

# Study Guide - The Bremen Town Musicians

- The Brothers Grimm

adapted for Maritime Marionettes by Darryll and Heather Taylor

## ◇ BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Have the children discuss or write about any puppet shows they have seen. This can be puppets they saw live in a theatre, at an event, or at school or in the movies or on television.
  - a. Our show is performed with marionettes, (string puppets) and shadow puppets. Have they seen or have they tried marionettes or shadow puppets? What was their impression of them?
  - b. Do they have any puppets at home? What kind of puppets? (Hand puppets, rod or stick puppets, giant sized puppets, finger puppets, sock puppets, or ventriloquist dummies.)
2. Find a story of *The Bremen Town Musicians*, by the Brothers Grimm and read it in class. Look for other versions, that are told, from other countries.
3. Do the students think this story would be interesting to watch as a puppet show?
  - a. Why, why not?
  - b. What part of the story are they most interested in seeing in a puppet show? ie: (any action parts, seeing the animals and how they move, hearing the sounds the animals make, watching the animals form the pyramid , seeing the Robbers and their loot)
4. Find a picture of the statue of the *Bremen Town Musicians* in Bremen, Germany.

## ◇ AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

### **LEARNING ABOUT OURSELVES THROUGH THEATRE**

1. Together in class, list the characters in the play.
  - a. Which character was their favorite and why?
2. Next, list some of the main moments in the play.
  - a. Have each student pick a few of these moments and write or discuss how they felt while watching them. (Happy, sad, angry, sleepy, excited etc.)
3. Have the students draw a picture of their favorite part, and write how they felt while watching it and what they liked about it.
4. Questions for discussion or journalling:
  - a. The animals did not become Town Musicians, but became good friends on their journey and found a place to live happily together. Did you like how the story ended?
  - b. On their journey, the four animals had compassion for each other, helped each other along, and made decisions together. In what situations have you done these same things? (Ie: In your family, in your school, working on a group project for class, playing on a team...)
  - c. How are your friendships valuable to you?
  - d. Explore this idea: The journey the animals made together is more important than reaching their goal of becoming town musicians?

### **ABOUT ANIMALS AND PEOPLE** Questions for the students:

1. Do you have a pet at home. Is it older? If so, do you continue to treat it with respect as it gets older?
2. What local organizations who can help animals that are abandoned or in trouble?

3. Why should you always be careful when you see a strange animal, (one you do not know)? (What happened to the robber when he went back inside the house?)

4. How are animals important to us today? (companionship, food, guide dogs, working animals...)

**DRAMA-** (Adapt according to grade)

1. Together in class, list the different elements in the play, (what helped to tell the story. )

Elements of the play:

narration

puppets

puppetry movement

costumes

props

lighting

music

Now, make a second list of what the audience learned from the above list. ie:

the location of a scene

the time of day, or the general era

the mood of each scene

The personality of the characters.

The emotions of the characters

Give specific examples of this from the play, using this sentence structure if needed.

ie: From (element of the play), I learned that \_\_\_\_\_.

From the movement of the robbers, (always looking around) I learned that they were nervous.

## **CREATIVE WRITING-** Suggestions for students

1. Write a story about what happens next in the lives of the Bremen Town Musicians.

a. Draw a picture to go with your writing.

or

2. Consider writing this story in a different location, in a different time, maybe with different animals in different situations they want to leave.

Ideas-

What if the Donkey started the journey from a place you know?

What places might they travel on their journey?

What dangers might there be for the animals in the time and place you choose?

a. Draw a picture of the new version of the story you have imagined.

## **PUPPETRY**

1. Have the students make their own puppets from mismatched socks and cut out props from cardboard. They can present their own plays in class. Keep the plays short and simple.

or

2. Have the students create their own shadow puppets, cut out of black construction paper, with popsicle sticks for controls, taped on the back. Use a white sheet for a screen, in front of a window, or with a light behind it for the screen. They can present their own plays in class. Keep the plays short and simple.

\*Please email or mail us any work the students wish to share with us.

Thank you

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