



The Bremen Town Musicians

- Introduce your students to the story of *The Bremen Town Musicians*. We suggest any of these beautifully illustrated versions found online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), or you can share the story summary found at the end of this document, which emphasizes these story elements:
 - The Bremen Town Musicians find the courage to leave their homes and join their voices together to make delightful new music.
 - By finding the courage to come together, the musicians are able to show the beauty of playing as an ensemble.
- The music from *Once Upon a Symphony* is found on this [Spotify](#) playlist. Here's how the music helps to tell the story:
 - Symphony No. 6, *Pastoral Symphony* by Ludwig van Beethoven: This music paints the opening scene for the town of Bremen.
 - The Old Castle from "*Pictures at an Exhibition*" by Modest Mussorgsky: This music demonstrates the sorrow felt by the animals, as each has been "put out to pasture."
 - Concerto in E \flat for Horn: Rondo, K.417 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: This music illustrates the joy of joining your voice with others to make music.
 - Symphony No. 41, *Menuetto* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: This music celebrates how individual practice, along with playing as an ensemble, leads to fine music making.

The Bremen Town Musicians

Story

Brothers Grimm Fairy Tale

Adapted by Megan Wells

Summary by Katy Clusen

Once in Bremen town far, far away, the town musician had grown quite old and lived sadly alone in his big empty house.

Word got around that the BIG fine house was nearly empty, and one day a rascally band of Scadiddling Squirrels barged right into the front door!

They just moved right in and started making unpolished and unpracticed “music”. Each squirrel played without even considering the music the other squirrels were making. It was clear that they never took the time to practice!

The town musician couldn’t stand the noise the squirrels were making, so he packed up a bag and left his house.

He traveled down the road out of Bremen, towards the safe silence of the woods.

He walked for quite a while when he heard a sound. It was music being played very slow, and very low, and full of heart.

A donkey was sitting in the middle of a mud puddle singing a song of sorrow because his back was sore and he could no longer carry his load.

The town musician said, “Come with me. I would love your company.”

The donkey said, “I’m too afraid to leave the only home I’ve ever known.”

“Have courage,” said the town musician, “and play your music with mine.”

And so the donkey joined the musician, and together they traveled down the road until they heard a sound. They followed the sad song and came upon a dog lying in a bramble bush full of stinging thorns.

The dog had bumped into the bush of thorns because he could no longer see well. He felt sad and useless.

The town musician and the donkey said, “Your music is beautiful. You are very good to us. Join us. We would love your company.”

The dog said, "I don't know. I feel scared leaving the only home I've ever known."

"Have courage", said the musician and the donkey, "play your music with ours, and come!"

So the trio merrily headed out together down the road until they heard a sound. The sound was so sad. Soon they came to the source of the sound, a rooster and a cat.

Rooster and cat shared their story of how they were called useless and were put out to field.

"But your music is beautiful, and you are very good to us," said the musician. "Join us, we would love your company."

The cat and rooster said, "We don't know. We feel scared leaving the only home we've ever known."

"Have courage", said the musician and the donkey and the dog, "play your music with ours, and come!"

So the five friends merrily headed out together down the road.

As they were traveling, the town musician told them the story of the rascally band of Scadiddling Squirrels that had barged right into the front door of his house, making sounds that were so horrible he had to leave his own home!

The dog couldn't believe his ears. He said, "We need to go back to Bremen and help you get your house back!"

And so they did. The five friends turned around and headed to the town of Bremen.

When they reached the house, the four animals tip-toed up to a window and peeked in. Sure enough, the Scadiddling Squirrels were inside making a racket!

The racket made the animals so upset that donkey began to hee-haw, dog began to bow-wow, cat meowed and rooster crowed cock-a-doodle-doo!

They sounded awful!

In fact, they sounded as bad as the squirrels!

They knew they could sound better because they had practiced. And they knew how to listen to each other. They were ready.

Together the animals started playing music that was beautiful. So beautiful in fact, that the squirrels realized how bad they sounded, and that they needed to leave the house and go do some serious practicing, and listening to each other.

And wouldn't you know it, the town musician gave those squirrels music lessons to help them be the best band they could possibly be.

As for the Donkey, Dog, Cat and Rooster, they stayed with the town musician. They had the courage to live in a new place. They spent their days playing music together, and none of them were lonely ever again.

Later, they became known as the Bremen Town Musicians. Famous forever. So famous, they made a statue of them. Maybe you'll go and see it someday?

The End.