

# Teacher Guide



FWOpera

## Table of Contents

To the Teacher .....	4
Objectives .....	5
<b>OPERA</b>	
Investigate Opera .....	7
Opera Production .....	8
A Short History of Opera .....	9
<i>Worksheets</i>	
Opera Pie .....	10
Opera Vocabulary .....	11
Where in the World Is... ..	13
Matching Picture .....	14
Opera Word Search .....	15
<i>Answer Sheet</i> .....	16
<b>THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS</b>	
Meet the Authors .....	19
The Story .....	22
Suggested Lesson Plans .....	24
Matching Pictures .....	25
Complete Patterns .....	26
Robber's Loot Math .....	27
You Be the Author .....	28
<i>Answer Sheet</i> .....	29



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## TO THE TEACHERS

This Teacher Guide is for use by classroom and music teachers in anticipation of a performance by Fort Worth Opera's Children's Opera Theatre.

This guide is designed to benefit both the student and educator with regard to the development of an interdisciplinary approach to opera education. The activities provided in the teacher guide assist students to actively listen and observe live opera. Also included are follow-up worksheets that encourage students to internalize what they saw, heard, and felt. We encourage you to use this guide to augment your existing curriculum in the many disciplines that are included. Please feel free to copy or adapt any part of the guide for use with your students. Although our production stands on its own merit, a prepared student will better understand and more fully appreciate our presentation.

We at Fort Worth Opera believe that the performing arts are an essential component of every student's education and that he/she should be afforded opportunities to explore this medium. To help accomplish this, we are committed to fostering strong partnerships with schools, educators, and parents to provide students with access to opportunities that illustrate how the arts are vital to our humanity.

We sincerely hope that your experience with Children's Opera Theatre will be genuinely rewarding, providing the catalyst for a lifelong appreciation of opera and the many art forms that combine to make this unique experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hannah Smith".

Hannah Smith  
Director of Fort Worth Opera Studio

Many thanks to Cindy Burlin, music teacher at Tanglewood Elementary, for her work in compiling and editing the Children's Opera Theatre study guide. Thanks also to Clarissa de Andrade and Amanda Nunnallee for their artistic contributions.

# OBJECTIVES

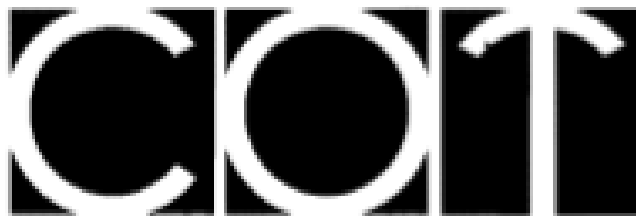
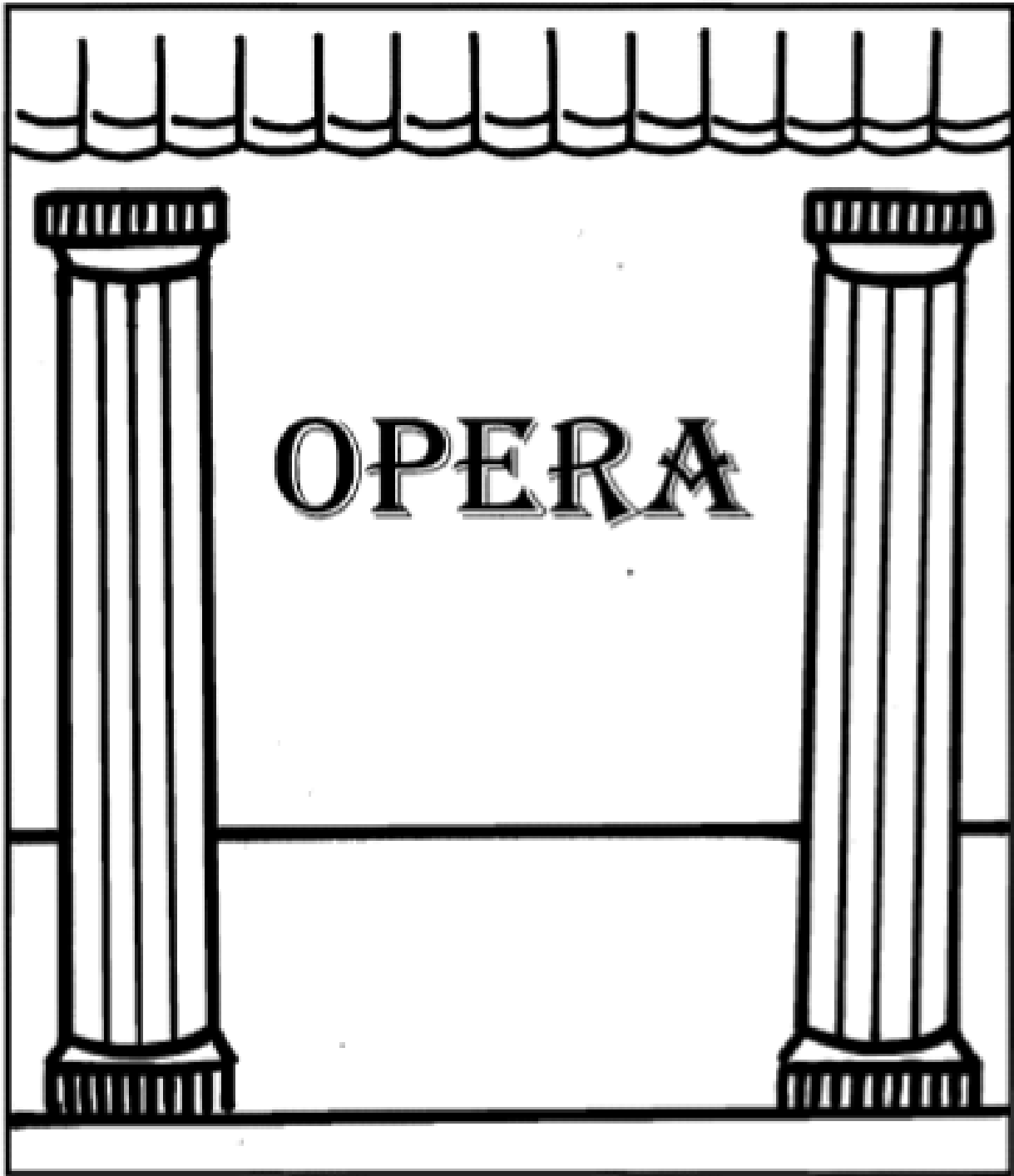
## Purpose of the Study Guide

- To acquaint both the educator and the student with musical storytelling
- To familiarize students with the “world of opera” – its vocabulary, history, etc.
- To provide an innovative, new, multi-disciplinary approach to teaching required skills and curriculum
- To promote the understanding of how opera, as an art form, reflects and comments on our society and the world in which we live
- To promote realization of the importance of literature as a mirror of human experience, reflecting human motives, conflicts, and values
- To help students identify with fictional characters in human situations as a means of relating to others

## BEFORE ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

### ALL STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Recognize the character names
- Understand how music and drama combine to tell a story



FWOPera

# INVESTIGATE OPERA

## WHAT DOES THE WORD OPERA MEAN?

The word **opera** comes from the Latin word **opus**, which means a work. What is a work? It is something a person creates. It is a poem or a song or a drawing or a composition or any other creative thing a person makes. The plural of opus is opera. Opera means works in the Latin language. Today we use the word **opera** to describe one large work of performing art that contains many creative parts. An opera is many works that are combined together. Opera has instrumental music, a dramatic play or comedy, singing and acting, scenery, costumes, special lighting and sometimes dancing.

## WHERE DID OPERA BEGIN?

Opera was created over 400 years ago in Florence, Italy. In 1597, a composer named Jacopo Peri (JAH-coh-poh PEH-ree) wrote a play that was sung throughout instead of being spoken. He did this because he was trying to write a play the way the ancient Greeks did. During this period, educated people were trying to learn all they could about the world of ancient Greece so they could imitate it. The first opera was about a character in Greek mythology named *Daphne*. The idea of presenting plays that were sung became very popular and more and more composers began to combine music and drama. Love of opera spread all over Europe and eventually the world. Operas have been written in every language and its popularity shows no signs of slowing down.

As in a play, designers must be called on to create the costumes, lights, sets, and makeup for an opera production. When the actual performance approaches, the singers have dress rehearsals where they get to wear their new costumes and perform on the newly build scenery. Rehearsals give the singers/actors an opportunity to practice their music and their acting with one another.

The person who actually writes the words for an opera is called a **librettist**. Often the words are adapted from an existing story or play, such as in *Little Red's Most Unusual Day*. *Little Red's Most Unusual Day* uses the music of composers Gioacchino Rossini (joh-ah-KEE-noh roh-SEE-nee), and Jacques Offenbach (JAHK OFF-en-bahk) and the librettist is John Davies.

## HOW IS THE OPERATIC VOICE DIFFERENT?

Operatic singing is different from popular singing. There is more vibration in a opera singer's voice. This vibration is called **vibrato**, an Italian word. It helps the singer hold notes for a long time without taking a breath. Proper breathing is very important because the air in the lungs must be let out very slowly in a controlled way. Opera singers must be able to sing very high and very low, in a wide range, and sing fast **runs**, which are many notes in a row sung very rapidly. They do not use microphones to project their voices. All the power in their voices must come from inside their bodies. It takes years of study and practice to learn to do this. The highest singing female voice is called **soprano** and the lowest male voice is called **bass**. Opera singers must be able to sing in different languages because most operas are performed in the language in which they were originally written.

# Opera Production

## A pie with lots of pieces!

Opera is created by the combination of a myriad of art forms. First and foremost are the actors/singers who portray characters by revealing their thoughts and emotions through the singing voice. The next very important component is a full symphony orchestra that accompanies the singing actors and actresses, helping to portray the full range of emotions possible in an opera. These performances are further enhanced by wigs, costumes, sets, and specialized lighting, all of which are designed, created, and then made by a team of highly trained artisans.

The creation of an opera begins with a dramatic concept created by a playwright, who alone or with help fashions the script or *libretto* – the words the artists will sing. Working together, the composer and librettist team up to create a musical drama in which the music and words work together to express the emotions revealed in the story. When their work is done, the composer and librettist entrust their work to another duo, the conductor and stage director. These two are responsible for bringing the story to life. The conductor prepares the music, while the stage director is in charge of what we see on the stage.

The design team, with help from the stage director, takes charge of the physical production of the story world on stage. Set designers, lighting designers, costume designers, wig and makeup designers and even choreographers are brought on board to help create a new production. A set designer combines the skills of an artist and an architect using blueprint plans to design the physical settings required by the storyline. These blueprints are turned over to a team of carpenters who are specially trained in the art of stage carpentry. After the set is constructed, painters paint the set following the original plans from the set designer. When the set is assembled on the stage, the lighting designer works with a team of electricians to throw light on the stage and the set, meeting the practical needs of the actors on stage and also creating a mood for the audience. Using specialized lighting instruments, color gels and computers, the lighting designer plots out which light come on at what time, and how quickly or slowly throughout the story of the opera.

The costume designer consults the stage director to design appropriate clothing for the singers. These designs are then made into patterns and created by a team of highly skilled artisans called cutters, stitchers, and sewers. Each costume is specially made for each singer using his or her individual measurements. The wig and makeup designer, working with the costume designer, designs and creates wigs that will complement both the costume and the singer as well as represent historically accurate fashions.

As a performance nears, rehearsals are held on the newly constructed set, using the costumes, lights, and orchestra to ensure a cohesive performance that will be both dramatically and musically satisfying to the audience.

# A Short History of Opera

The word **opera** is the plural form of the Latin word **opus**, which translates quite literally as “work.” The use of the plural form alludes to the abundance of art forms that combine to create an operatic performance. Today we accept the word opera as a reference to a theatrically based musical art form in which the drama is propelled by the sung declamation of text accompanied by instrumental music.

Opera as an art form can claim its origin with the inclusion of incidental music that was performed during the tragedies and comedies popular during ancient Greek times. The tradition of including music as an integral part of the theatrical activities expanded in Roman times and continued through the Middle Ages. Surviving examples of liturgical dramas and vernacular plays from Medieval times show the use of music as a part of the action, as do the vast mystery and morality plays of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Most music historians hold that the first completely sung musical drama (or opera) developed as a result of discussions held in Florence, Italy, in the 1570’s by an informal academy known as the Camerata, which led to the musical setting of Rinuccini’s drama, *Dafne*, by composer Jacopo Peri in 1597.

The work of such early Italian masters as Giulio Caccini and Claudio Monteverdi led to the development of a through-composed musical entertainment comprised of **recitative**, or speech-like sections, which revealed the plot of the drama, followed by **arias** that provided the singer an opportunity for personal reflection. The function of the chorus in these early works mirrored that of the character of the same name found in Greek drama. The new form of opera was greeted favorably by the public and quickly became a popular entertainment.

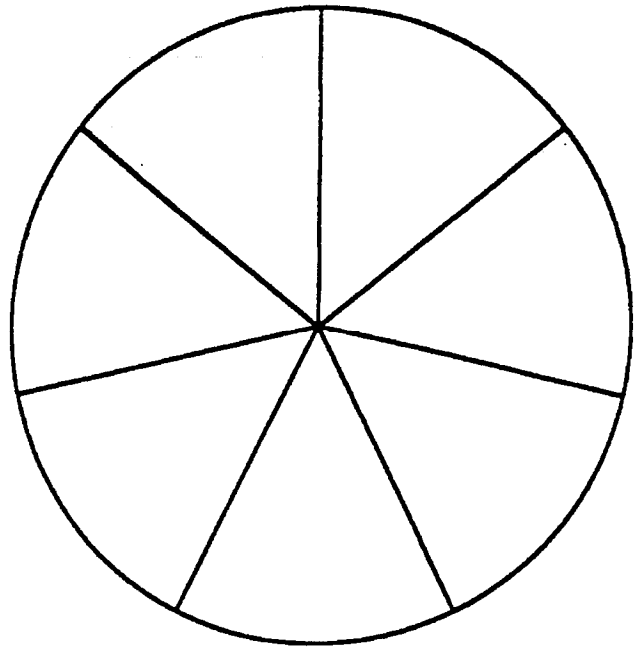
Opera has flourished through the world as a vehicle for the expression of the full range of human emotions. Italians claim the art form as their own – retaining dominance in the field through the death of Giacomo Puccini in 1924. Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, and Puccini developed the art form through clearly defined periods of development that produced **opera buffa**, **opera seria**, **bel canto**, and **verismo**. The Austrian Mozart championed the **singspiel** (singing play), which combined the spoken word with music, a form also used by Beethoven, Bizet, and Offenbach. Gounod and Meyerbeer were the leaders in French opera that combined lavish sets and costumes, and incorporated ballet. The Germans von Weber, Richard Strauss, and Wagner developed the unique style of opera popular in their home country. The English, Spanish, and Viennese also helped to establish opera as a form of entertainment that continues to enjoy great popularity throughout the world.

With the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, composers in America diverged from European traditions in order to focus on their own roots while exploring and developing the vast body of the country’s folk music and legends. Composers such as Aaron Copland, Douglas Moore, Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, and Carlisle Floyd have all crafted operas that have been presented throughout the world to great success. Today, composers John Adams, Philip Glass, John Corigliano, and Mark Adamo enjoy success both at home and abroad and are credited with the infusion of new life into an art form that continues to evolve even as it approaches its fifth century.

# THE OPERA PIE

Make your own "Opera Pie" by listing the different kinds of performing arts that make up one whole opera.

Make each piece of the pie a different color. Color in the boxes next to the different components of each opera.



## PIE LEGEND

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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### ***THE 5 W'S OF OPERA HISTORY***

**WHO** wrote the first opera? \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT** was the name of the first opera? \_\_\_\_\_

**WHERE** was the first opera performed? \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEN** was the first opera written? \_\_\_\_\_

**WHY** was the play sung instead of spoken? \_\_\_\_\_

# Opera Vocabulary and Pronunciation Guide

- **Aria** (AH-ree-ah). A musical piece for solo voice.
- **Baritone** (BARE-ih-tone). The middle range male voice.
- **Bass** (BASE). Lowest male voice.
- **Bel Canto** (behl-CAHN-toh). Literally “beautiful singing”. Also a style of Italian opera made popular by composers Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which showcased the singing voice.
- **Coloratura** (coh-loh-rah-TOO-rah). A singing style when singers sing very fast florid scales and arpeggios, usually all on one sound or syllable of a word.
- **Contralto** The lowest female voice.
- **Conductor** The person who leads the orchestra.
- **Composer** The person who writes the music.
- **Designer** Person who creates the scenery, costumes, and light.
- **Ensemble** Two or more singers singing and expressing their emotions at the same time.
- **French Operetta** A style of light opera with spoken dialogue from 19<sup>th</sup> century France.
- **Libretto** (lih-BREHT-toh). Literally “little book,” this is the text or words of an opera.
- **Mezzo-Soprano** (MEH-tso soh-PRAH-noh). The middle female voice.
- **Opera** (AH-peh-rah). A play that uses singing instead of speaking and is accompanied by instrumental music.
- **Opera Buffa** (BOOF-ah). Funny or lightheartedly themed opera.
- **Opera Seria** (SEH-ree-ah). Dramatic or seriously themed opera.
- **Overture** The prelude to an opera, played by the orchestra alone.

- **Recitative** (reh-chih-tah-TEEV). A type of musical speaking where the words of the singer are sung in the rhythm of natural speech with melody added. Recitative is usually used between arias and ensembles to propel the story line.
- **Props** Objects placed on the stage and used by the actors.
- **Score** The book that contains the music and words of an opera.
- **Set** The scenery used on the stage to show location.
- **Singspiel** A type of opera created in Germany that uses spoken dialogue between arias and ensembles.
- **Soprano** The highest female voice.
- **Stage Director** The person who decides how the singers will move on stage and how they will act while they are singing their parts.
- **Tenor** (TEH-nor). The highest male voice.
- **Verismo** (veh-RIHZ-moh). A style of Italian opera with very realistic characters popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- **Vibrato** (vih-BRAH-toh). The natural way for a voice or instrument to enlarge its sound through a rapid and small waver in pitch. Vibrato makes sound carry further and sound more powerful.
- **Vocal range** The scope of the human voice from its highest to its lowest sounds. Voice fall into these categories:

Female	Soprano	High
	Mezzo-Soprano	Middle
	Contralto	Low
Male	Tenor	High
	Baritone	Middle
	Bass	Low

# WHERE IN THE WORLD IS ...

Opera and many fairy tales trace their roots to Europe.  
Find and color the following countries with your favorite colors.

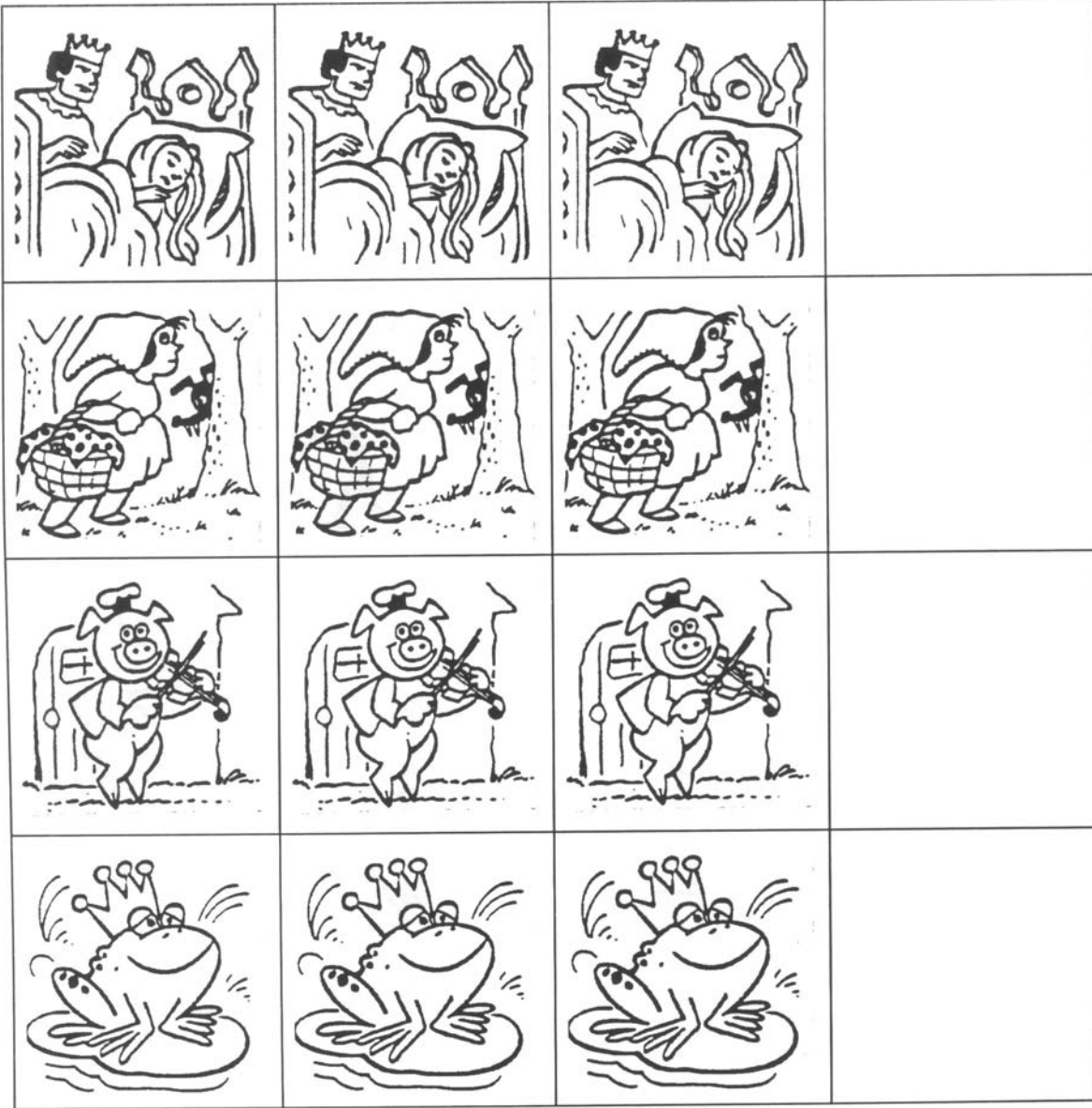
1. England
2. Germany
3. France
4. Spain
5. Italy



# Matching Pictures

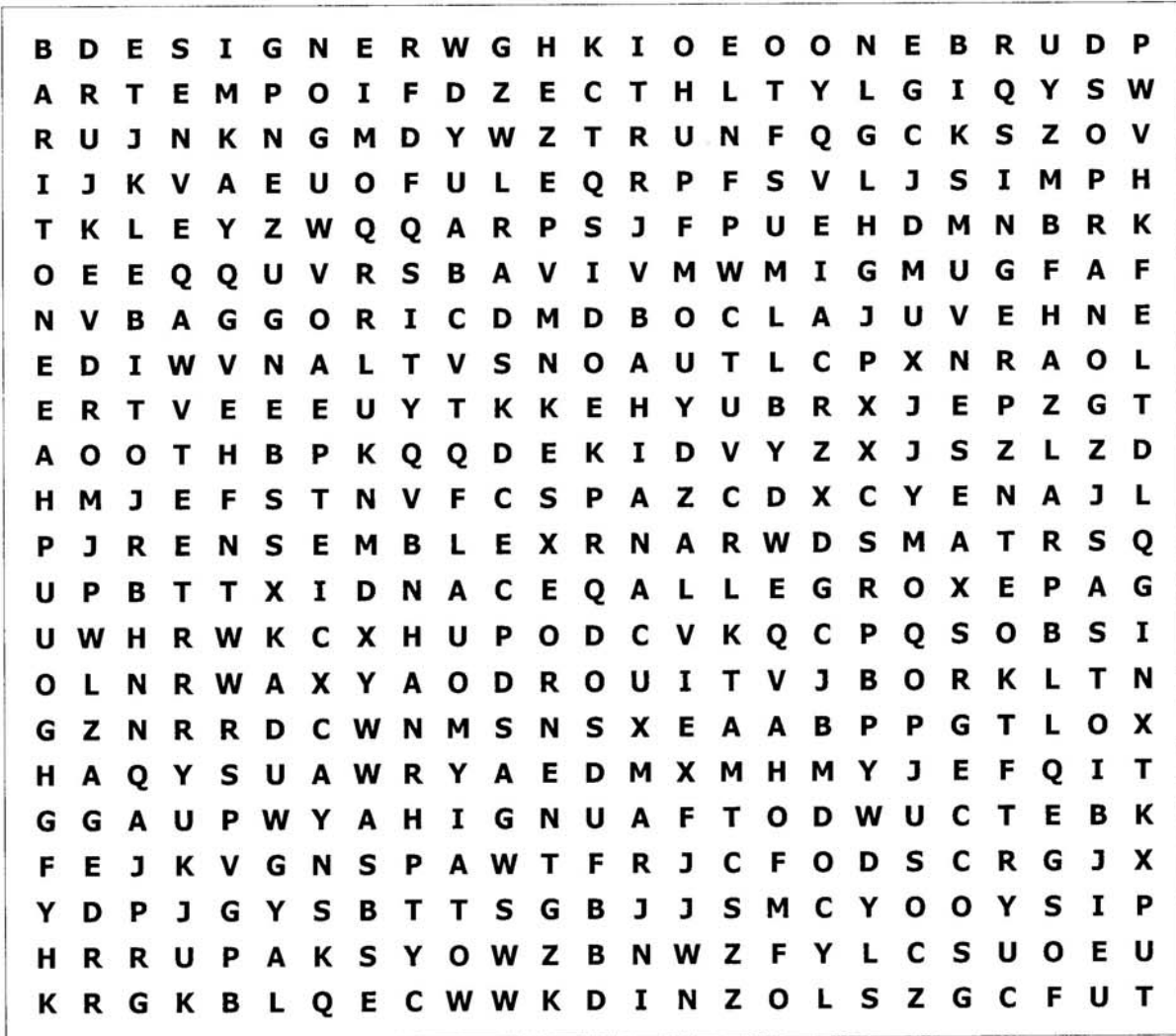
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cut and paste the pictures from the bottom that match the pictures.



# OPERA WORD SEARCH

Find the following music vocabulary words in the puzzle below. Circle them.



ALLEGRO

ARIA

BARITONE

BASS

COMPOSER

COSTUME

DESIGNER

DUET

ENSEMBLE

LIBRETTO

MEZZO

OPERA

PIANO

PROPS

REHEARSAL

SCORE

SET

SINGER

SOPRANO

TENOR

STAGE

TEMPO

# ANSWER SHEET

## THE OPERA PIE

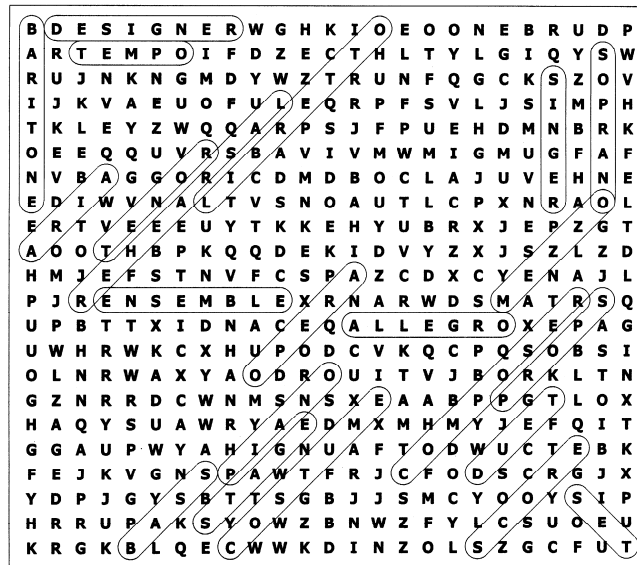
symphony orchestra  
theater  
scenery  
dancing

costumes  
singing/acting  
special lighting

### 5 W's of Opera History

Who	Jacopo Peri
What	Daphne
Where	Florence Italy
When	1597
Why	To write a play the same way as the ancient Greeks

### Opera Word Search



# THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS



FWOpera

# *The Bremen Town Musicians*

## **The Producers**

Composers	Offenbach, Rossini, Donizetti, Sullivan, and Verdi Arranged by John Davies
Librettist	John Davies
Set Designer	Jason Domm, Rick Morrison, and Mark Walker
Costume Designer	LaLonnie Lehman
Stage Director	Richard Kagey
Accompanist	Eduardo Rojas

## **The Characters**

Dorabella the Cat	Corrie Donovan
Barcarolle the Dog	Amanda Robie
Eddie Pensier the Rooster	Logan Rucker
General Boom the Donkey	Joel Herold

# ***The Bremen Town Musicians***

## Meet the Authors

### **Gaetano Donizetti – Composer**

Gaetano Donizetti was born in 1797 in Bergamo, Italy. Donizetti is considered a master of the **bel canto** style. **Bel canto** describes a type of opera that had a set number of separate arias and ensembles that were designed to show off the human voice. These pieces were florid and demanded great virtuosity from the singers. This style helped make many singers of the day into stars.

Donizetti's talents were recognized at an early age and at age nine, he was sent to study at Lezioni Caritatevoli School on a full scholarship. The founder of the school took a personal interest in Donizetti's education. He sent Donizetti to study with Padre Stanislao Mattei, who had been a teacher of Rossini and even partially paid for some of his lessons.

Donizetti wrote serious and comedic opera, as well as other vocal works. *L'elisir d'amore (The Elixir of Love)* (1832) and *Don Pasquale* (1843), both comedic operas, are two of Donizetti's best known works. Many works within Donizetti's operas were created specifically for performers Donizetti knew and offered them opportunities to showcase their specific talents. Donizetti wrote 65 operas.

Donizetti wrote operas in Italy as well as Paris. Donizetti suffered great tragedy in his life. He had three children, none of whom survived childhood and his wife died early in their marriage. Donizetti became ill and after spending a year and a half in an institution, moved to Paris. Once there, he was visited by many musicians and composers, including Verdi. Donizetti died in 1848 in his home town of Bergamo.

### **Jacques Offenbach – Composer**

Jacques Offenbach, the creator of **French operetta**, was the son of a German Cantor. Born in 1819, Jacques became a very skilled cellist and at age 14 enrolled at the Paris Conservatory of Music where he got his first taste of opera. Playing cello for private parties gave him inspiration to start composing and by the age of 20, Offenbach had composed his first theatrical piece, *Paschal et Chambord*, which was not very successful.

In 1850, he was elected as the head of the orchestra for the Paris Comic-Opera, and it was then that he started composing a great deal of incidental music for the company. Upset with the opera company's unwillingness to produce true comic opera, Offenbach decided to write his own short operettas. In 1855 his opera, *Les deuz aveugles*, was received with great success. Many works followed and Offenbach's fame was widespread. He would often tour with these productions, and by 1858 his short **opera buffos** were transformed into a new 21 character opera titled *Orphee aux enfers*. With such a great success behind him, Offenbach continued writing such operas such as *Barbe Bleue* and *La vie Parisienne* that helped spread his fame. By

1870 Offenbachs' operas had fallen out of favor with the public. He was working on *The Tales of Hoffman* when he died in 1880. The opera was yet unfinished, but his family had the work finished. Amazingly enough, *Hoffman* remains his most noted work and is performed regularly today.

### **Gioachino Rossini – Composer**

Born into a musical family in 1792, Rossini was quite accomplished at the horn, violin, cello, and harpsichord. By the age of 14, he had composed his first work for the stage, and in 1806 went to study at the Bologna Conservatory where he wrote his first opera, *Demetrio e Polibio*. Many operas followed while he developed his tools as a composer, using the orchestra to heighten his dramas. *The Italian Girl in Algiers* was his first big **opera buffo** and gained him widespread fame. *The Barber of Seville* followed and is considered Rossini's most enduring work. He composed more than 40 operas during his life, utilizing not only the **opera buffo** style of *Barber*, but also the **opera seria** style. He also set one of the most famous fairy tales, *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella), as a full-scale operatic production. Rossini used crisp rhythmic patterns along with vocal **coloratura** to create sharp, witty operas full of comic realism.

The **overture** to *Guillaume Tell* (William Tell), known to many as the theme for the Lone Ranger, is a great example of a device Rossini invented for orchestra. He would set up the finale of many of his pieces using a Rossini crescendo where the orchestra would start softly and keep building and building to reach the end of the piece. It created a very strong ending to many of his opera overtures. Although many of his operas are as popular today as they were in Rossini's time, most of them have not survived to be in the current operatic repertoire.

### **Authur Sullivan – Composer**

An English composer, Sullivan was born in London in 1842 and was son to an army bandmaster. Perhaps because of this, Sullivan could play most instruments. After winning a Mendelssohn Scholarship in 1856, Sullivan was able to study music at the Royal Academy. In 1858, Sullivan moved on to the Conservatory in Leipzig, which was the top musical school of the time.

Sullivan is best known for his collaborations with librettist, William S. Gilbert. Although the two often did not get along, their names are almost inseparable. The two wrote numerous comedic operas together, including *H. M. S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Iolanthe*, *Prince Ida*, *The Mikado*, *Ruddigore*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, and *The Gondoliers*. Their works often ridiculed the British government for stuffiness and pretentiousness.

In addition to his operas with William S. Gilbert, Sullivan also composed cantatas, oratorios, a grand opera, hymns, orchestral works, and chamber music. In 1883, Sullivan was knighted. Sullivan died in 1900.

### **Guiseppi Verdi – Composer**

Born in Le Roncole, Italy, in 1813, Verdi is considered to be one of the greatest opera composers. Verdi had a difficult childhood, having his entire town invaded by Russian soldiers

when he was two. He and his mother hid in a bell tower to survive. He was very poor but did his best to help his mother by taking a job as an organist.

Verdi was rejected by the Milan Conservatory because they did not feel he was sufficiently talented. He also married and then suffered losing his wife and their two children within a four year period. Verdi remarried in 1859.

In 1842, Verdi finally found great success with his opera *Nabucco*, which was performed at La Scala, the world's most important opera house. The chorus "Va, pensiero" is greatly loved and is said to be an unofficial Italian anthem. Much of Verdi's music is considered nationalistic—it is closely associated with the country of Italy and often gives its citizens a sense of patriotism.

Verdi used the works of William Shakespeare, Victor Hugo, and Alexander Dumas for some of his greatest operas, including *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Falstaff*, *Rigoletto*, and *La Traviata*. *Rigoletto* contains the famous aria "La donna é mobile." Verdi's work is dramatic and deals with the depths of real human emotion and condition, including love, jealousy, betrayal, greed, desire, patriotism, etc. Perhaps Verdi's grandest opera was *Aida*. Commissioned by the king of Egypt, the work was written for the opening of the Suez Canal. The work tells of love and tragedy in ancient Egypt, and is an incredible production. Besides the spectacular orchestral and vocal work, enormous set pieces are required. The original production used live animals including elephants! It was such a hit, that when the piece opened in Italy, Verdi himself conducted and the audience's standing ovation at the end lasted for thirty-two curtain calls. Verdi is also known for his dramatic *Requiem Mass*.

Verdi's music is cherished by Italians. His operas are known for their drama, depth, and intricacies. Many of his melodies are now household tunes hummed by children and used in commercials. Although Verdi retired to a farm, he continued to write operas, including *Othello* and *Falstaff*. Verdi died in 1901. He was given a state funeral and famed conductor Arturo Toscanini conducted combined orchestras and choirs of musicians from all over Italy at the event.

# ***The Bremen Town Musicians***

## Introduction to the Operatic Version

Featuring the music of Offenbach, Rossini, Donizetti, and Verdi, John Davies has adapted the tale of Dorabella the Cat, Barcarolle the Dog, Eddie Pensier the Rooster, and General Boom the Donkey into a delightful children's opera. General Boom seeks to form a band for the town of Bremen using the outcast farm animals as musicians. It doesn't take long for them to discover that they have to consider each other's feelings before they can make music, but can the four very different creatures band together before pirates steal all their instruments?

### The Original Version

An old donkey realizes that he may no longer be needed on his farm, so he runs away. He decides he will travel to the town of Bremen and become a musician.

Along the way, he runs into a dog that is also running away because he is old and feels unloved and unneeded. The two share their sorrows. The donkey explains that he will play the lute and the dog can play the drum when they go to Bremen.

Soon after, they come across an old cat that is running away from home because she is getting too old to chase mice and knows that her owner will not want her anymore. She joins the band.

Next, they pass a farmyard where they find a rooster crowing loudly. When they ask about his problems, he explains that he has heard he will become tomorrow's dinner, so he is crowing loudly as long as he can. The troupe invites the rooster to join their band and they continue their trip to Bremen.

As night approaches, the band realizes they are hungry and tired, and need a place to rest. They come upon a house in the middle of nowhere, and realize that it is a hide-out for robbers. Peering through a window, they see all of the delicious things the robbers have to eat.

The group makes a plan. The animals stack themselves, with the donkey on bottom, then the dog, then the cat, and then the rooster on top. Together they all make their own music—the donkey braying, the dog barking, the cat meowing, and the rooster flapping his wings and crowing. They crash through the window. Their noise and display terrifies the robbers and convinces the robbers that they have seen some sort of ghost or monster. The robbers flee.

The animals have their fill of the food and decide to rest for the night. The robbers began to talk and decide that they, being robbers, are tough. They must have let their fears get the best of them. One of them will go back to the house, which is now completely dark, and investigate.

Once inside the dark house, the robber steps on the cat's tail causing her to jump on him, screeching, hissing, and scratching. As he stumbles, he trips over the dog who bites him on the leg. Next, the donkey gives him a strong kick. The rooster, who had been sleeping in the rafters, awakes from the commotion and begins to crow as loudly as he can.

The robber runs as fast he can back to the other thieves. He exclaims that first he ran into a witch who hissed at him and scratched his face. Then, a man hiding in the corner stabbed him in the leg with a knife. Another man struck him with a club on his backside, and something or someone was screaming at him from the rafters! After hearing the tale, and seeing the wounds, the robbers flee.

The next morning, the band of animals decides that they love the new place and they make it their home, and can sing with one another whenever they like. They realized that when working as a team they can accomplish great things, and that they each are useful. In other words, everyone has something to offer, no matter how old they are.

**The End**

For a read-aloud version, visit <[www.bremontownmusicians.com](http://www.bremontownmusicians.com)>.

Fort Worth musician, storyteller, and children's author, Tom McDermott also has a lively song adaptation called "Nobody's Good for Nothin'" that can be found on his album *Cooperation Garden Time: Stories and Songs for Kids*. The song or album can be downloaded and purchased from Amazon.com and the album can be purchased on Itunes.

# ***The Bremen Town Musicians***

## **Suggested Lesson Plans**

We hope that teachers of all elementary grade levels, pre K – 6, will find something in our handbook to use in their classroom. Below are some suggestions for lesson plans in various curriculum areas.

While specific grade levels are listed, the lessons can easily be adapted for older or younger students.

### **Before attending the performance:**

Every student should know the story line from the opera. Encourage students to read the story for this production or read it to them. Encourage older students to read to younger students, partnering students in a “big brother, little sister” program. As a class, identify and discuss literary elements appropriate for your students’ ages such as plot, characters, conflict, etc.

### **Mathematics**

#### **Pre-Kindergarten-1<sup>st</sup> grade**

(Kindergarten TEKS)

**TEKS:** (5) Patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking. The student identifies, extends, and creates patterns. The student is expected to identify, extend, and create patterns of sounds, physical movement, and concrete objects.

Have students complete the cut and paste **Matching Pictures** and **Complete Patterns** worksheets, identifying like pictures, and completing patterns as they are able.

### **Mathematics**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> grade**

(3) Number, operation, and quantitative reasoning. The student recognizes and solves problems in addition and subtraction situations. The student is expected to:

(B) use concrete and pictorial models to apply basic addition and subtraction facts (up to  $9 + 9 = 18$  and  $18 - 9 = 9$ ).

Have student complete **Robbers’ Loot Math** worksheet.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

#### **English Language Arts**

(12) Reading/text structures/literary concepts. The student analyzes the characteristics of various types of texts (genres). The student is expected to:

(F) analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts, points of view, relationships, and changes they undergo.

Creating a New Version of **The Bremen Town Musicians**.

For an example, listen to Tom McDermott’s “Nobody’s Good for Nothin’” from his album, *Cooperation Garden Time: Stories and Songs for Kids*.

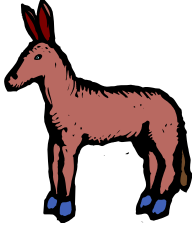
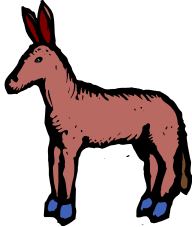
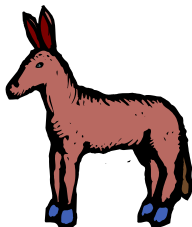






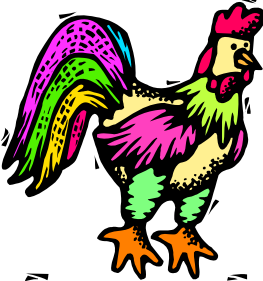

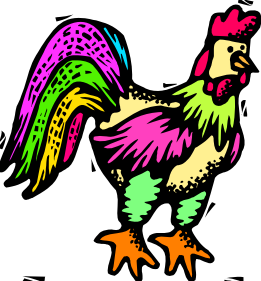
Complete attached worksheet **You Be the Author**.

# The Bremen Town Musicians

## Matching Pictures

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cut and paste the pictures from the bottom next to the pictures that they match.


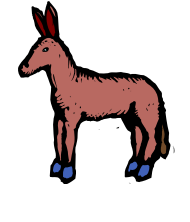

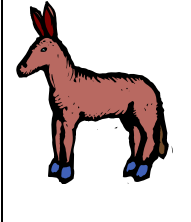
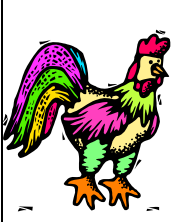




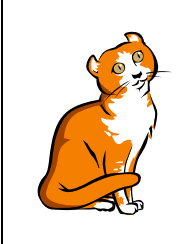


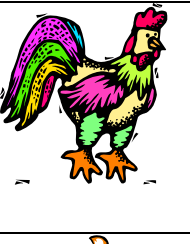
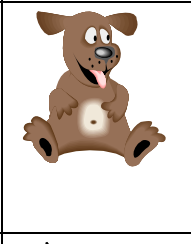

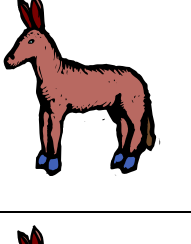
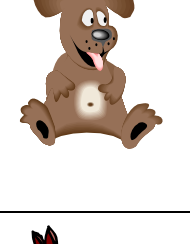
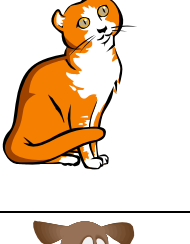
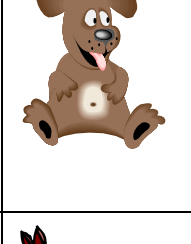
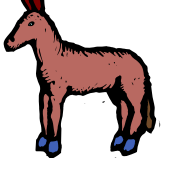
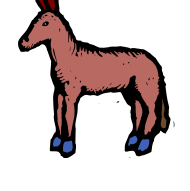
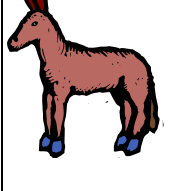
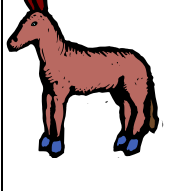


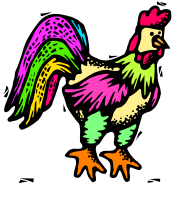
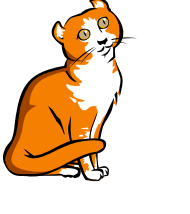


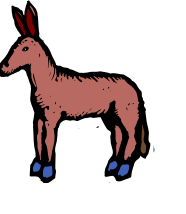
# The Bremen Town Musicians

## Complete Patterns

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Find the picture from the bottom that completes the pattern and cut and paste it in the empty square.

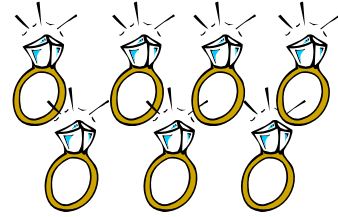
				
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## The Bremen Town Musicians

### Robber's Loot Math

Solve the math problem, and draw a line connecting the problem to the picture containing the right amount of items.

$$10 - 6 =$$



$$3 + 3 =$$



$$9 - 4 =$$



$$2 + 5 =$$



$$6 - 3 =$$



# ***The Bremen Town Musicians***

## **You Be the Author**

Now it is your turn to be the author (Use more paper if necessary).

Write your own version of *The Bremen Town Musicians*. Create new characters that learn similar lessons as the characters in *The Bremen Town Musicians*. Be as creative as you like, but try to follow these guidelines:

- 1) Good stories always have a **conflict**...that is when a character has a difficult problem.
- 2) Your story must have a **resolution**...that is when the problem is solved.

Use the questions below to plan your story.

1. List your **characters**. How are they like the characters from *The Bremen Town Musicians*? How are they different from those characters? Who is/are the hero(s)? Who is/are the villain(s)?

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2. Briefly describe your characters' **conflict** and **resolution**.

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3. A story's **setting** is where the story takes place. Describe your story's **setting**.

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On a separate piece of paper, write your version of *The Bremen Town Musicians*.


***The Bremen Town Musicians***  
**Answer Sheet**  
**ROBBER'S LOOT MATH**


**Robbers' Loot**

$10 - 6 =$  

$3 + 3 =$  

$9 - 4 =$  

$2 + 5 =$  

$6 - 3 =$  

The image shows a matching exercise where five math problems on the left are connected by lines to five illustrations of loot on the right. The connections are:  $10 - 6 =$  connects to the 10 gold coins;  $3 + 3 =$  connects to the 3 treasure chests;  $9 - 4 =$  connects to the 4 green bags;  $2 + 5 =$  connects to the 5 silver coins; and  $6 - 3 =$  connects to the 6 brown coins.