



Contents

1. Enchantment Theatre Company • pages 1-2
2. About Enchantment Theatre's Performance Style • page 2
3. Why Tell Fairy Tales? • pages 2-5
 - a. About the Brothers Grimm
 - b. The Brothers Grimm version of *The Bremen Town Musicians*
 - c. Enchantment's version of *The Bremen Town Musicians*
4. Pre-Performance Activities • pages 5-6
5. Post-Performance Activities • pages 7-8
6. Post-Performance Student Survey • page 9

The Bremen Town Musicians Study Guide

1. ENCHANTMENT THEATRE COMPANY

For more than 30 years, Enchantment Theatre Company has been guided by our mission to create original theater for young audiences and families. The new shape of our mission, as defined in early 2017, is to inspire children to **dream**, **explore**, **think** and **connect** through imaginative storytelling onstage and in the classroom. We bring stories to life in a way that encourages children to **dream** about who they are and may become, to **explore** story from different perspectives, to **think** using inductive reasoning and to **connect** to other people and ideas. Our programs encourage children to question and explore how to live in a complex world so that they grow up healthier, smarter and kinder. Enchantment Theatre Company aspires to transform young audiences into creative, curious and compassionate adults.



We accomplish this through the imaginative telling of fairy tales, fables and myths that inspire, challenge and enrich our audience. Enchantment believes deeply in the transformative power of theater to awaken children's imaginations and to nurture their humanity. Our unique style of performance – incorporating expressive masks, life-sized puppets, magical illusion, original music, dance and pantomime – is accessible to children of all ages and backgrounds and encourages everyone – regardless of age and language barriers – to engage in the joy of a live theatrical production.

2. ABOUT ENCHANTMENT THEATRE'S PERFORMANCE STYLE

Our unique style of performance brings stories to life in a way that inspires children to use their imaginations and stimulates them to bring their curiosity, discoveries and questions back to the classroom to explore the story in different ways.



Beauty Jane and the Beast in Enchantment Everywhere's The Beast in the Bayou

- **Masks** – the actors wear masks on their faces so they can play many characters different from themselves
- **Puppets** – the actors use puppets to play characters that are animals or large creatures
- **Music** – a composer wrote the music to go along with the story and to reinforce the action that is seen on stage
- **Narration** – one voice will tell the story as we watch the actors use their bodies to tell the story

3. WHY TELL FAIRY TALES?

Enchantment Theatre Company believes that myths, fables and fairy tales have intrinsic value for children's development. These classic and magical tales are not only filled with promise – the weak can become strong, the poor can become rich, the unimaginable becomes possible – they provide children with models for how to be in life. And most importantly, they invite children into a new way of seeing and being, where they can discover a deeper understanding of others and of themselves. Myths, fables and fairy tales are essential because they:

- Model problem solving
- Build emotional resiliency
- Give us a common language (cultural literacy & canon)
- Cross cultural boundaries
- Teach the dramatic structure of a story
- Develop a child's imagination
- Give teachers opportunities to teach critical thinking skills
- Teach lessons
- Support new Common Core Standards

a. About the Brothers Grimm

The story of *The Bremen Town Musicians* was written by two brothers, named Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. We call them the Brothers Grimm and they lived over 200 years ago. When Jacob was 11 and Wilhelm was 10, their father died. This caused great hardship for their family and affected the brothers for many years. In spite of their family's poverty, Jacob and Wilhelm were able to attend college at the University of Marburg. While at university, the brothers developed a passion for folktales. They began to collect and write down many of the stories that they knew from growing up in Germany. The stories they wrote down are known as folk stories.

Folk stories are tales or legends that are told and passed on by a group of people through many generations; most of the time these stories were told out loud. Because Jacob and Wilhelm were from Germany, they wrote down and recorded all of the stories they found from the German people. Did you know the Brothers Grimm wrote down more than 200 stories?

So, what is the difference between a folk story and a fairy tale? As we said above, a folk tale is a short story that comes from the oral tradition. Folk tales often have to do with everyday life and frequently feature wily peasants getting the better of their superiors. In many cases the characters are animals with human characteristics. Fairy tales are a subgenre of folk tales and almost always involve some element of magic and the triumph of good over evil.

Do you recognize any of these stories?

- The Frog Prince
- Rapunzel
- Cinderella
- Little Red Riding Hood
- The Brave Little Tailor
- Rumpelstiltskin
- Sleeping Beauty

All of these were stories written down by the Brothers Grimm!

b. The Brothers Grimm version of *The Bremen Town Musicians*

Once upon a time there was a Donkey who ran away from home because his farmer stopped feeding him. He decided he would go to the town of Bremen and make his living as a musician. As he was traveling along, he met a Cat and then a Dog who had both been thrown out of their homes because they were getting old and he invited them to join him. The three animals came upon a farm where a Rooster was crowing with all of his might. The Rooster told the trio that he was

going to be cooked for dinner that evening. The Donkey invited the Rooster to join them and he did.

At the end of the day they were very tired and hungry and looked for a place to rest. Suddenly they came upon a cottage in the woods. They looked in the window and saw a splendid feast laid out and twelve robbers eating it. They decided to make a plan to scare the robbers away. The Dog climbed up on the Donkey's back and then the Cat climbed up on the Dog. Lastly the Rooster flew up and landed on the Cat's back. The four of them stood at the window and began to sing, making a huge racket of he-haws, meows, woofs and cock-a-doodle dos. Then they jumped through the window and crashed into the cottage. The robbers were terrified and ran off into the woods. The hungry animals sat down and finished the meal and then found a place to sleep for the night. The Donkey stretched out on the porch, while the Dog lay down just inside the front door. The Cat curled up in the kitchen by the fire and the Rooster flew up to the rafters.

Meanwhile the robbers decided to send a scout back to the cottage to retrieve their loot. They drew straws and Lefty, the smallest of the robbers, was sent to the cottage. Lefty snuck in the back door and bumped into the cat, who scratched him. Then he ran into the front room and the Dog bit him, and as he dashed out the cottage door, the Donkey kicked him. The Rooster crowed loudly from the top of the house and Lefty fled into the woods. When Lefty made his way back to the robber gang, he told them that the house was filled with ghosts and monsters. He explained that a witch with glowing eyes scratched him in the kitchen and that a man with a knife stabbed him in the leg by the front door. Then a terrible monster in the yard whacked him with a club. But worst of all was the devil on the roof calling out judgement day.

From then on the robbers decided the house was cursed and didn't dare go back. The four musicians of Bremen, on the other hand, decided that they liked it so much that they never left.

c. Enchantment Theatre's version of *The Bremen Town Musicians*

A Donkey who's been fired by his farmer decides to become a musician in Bremen. On his way to the town he meets a Cat who's also been thrown out of her home. The Donkey persuades the Cat to join him and they continue on their journey. Meanwhile in another part of the woods, an old lady named Granny lives alone with her dog, Woofy. Granny is about to take her weekly trip to the nearby village. She tells Woofy to stay behind and guard the cottage because she's heard that robbers are lurking in the woods. Woofy reluctantly agrees to stay and Granny sets off on her trip. Woofy falls asleep in front of the cottage just as two robbers sneak in to check it out. Woofy growls in his sleep and scares the robbers away and then wakes up, not realizing what's happened. Woofy decides he'd rather be with Granny and takes off to follow her.

The story shifts back to the Donkey and the Cat as they continue their journey. They come across a Rooster who's run away from his farm because he was going to be cooked for dinner. The Donkey invites the Rooster to join them, and in spite of the Cat's objections, they team up and continue on their way. Meanwhile, as Granny is traveling to the village, Woofy catches up and tiptoes behind her. Granny discovers Woofy and scolds him for leaving the cottage but then relents and allows him to stay with her. The Robbers peak out and see Granny and Woofy leave together; they realize that now they're safe to go back and rob Granny's cottage.

Back with the animal trio, the Cat is having second thoughts about staying with the Donkey and the Rooster and she and the Rooster get into a fight. The Donkey stops them, saying that they have a great future together. In a fantasy sequence, they imagine how successful they'll be in Bremen. They resolve to stay together and hurry along to Bremen.

The Robbers – Chief and Lefty – arrive at Granny's cottage. Lefty is nervous because he's heard animal sounds in the distance (the Donkey, Cat and Rooster singing together) and thinks that they're being followed by a monster. The Chief tells Lefty he's just imagining things and they break into Granny's cottage. Just as the Robbers disappear inside Granny's cottage, the animal trio arrives at the cottage. The Cat and Rooster both want to rest but the Donkey is eager to continue. When they tell the Donkey he should just go on without them, the Donkey agrees to let them stop but insists that they rehearse. As the animals rehearse downstage right, we see Chief and Lefty enter the interior of the cottage on stage left. Lefty hears the animals singing and gets nervous but Chief tells him he's imagining things. They decide to sleep in the cottage for the night.

The Donkey scolds the Cat and Rooster for their poor performance and the three animals get into a big fight, with the Cat climbing on the Donkey's shoulders and the Rooster chasing them. They make a huge racket and wake up the robbers who are terrified. The robbers dash outside with their bags of loot. They see the animals, yell "Monsters!" and then drop their loot and run off. The animals don't see the Robbers at all and finally collapse in exhaustion. They discover the loot and the Donkey thinks it must belong to Granny. Just then Granny and Woofy enter, having seen the Robbers run off in a fright. Woofy begins to chase the animals but Granny stops him, realizing that it was the animals' singing that scared the Robbers away. The Donkey gives Granny the loot and Granny invites the trio to stay with them. The Donkey says it's time to go but the Cat and Rooster want to stay with Granny. Finally the Donkey realizes that he'll be much happier staying with Granny and his new family and that will be the true fulfillment of his dreams.

4. PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

Class Exercise 1:

In our experience it's best to read the story several times to the students before they come to see the show. This can be done in a single sitting or over several days.

1) Read the story to encourage imagination

Simply read the story to your students, no need to act it out, just keep a matter-of-fact tone. During the first reading, invite children to close their eyes, simply to listen to the story and imagine the scenes. **Ask them: what did they see in their mind's eye (Donkey, Granny, Robbers), what did they hear (the animal's sounds/singing), what did they sense (quiet forest, dangerous robbers)?**

2) Read the story for understanding

On the second reading, ask your students to notice different characters, language, descriptions. What kind of story is it (fictional, fantasy)? Is it set in an imaginary world? How do you know? Is

the ending happy or sad? Are there any words you don't understand? E.g. Rooster, exhaustion, loot...?

3) Read the story for elaboration

This time, read the story and ask your students to remember their favorite parts so they can retell them in their own words, retell the whole story or act out a new ending like Enchantment Theatre did.

You may want to talk about the moral of the story. What is it teaching us? The animals are each undervalued on their farms but find something of value together. What does each of the animals learn as they work together? Are they able to overcome their differences?

NOTE: In our talkback the actors will ask the students several questions:

- 1) Who was the main character in the story?
- 2) If you were the Donkey, would you have given Granny the robber's loot?
- 3) Why did the Cat and Rooster fight?
- 4) What was different about the story you saw on stage and the Brothers Grimm version that you read?

Questions 1 & 2 could be discussion or activity points before or after seeing the show. Question 3 could be a discussion point after seeing the show.

Class Exercise 2:

- 1) What is another story that you know and like to hear?
- 2) Can you write down what happens in the story?
- 3) Can you tell us the story out loud?
 - This could be a project that is worked on over a period of time, in multiple sessions.
 - Work with the students on writing down the story piece by piece and finding causal and temporal links.
 - Students review the story repeatedly, growing familiar with the through line of the story.
 - They practice telling pieces of the story out loud. What happens first? What happens next? Why did that happen?
 - The goal would be that they could tell the story to the class without looking at any paper, that they would not be reciting a memorized portion of text, but really just telling the story themselves, in the mode of passing on an oral tradition.

Class Exercise 3:

Before going to the show, ask your students to close their eyes once again and recall what they imagined in their mind's eye (Donkey, Granny, Cat, Rooster) when you read the story aloud. Then for a moment, ask them to see themselves sitting quietly in the classroom. Are they excited about seeing the play? What do they notice about how they feel? Can they move their attention from themselves to the whole class...then to the whole school? Then ask them to easily bring their attention back to the class and then to themselves. How do they feel now? Are they ready to enjoy the show with their fellow students?

5. POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

Regardless of age, experience has shown that it is worthwhile to speak with your students after a performance (their favorite part might have changed or for older students ask them how acting, music, puppets, etc. changed their response to the story) and then ask them to draw a response to the show. This is important because creating a visual piece of work allows the response to remain in the imaginative realm of their mind's eye, rather than being committed straightaway to an intellectual realm. They could also make a class collage/poster/or hallway display depicting times when they or people they know were brave.

Art/Drama Activities for Younger Students:

1) Make half-masks in class (the same style that the actors wear):

- Cut a paper plate in half
- Cut out a triangle along the center of the edge, giving a space for the nose
- Using a large hole punch, create a hole for the eyes
- Hole punch two small holes on the sides & twist pipe cleaners through them to attach the mask behind the head
- Decorate the masks using materials of your choice (markers, crayons, glitter, feathers, stickers, paper scraps of different colors, gems, etc)



2) Physical activity: wearing your mask

- What character did you create?
- How does this character walk? Do they have heavy steps, or light steps? Do they move fast or slow? Do they glide across the floor? Do they stomp their feet? (ask questions that generate different ways of moving)
- What does your character look like when they are happy? What does your character look like when they are sad?
- How does this character sound? Can they talk? What sounds do they make? (ask questions that generate different vocal qualities)

Art/Drama Activities for Older Students:

1) Create a cartoon of your favorite part of the story (write the narration along the bottom and dialogue in speech bubbles.) Then create a group comic strip. Take the original cartoons and hang them up in sequence. What are the missing scenes? What is the dialogue needed in between scenes?

2) Physical activity: acting out the story, through a variety of different ways

- Actors mime the whole piece with someone narrating/reading on the side

- Actors mime the piece and the class makes the sound effects
- Actors make the sound effects instead of words and someone narrates
- Actors use their bodies in a way that shows what character they are

Independent Writing or Discussion Work:

- 1) Ask your students (or discuss with younger students) to describe/write about the characteristics of the Donkey; e.g. kind, optimistic, etc. Then have them write/describe the characteristics of the Cat and the Rooster. How are they different from the Donkey?
- 2) Based on the above definitions for folk tales and fairy tales, into which category does “The Bremen Town Musicians” fit?
- 3) Compare and contrast the behavior and characters of the Donkey and the Cat; do the same for the robbers, Chief and Lefty.
- 4) Write a personal account from the point of view of Granny or Woofy.
- 5) Write a poem based on the story.
- 6) Review the performance (pretend you are a theater critic – what was good about the performance, story, acting etc..)
- 7) Help preserve oral traditions (like the Brothers Grimm). Interview a parent, guardian or neighbor and ask them to tell a story they were told when they were young. Write down the story and the context in which it was told.



The cast of The Beast in the Bayou, our 2016 Enchantment Everywhere production

Enchantment Theatre Company would like to give credit to "Fairy Tales from the Brothers Grimm" by Philip Pullman, a resource that was most helpful in the development of this project.

6. POST-PERFORMANCE STUDENT SURVEY FOR *THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS*

Survey can be taken individually or as a class. If taken as a class, we recommend that you ask your students to place their heads down on the desk (e.g. 7-up game) and have them raise their hands for a count. Please also jot down their comments to the open-ended questions below. Thank you.

Name of School: _____ Grade: _____

Student's Name/Teacher's Name: _____

	Yes	No
1. <i>The Bremen Town Musicians</i> was fun.	___	___
2. I learned many new things.	___	___
3. Watching the show made reading more fun.	___	___
4. I want to make up my own stories.	___	___
5. I want to learn more about acting.	___	___
6. I want to see another show.	___	___
7. This was my first play.*	___	___
8. I told/will tell my parents about the show.	___	___

What was your favorite part of the show? Why?

What was your least favorite part of the show? Why?

*If this was NOT the first play you have ever seen, do you recall the titles of the other plays?

PLEASE MAIL/FAX THIS SURVEY TO US AT
Enchantment Theatre Company / Attn: Student Survey
100 South Broad Street, Suite 1318 / Philadelphia, PA 19110 / Fax: 215-496-9161