

## The Bremen Town Musicians – A Clay Sculpture by 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

This sculpture is based upon the folk tale of the same name collected by the Brothers Grimm in the 1800s in Germany.

We had four animal sculptures to construct. Usually when we work in clay in the Art Room in Oakland Terrace, we finish each sculpture the day we begin because there is not enough storage space available to keep clay moist enough to work with the following week. To avoid this predicament, we made one animal per class. Each animal was dried and fired before the next class. Since the donkey was fired, it was rigid enough to press the feet of the dog into its back leaving an indent. The dog was then fired. Once it was fired, we glued the dog on the donkey and repeated the process with the cat. Before we fired the cat, we stuck stove pipe wire (which doesn't melt in the kiln) into its back. These became the legs of the rooster! When the rooster was completed, we let it dry on the wire left in the cat's back the previous week. Ms. Leckie would wiggle the rooster around during the week between classes so that it could be taken off and fired by itself.



A bronze statue depicting the Bremen Town Musicians located in [Bremen, Germany](#). The statue was erected in 1953.

In the story a [Donkey](#), a [Dog](#), a [Cat](#), and a [Rooster](#), all mistreated by their masters, leave them and meet in a desolate place. They decide to go to [Bremen](#), known for its freedom, to live without owners.

On the way to Bremen, they see a lighted cottage; they look inside and see four robbers enjoying their ill-gotten gains. Standing on each other's backs, they decide to perform for the men in hopes of gaining food. Their 'music' has an unanticipated effect; the men run for their lives, not knowing what the strange sound is. The animals take possession of the house, eat a good meal, and settle in for the evening.

Later that night, the robbers return and send one of their number in to investigate. It is dark, and he sees the eyes of the Cat shining in the darkness. He reaches over to light his candle, thinking he sees the coals of the fire. Things happen in quick succession; the Cat swipes his face with her claws, the Donkey picks up his hooves and kicks him, the Dog bites him on the leg, and the Rooster crows and chases him out the door, screaming. He tells his companions that he was beset by a horrible [witch](#) who scratched him with her long fingers( the Cat), a man with a knife (The dog), a monster who had hit him with a club (the Donkey), and worst of all, the [devil](#) who screamed from the rooftop (the Rooster). The robbers abandon the cottage to the strange creatures who have taken it, where the animals live happily for the rest of their days.

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