



The Bremen Town Musicians

The Bremen Town Musicians

The story you will hear today is also a folktale, like The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids. Remember a folktale is a story that is passed down from person to person. Folktales are one type of fiction. Stories that are made up or from someone's imagination are known as fiction.

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In today's folktale there is a donkey, a cat, a dog, and a rooster. Let's make the sounds of these animals.

I'm going to need your help during the read aloud. One group will make the sound for each of the animals when it comes time for the animals to sing in the read aloud. (Divide kids, assigning donkey, cat, dog or rooster to each group)

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Listen carefully to find out how the differences in the ways animals and people communicate cause some confusion in the story.

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Once upon a time there was a donkey who for many years had worked for a farmer. The donkey had worked on the same farm day in and day out, and longed to leave the farm and see the world. The farmer was not happy that the donkey wanted to leave, but when he saw how sad the donkey was, he told him that he must go.

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The donkey left and took the road to a town called Bremen, where he had heard a street band play sweet music. He thought he could be a fine **musician** too.

Here the word play, means to make music. The word play can also have other meanings. The word play also means something performed on stage.

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A musician is someone who plays an instrument or sings. Do you think a donkey can really be part of a band, or a group of musicians?

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Soon he came upon an old dog panting for breath, as if the dog had been running a long way. This means that the dog was having a hard time breathing (He sounded like this).

"What are you panting for, my friend?" asked the donkey.

"Ah," answered the dog, "now that I am old I have decided to leave my home and see the world. There is so much of the world to see that I have been running in order to get it all in!"

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“Well,” said the donkey, “come with me. I am going to be a street musician in Bremen. I can play the flute, and you can play the drum.”

The dog was quite willing, and so they both walked on.

To be willing means that you will do what another person says or go where another person goes.

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Soon the dog and the donkey saw a cat sitting in the road with a face as long as three days of rainy weather.

What do you think it means to say that the cat's face was "as long as three days of rainy weather"? Do you think the cat feels happy or sad? Show me a face as long as three days of rainy weather.

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“Now, what the matter with you, old kitty?” asked the donkey.

“You would be sad,” said the cat, “if you were in my place; for now I am getting old, and I haven’t seen any of the world beyond the barn I live in. Alas, I want to go and see the world, but I do not know where to begin!”

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“Then come with us to Bremen,” said the donkey. “I know that you sing well at night, so you can easily be a street musician in the town. Bremen will be a great place to start your adventures.”

“That is just what I should like to do,” said the cat, so she joined the donkey and the dog, and they all walked on together.

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By and by, the three musicians came to a farmyard. On the gate stood a rooster, crying “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” with all his might.

“What are you making so much noise for?” asked the donkey.

“Ah,” said the rooster, “I am trying to get the other animals’ attention. I am leaving to see the world, and this is how roosters say goodbye.”

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"Come with us, old Red Comb," said the donkey. "Old Red Comb" refers to the rooster because of the red comb on his head.

"We are going to Bremen to be street musicians. You have a fine voice, and the rest of us are all musical, too."

"I will join you!" said the rooster. And they all four went on together.

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They could not reach the town in one day, and as evening came on, they began to look for a place to spend the night.



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The donkey and the dog lay down under a large tree. The cat climbed up on one of the branches. The rooster flew to the top of the tree, where he could look all around.

"I see a light from a window," the rooster called to his friends.

"That means there is a house nearby," said the donkey. "Let us ask the people for supper." Supper means dinner.

"How good a bone would taste!" said the dog.

"Or a nice piece of fish!" said the cat.

"Or some corn!" said the rooster.

So they set out at once and soon reached the house. The donkey, who was the tallest, looked in the window.

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"What do you see, old Long Ears?" asked the rooster. "Old Long Ears" refers to the donkey because he has long ears.

The donkey answered, "I see a table spread with plenty to eat and drink. And a family is sitting before it having their supper."

Do people usually share their dinner with animals?

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The four friends talked over what they could do to show the family that they were not just ordinary barnyard animals. At last they had an idea!

The donkey stood on his hind legs and placed his front feet on the windowsill. The dog stood on the donkey's back. The cat climbed up and stood on the dog's back. And the rooster **perched** on the cat's head.

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When you perch on something, you sit or stand on it like a bird.

Then the donkey gave a signal, and they all began to make their loudest music. The donkey brayed, the dog barked, the cat meowed, and the rooster crowed. The animals thought for sure that this sweet music would charm the family.

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The family had never before heard such a noise, and they were frightened and had no idea what could be making such a terrible sound.

What was the noise really coming from?

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They ran as fast as they could through the woods to their neighbor's house. Our four friends were dismayed that their beautiful song had frightened the family so. Still, they were very hungry from their journey and decided to eat what remained of the family's supper.

When the four musicians had eaten as much as they could, they were full and ready to sleep. The donkey lay down in the yard, the dog lay behind the door, the cat curled up in front of the fireplace, and the rooster flew up to a high shelf. They were all so tired that they soon fell fast asleep.

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Later that night, the uncle decided to go back to check on the house. He found everything quiet and still, so he went inside. He did not see the cat, and he stepped on her tail. The poor kitty was caught by surprise and jumped up, landing on the uncle's face by accident. It gave the uncle such a fright that he ran for the door, which in turn scared the dog who grabbed the uncle's leg as he went by.

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In the dark yard the uncle could not see the donkey and ran into him by accident. This scared the donkey, who gave him a great kick with his hind foot. All this woke the rooster, who cried with all his might, "Cock-a-doodle doo! Cock-a-doodle doo!"

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The uncle ran as fast as his legs could carry him back to his neighbor's house, where his family was waiting for him.

Gasping for breath, he said, "I have no idea what is going on in that house, but I am never going back! First, something tried to cover my eyes.

Which animal did this?

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*Then something tried to stop me from leaving, by
grabbing my leg.*

Which animal did this?

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Then out in the yard something pushed me from behind.

Which animal did this?

And all the while I heard an awful noise asking, "Who are you? Who are you?"

Which animal did this?

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The family was filled with fear and ran away as fast as they could.

Should the family really be afraid of a donkey, dog, cat and rooster?

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Meanwhile, the animals had finally settled down after being woken up from their slumber. They decided that it was all just a bad dream and went back to sleep in the cozy little house. They liked the little house so much that they stayed there, waiting for the family to come back, and as far as I know, they are there to this day.

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

Who wants to move to Bremen to become a musician?

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

What other animals join the donkey?

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

What are the animals planning to do?

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

Who do the animals see in the house?

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

Why do the animals stand on one another and make noise? Why does the noise scare the family?

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

Why does the uncle get scared when he returns to the house to see if everything is okay?

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Comprehension Questions:

Evaluative

Remember that "The Bremen Town Musicians" is a special kind of fiction story. Which part of the story tells you that "The Bremen Town Musicians" is fiction, or a made up story? What kind of fiction is this story? What is a folktale?

Think. Pair. Share.



I'm going to ask you a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

Think. Pair. Share.



Evaluative:

Do you think the animals ever became musicians as they had planned?

Word Work

The Bremen Town Musicians

*You heard, "The donkey left and took the road to a town called Bremen, where he had heard a street band play sweet music. He thought he could be a fine **musician**, too."*

*Say the word **musician** with me.*

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*A **musician** is someone who plays a musical instrument or sings.*

*The **musician** played a beautiful song at the wedding.*



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*Have you ever seen or heard a musician? Describe the experience. Try to use the word **musician** when you tell about it.*

*“When I saw a **musician** play, it was...”*

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*What's the word we have been talking
about?*

