pools; if they dry up, it waits for rain to fill them.

Image: Freshwater and Marine Image Bank, via Wikimedia Commons.

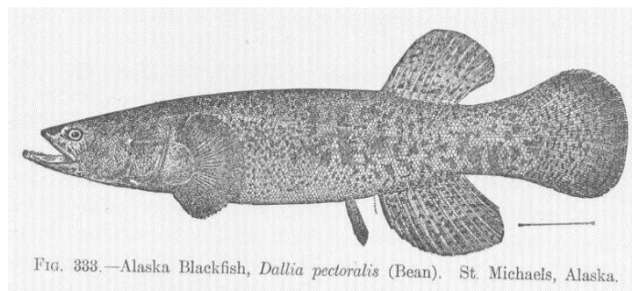


FIG. 333.—Alaska Blackfish, *Dallia pectoralis* (Bean). St. Michaels, Alaska.

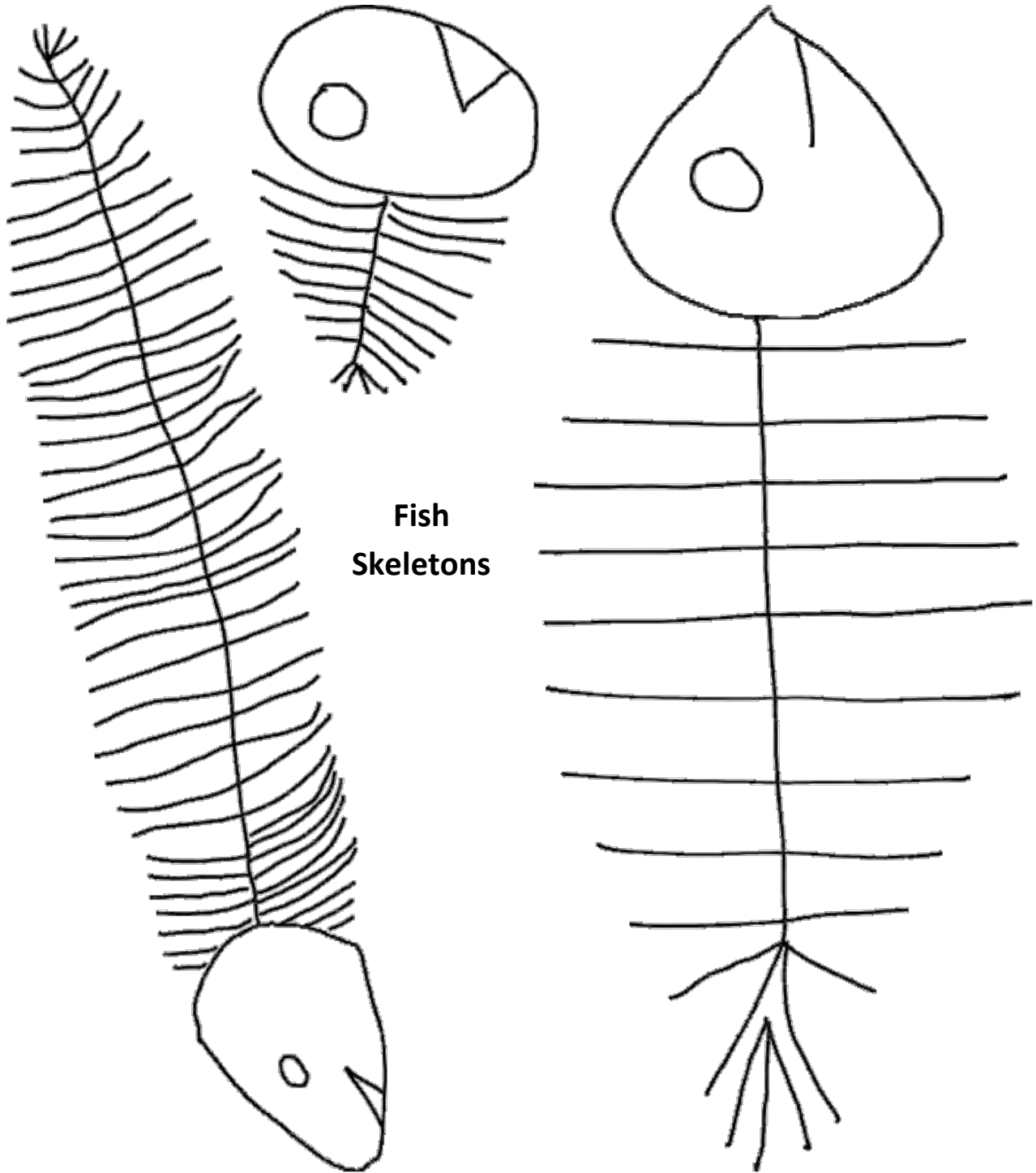


Arctic Grayling have incredible iridescent colors and a beautiful dorsal fin shaped like a sail.

Image: Evermann and Goldsborough, *The Fishes of Alaska*, via Wikimedia Commons.

Build a Fish Printables

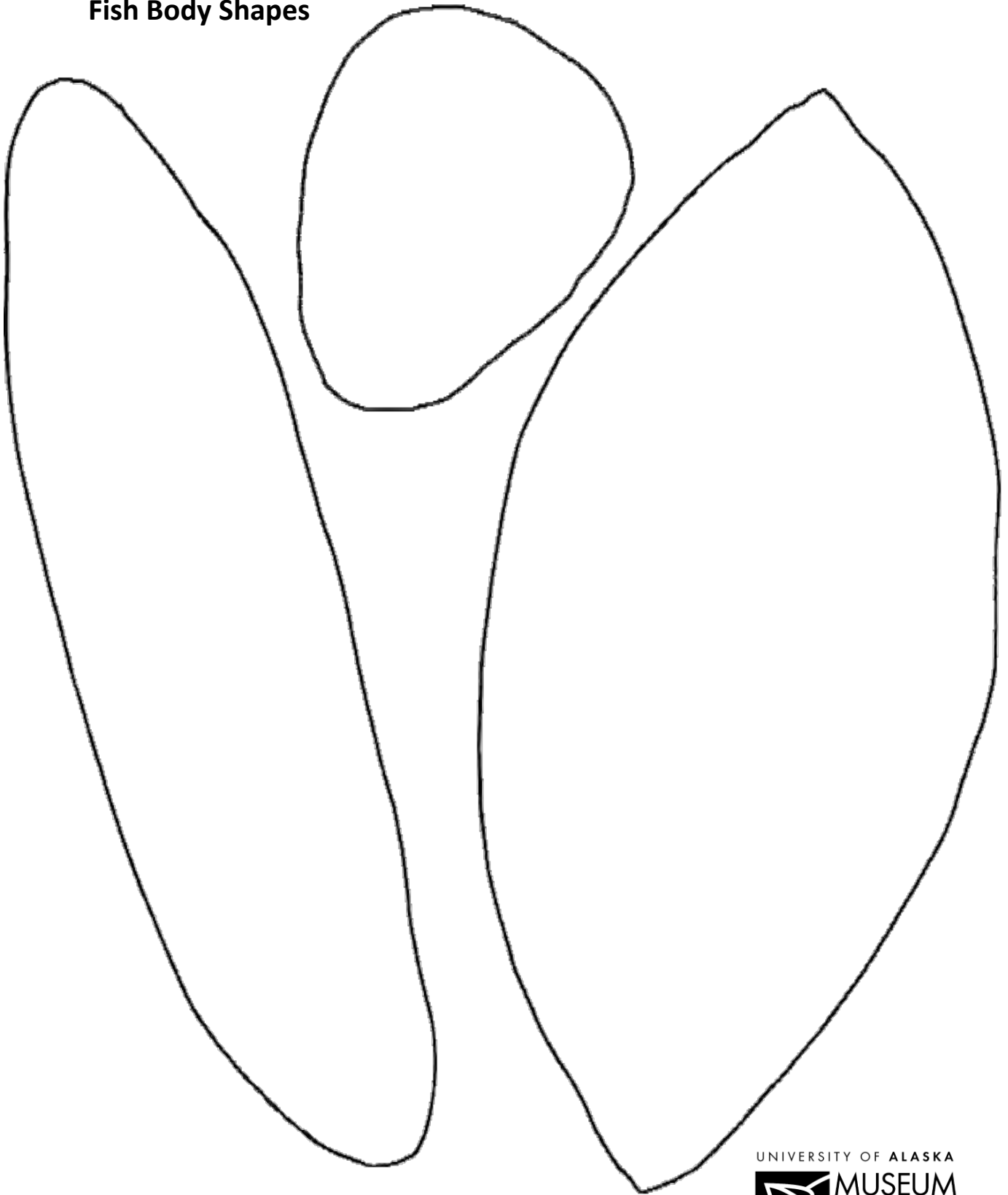
Choose and cut out a skeleton, body, fins, tail, eyes, gills, and lateral line. You can also draw your own shapes!



Note: These are general shapes, not representing specific fish species.

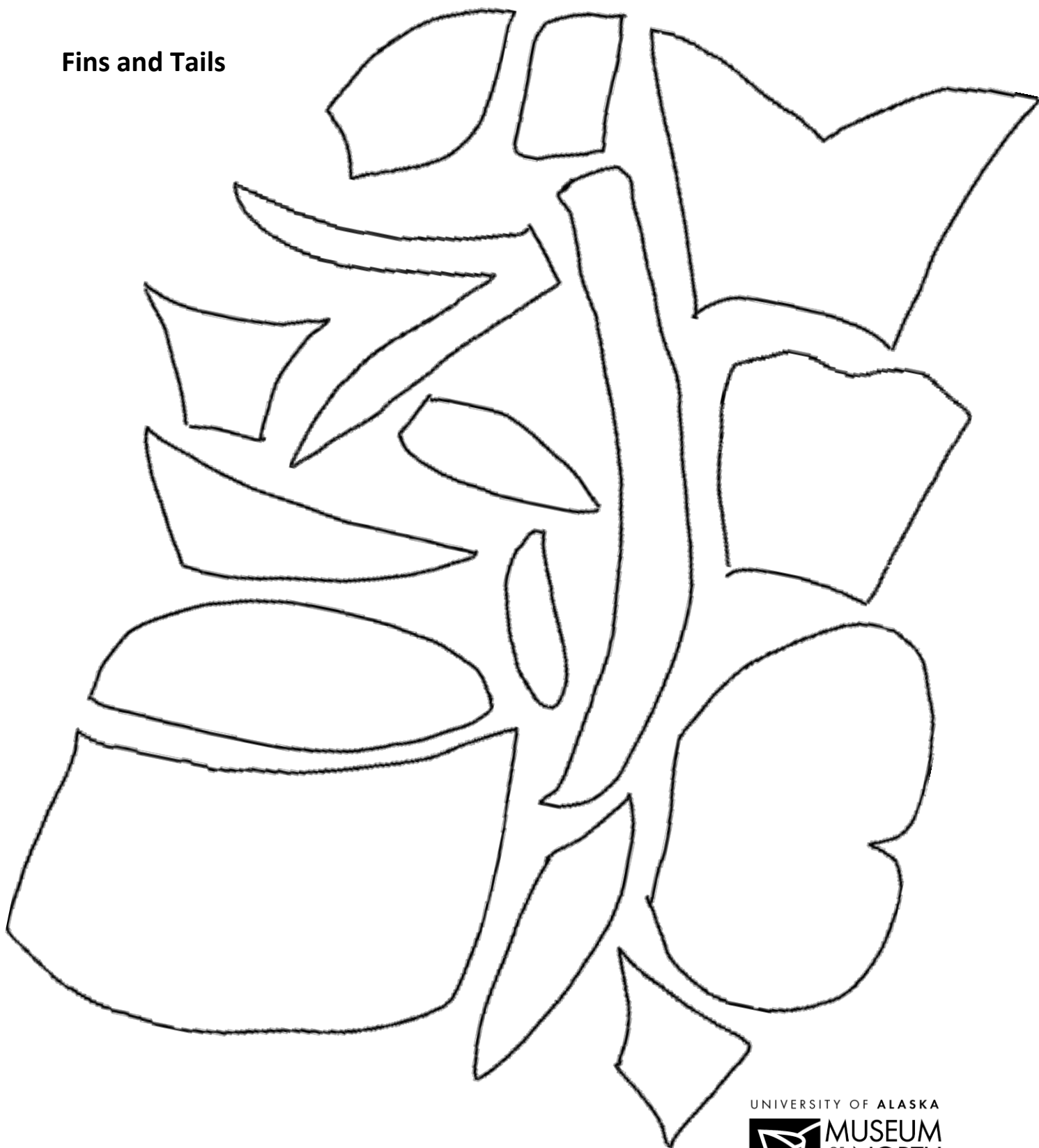
Build a Fish Printables

Fish Body Shapes



Build a Fish Printables

Fins and Tails



Build a Fish Printables

Eyes, Gills, and Lateral Lines

