

THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS

Language Arts: Poetic Devices

Students will

- Read **The Story of the Opera**
- Listen to the online selection **Eddie's Song: "I'm Running Away"** from *The Bremen Town Musicians* included with the lesson and read the lyrics along with the song
- Complete and discuss the appropriate portions of the Activity Worksheets

Copies for Each Student

Lyric sheet for "I'm Running Away" and the selected Activity Worksheets

Copies for the Teacher

Answer Keys for Activity Worksheets

Getting Ready

Decide which section(s) of the worksheet you wish your group to complete. Prepare internet access for *The Bremen Town Musicians* online listening selections. Gather pens, pencils and additional writing paper as needed for your group.

Introduction

Read "The Story of the Opera" to your students. Give each student a copy of Eddie's Song: "I'm Running Away" and have them read it aloud. After reading it through once, have the students listen to the song:

<http://www.operatales.com/bremen/Im-running-away.mp3>

Review

Depending on which Activity Worksheets your class will complete, use the **Poetic Devices Sheet** on page 6 to review parts of a poem, rhyme scheme, alliteration, metaphors, similes or foreshadowing with your students.

Guided/Independent Practice

Depending on your grade level, the ability of your students, and time constraints, you may choose to have students work as a whole class, in small groups, with a partner, or individually. Read the directions on the Activity Worksheet. Provide instruction and model the activity as needed. Have students complete the portion(s) of the Activity Worksheet you have chosen with opportunity for questions.

Evaluation

Have students share their answers individually or by groups and explain why they gave their answers. The teacher may want to guide the discussion with the sample answers provided.

TEKS

[Kinder] 110.2.B.8.B Multiple genres: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student is expected to (B) discuss rhyme and rhythm in nursery rhymes and a variety of poems.

[1st Grade] 110.3.B.9.B Multiple genres: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student is expected to (B) discuss rhyme, rhythm, repetition, and alliteration in a variety of poems.

[2nd Grade] 110.4.B.9.B Multiple genres: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student is expected to (B) explain visual patterns and structures in a variety of poems.

[3rd Grade] 110.5.B.9.B Multiple genres: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student is expected to (B) explain rhyme scheme, sound devices, and structural elements such as stanzas in a variety of poems.

[4th Grade] 110.6.B.9.B Multiple genres: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics,

structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student is expected to (B) explain figurative language such as simile, metaphor, and personification that the poet uses to create images.

[5th Grade] 110.7.B.9.B Multiple genres: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student is expected to (B) explain the use of sound devices and figurative language and distinguish between the poet and the speaker in poems across a variety of poetic forms.

[6th Grade] 110.22.B.8.B (8) Multiple genres: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student is expected to: (B) analyze the effect of meter and structural elements such as line breaks in poems across a variety of poetic forms.

Correlates: Music

Gardner's Intelligences: Verbal-Linguistic, Musical, Interpersonal

Bloom's Taxonomy: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Evaluation, Synthesis

Sources:

The Bremen Town Musicians Libretto

Strachan, Terry, Richard, Poetry: an introduction, Edinburgh University Press, 2000.

<http://www.operatales.com/bremen-town-musicians.shtml>

www.operatales.com/about.shtml

John Davies, Librettist

John Davies believes when young people have fun doing something for the first time, it's a pretty good bet they'll want to do it again. It is with this in mind that he wrote *Jack and the Beanstalk*, along with several other children's operas based on popular fairy tales. Opera Tales, his operas for young people, are designed to encourage an interest and enthusiasm for literature and music through each performance. More than 60 opera companies and university opera programs in the United States and Canada have presented one or more operas from the Opera Tales collection.

Jack and the Beanstalk was written in 1993 in response to a request from Arkansas Opera Theater. They needed a children's opera that could be performed by three singers. *Jack and the Beanstalk* contained the larger-than-life characters which were perfectly suited for a children's opera. Davies borrowed energetic, fun and highly accessible music from English operetta composer Sir Arthur Sullivan, then wrote the libretto himself and *Jack and the Beanstalk* was born.

Davies is not only known for his skill as a librettist. He has been performing and directing opera throughout the United States since 1974. Davies has sung leading roles with companies including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, and the opera companies of Boston, Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, Atlanta, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, Cincinnati, Phoenix, Nashville, and Anchorage. He has also performed in concert as a bass-baritone soloist with the symphony orchestras of Boston, San Francisco, St. Louis, Detroit, San Antonio, Indianapolis, Chattanooga and Syracuse. He has directed numerous productions throughout the United States and served as Artistic Director of the Empire Opera Theater which he founded in 1997.

Davies graduated from Boston University with a Degree in Vocal Performance and received his early professional training as an Apprentice at The Santa Fe Opera and as a member of the Western Opera Theater of the San Francisco Opera. A devoted father of six, Davies continues his quest to bring opera to young audiences through the simplest of means: good, old-fashioned fun.

The Story of the Opera

Eddie Pensier, a rooster with operatic aspirations, is chased away from his farm for waking the entire barnyard by singing tenor arias (songs). He decides to look for some pirates, who he thinks will be his friends and help him to survive. On the very same day, Barcarolle the dog, and Dorabella the cat, are cast out by their owners for being too old to catch rabbits and mice. As Barcarolle and Dorabella make their way through the woods near the road to Bremen, they meet General Boom, a retired army donkey, who is marching along playing his drum. After hearing the reason they were forced to leave their homes, the general awards medals to them for being nice to rabbits and mice. In further appreciation of their kindness, General Boom also invites them to come to Bremen to play in his new band. Dorabella and Barcarolle are overjoyed at the invitation but must decline because they have promised to open a retirement home for old dogs and cats.

Eddie, who has now joined the Sea-sick Pirates, has been hiding and watching General Boom, Barcarolle, and Dorabella. When Dorabella and Barcarolle leave, Eddie draws his sword and startles the general with a big shout, "Cock-a-doodle-doo! ARRRRRRRRRRRRRR!" General Boom, after calming himself, asks Eddie to stop trying to frighten him and invites the singing rooster to Bremen to join his new band. Eddie declines the invitation because he has promised to never think for himself and will only do whatever the pirates command. Therefore, the general bids Eddie farewell but suddenly realizes his drum is missing! Eddie confesses that the pirates commanded him to distract the general so they could steal the drum. General Boom vows to get his drum back and recruits Eddie to help. However, Eddie does not pay attention to where General Boom is marching and heads off in the wrong direction.

Meanwhile, Dorabella and Barcarolle have gotten lost and start to blame each other angrily. They spot Eddie and demand to know who he is. Eddie demands to know who they are, and all three animals begin arguing so loudly that General Boom hears their shouting. He tells them that they should learn to get along and extends another invitation for them to

join his band. With the woods surrounding the Bremen Road filled with uncertainty and rumors of pirates all about, they decide that it is best for them all to stick together. Therefore, Dorabella, Barcarolle, and Eddie agree to join the general's new band and march with him to Bremen. Eddie warns everyone that the house belonging to the Sea-sick Pirates is on the way to Bremen and that General Boom's drum is probably there. Working together as a team, the four create a plan to scare the pirates away from the house disguising themselves as a big noisy monster! Their plan succeeds and Eddie is able to return the drum to its rightful owner, General Boom. As they make their way to their new home, the newly-formed Bremen Town Musicians celebrate the idea that friendship, cooperation, and respect for others is far better than facing problems alone.

The Characters

Eddie Pensier: (*Tenor*) A singing rooster with artistic aspirations who loves singing opera.

General Boom: (*Bass or Baritone*) A retired Army donkey and percussionist.

Barcarolle: (*Mezzo or Soprano*) An old dog and best friend of Dorabella.

Dorabella: (*Soprano or Mezzo*) An old cat and best friend of Barcarolle.

Eddie's Song: "I'm Running Away"

Music by: J. Offenbach/G. Verdi

Libretto by: John Davies

I'm running away as you can see.
The farmer's wife is chasing me.
She wants to put me in the soup
And that is why I flew the coop.

I have to go, I cannot stay.
You see I've got to run away.
The farmer's wife is chasing me
And she's as mean as she can be.

I am a rooster, that is true,
I sing a cock-a-doodle-doo.
I'd like to stay to say hello,
But now I've really got to go.

I woke her up at break of day
And now she wants to make me pay.
I was a little bit risqué,
I sang La donna mobile.

That is a song from opera.
I really like to sing.
I like to sing in op'ra
More than any other thing.

Someday I'll be an op'ra singer
Here upon the stage.
I'll get to sing a lot
And almost make a living wage.

I will stand before the lights.
I will sing and act with all my might.
La la la la la...

I'm leaving home but I don't care.
I can sing anywhere.
She'll never find me.
She's far behind me.

I'll sing a song for you,
Not cock-a-doodle-doo.
I'll be an op'ra star.
Singing my repertoire.

And when you hear me
You all will cheer me
Shouting my name
Eddie Pensier!

Poetic Devices

Did you know...?

The words of a song in an opera (the lyrics) often come from poetry

An aria is a song in an opera sung by one character. "I'm Running Away" is an aria, and the lyrics work exactly like the lines and stanzas of a poem.

When a poem is set to music it becomes a song. The rhythm of the poem usually matches the rhythm of the music.

Parts of a Poem: Compare a poem to a paragraph - a paragraph is made up of sentences that are written together and divided by punctuation. A poem is made up of stanzas and lines. A stanza is a group of lines put together. Stanzas are usually divided by a space and may not contain punctuation. Lines of a poem are not always complete sentences.

How a poem sounds: When you read a paragraph, there is a pause at punctuation marks. In a poem there is often a sense of rhythm and rhyme in the lines and stanzas.

Rhyme Scheme: Poets will often use rhyme patterns in their poems. Usually the rhyme is found at the end of a line and the pattern of the rhyme is called a rhyme scheme.

Meter: a stressed and unstressed syllabic pattern in a verse, or within the lines of a poem. Stressed syllables tend to be longer, and unstressed shorter. It gives poetry a rhythmical and melodious sound.

Alliteration: Alliteration is the use of the same consonant sounds in words that are near each other. Have you ever heard the tongue twister: "She sells sea shells by the seashore"? This is an example of alliteration.

Metaphor: A metaphor compares two things without using the words "like" or "as." It creates a strong image in our mind and makes writing more powerful. For example: "Mr. Jones is an ox" creates the image that Mr. Jones is very strong, just like an ox. It is more direct than a simile because it does not contain "like" or "as."

Simile: A simile is a comparison between two things using the words "like" or "as." For example: "Mr. Jones is as strong as an ox" or "Mr. Jones is strong like an ox." In this comparison, I know that oxen are very strong so if Mr. Jones is like an ox, he must be very strong as well. Authors use similes in the same way. They compare things in their poems to help create images in the reader's mind. This makes the poem more meaningful.

Foreshadowing: Using hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in the story.

Name_____

Date_____

Activity Worksheet 1: Rhyme Scheme & Rhythm

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When a poem is set to music it becomes a song. The rhythm of the poem usually matches the rhythm of the music.

One of the ways authors express meaning in poetry is to create rhymes. If two words rhyme, that means they have the same sound at the end. For example, rug and bug both have the -ug sounds at the end, they are words that rhyme. In a poem, sometimes the author will create lines that end with rhyming words. Rhymes come in different patterns in a poem. These patterns are called rhyme schemes.

When we label a poem for rhyme scheme we label each line with letters. The letters are in alphabetical order and lines that have words that rhyme are labeled with the same letter.

1. Find and label the rhyme scheme in the poem on the next page.
2. Find the rhythm of each line of the poem. Underline each word or syllable that occurs on a strong beat.
3. The rhyme scheme in this poem is not the same for every stanza. Mark the stanzas that are different. How does this affect the poetic meter in those stanzas?

4. Optional: With a partner or as a class, discuss the meter of the poem.

“I’m Running Away” from *Bremen Town Musicians*

I’m running away as you can see. _____	Someday I’ll be an op’ra singer _____
The farmer’s wife is chasing me. _____	Here upon the stage. _____
She wants to put me in the soup _____	I’ll get to sing a lot _____
And that is why I flew the coop. _____	And almost make a living wage. _____
I have to go, I cannot stay. _____	I will stand before the lights. _____
You see I’ve got to run away. _____	I will sing and act with all my might. _____
The farmer’s wife is chasing me _____	(La la la la la...)
And she’s as mean as she can be. _____	
I am a rooster, that is true, _____	I’m leaving home but I don’t care. _____
I sing a cock-a-doodle-doo. _____	I can sing anywhere. _____
I’d like to stay to say hello, _____	She’ll never find me. _____
But now I’ve really got to go. _____	She’s far behind me. _____
I woke her up at break of day _____	I’ll sing a song for you, _____
And now she wants to make me pay. _____	Not cock-a-doodle-doo. _____
I was a little bit risqué, _____	I’ll be an op’ra star. _____
I sang La donna mobile. _____	Singing my repertoire. _____
That is a song from opera. _____	And when you hear me _____
I really like to sing. _____	You all will cheer me _____
I like to sing in op’ra _____	Shouting my name _____
More than any other thing. _____	Eddie Pensier! _____

Name _____ Date _____

Activity Worksheet 2: Alliteration

Did you know...?

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Alliteration is the use of the same consonant sounds in words that are near each other.

Find the alliterations in the following stanzas from *The Bremen Town Musicians* and circle the consonant sound.

Shhhh!! Very slyly, sneaking, sneaking into the woods we all will go.

Very softly we all are creeping while we stand on the tips of our tippy toes.

Very softly we'll sneak while we stand on our tippy toes.

Just follow me as softly as can be. Don't be slow, here we go.

Very slyly, sneaking, sneaking into the woods we all have come.

Sneaky sneak, creepy creep, we will go on tippy toes.

Listen to the song:

How does the music add to the effect of the alliteration used? List some things about the music that match the concepts in the text.

Name _____

Date _____

Activity Worksheet 3: Metaphors | Similes | Adjectives

A metaphor compares two things without using the words "like" or "as."

Example: His room is a pig sty.

A simile compares two things using the words "like" or "as."

Example: His room is as messy as a pig sty.

An adjective is a word that describes a noun.

Example: His messy room needs to be cleaned.

Label each example below as an example metaphor, simile or adjective. (Hint: some examples have more than one descriptive type and some have none!)

1. Through sunny days and stormy weather we will always be together.
2. When the fog is thick as soup our Captain stands upon the poop.
3. There's no one as mean as me, sir.
4. Who's that lily-livered, barnacle-bottomed, scurvy donkey?
5. I am a rooster on the run.

What does each example mean?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Name _____ Date _____

Activity Worksheet 4: Foreshadowing

Using hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in the story is called foreshadowing. This technique is found in poetry and storytelling in general.

After hearing the story of *The Bremen Town Musicians*, underline the lines in the following stanzas that contain foreshadowing.

Eddie:
Oh no, oh no,
What have I done?
I am a rooster on the run.
Now am alone.
Where can I be?
I need some friends
To rescue me.

"We're pirates, true"
We don't have manners, we're not polite
We never try to do what's right.
For we are tough and very rough
And we may even steal your stuff!

What events happen later in the story that are foreshadowed in the stanzas above?

ANSWER KEY

Activity Worksheet 1: Rhyme Scheme & Rhythm

Did you know...?

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When we label a poem for rhyme scheme we label each line with letters. The letters are in alphabetical order and lines that have words that rhyme are labeled with the same letter.

1. Find and label the rhyme scheme in the poem on the next page.
2. Find the rhythm of each line of the poem. Underline each word or syllable that occurs on a strong beat.
3. The rhyme scheme in this poem is not the same for every stanza. Mark the stanzas that are different. How does this affect the rhythm and meter in those stanzas?

4. Optional: With a partner or as a class, discuss the meter of the poem.

ANSWER KEY

“I’m Running Away” from *Bremen Town Musicians*

I’m <u>running away</u> as <u>you</u> can <u>see</u> .	A	Someday I’ll <u>be</u> an <u>op’ra singer</u>	H
The <u>farmer’s wife</u> is <u>chasing me</u> .	A	<u>Here upon</u> the <u>stage</u> . ____	I
She <u>wants</u> to <u>put</u> me <u>in</u> the <u>soup</u>	B	I’ll <u>get</u> to <u>sing</u> a <u>lot</u> and <u>almost</u>	J
And <u>that</u> is <u>why</u> I <u>flew</u> the <u>coop</u> .	B	<u>make</u> a <u>living wage</u> . ____	I
I <u>have</u> to <u>go</u> , I <u>cannot</u> <u>stay</u> .	C	I will <u>stand</u> <u>before</u> the <u>lights</u> .	K
You <u>see</u> I’ve <u>got</u> to <u>run</u> <u>away</u> .	C	I will <u>sing</u> and <u>act</u> with <u>all</u> my <u>might</u> .	K
The <u>farmer’s wife</u> is <u>chasing me</u>	A	(La la la la la...)	
And <u>she’s</u> as <u>mean</u> as <u>she</u> can <u>be</u> .	A		
I <u>am</u> a <u>rooster</u> , <u>that</u> is <u>true</u> ,	D	I’m <u>leaving</u> <u>home</u> but I don’t <u>care</u> .	L
I <u>sing</u> a <u>cock-a-doodle-doo</u> .	D	I can <u>sing</u> <u>any-where</u> .	L
I’d <u>like</u> to <u>stay</u> to <u>say</u> <u>hello</u> ,	E	<u>She’ll</u> <u>never</u> <u>find</u> <u>me</u> .	A
But <u>now</u> I’ve <u>really</u> <u>got</u> to <u>go</u> .	E	<u>She’s</u> <u>far</u> <u>behind</u> <u>me</u> .	A
I <u>woke</u> her <u>up</u> at <u>break</u> of <u>day</u>	C	I’ll <u>sing</u> a <u>song</u> for <u>you</u> ,	D
And <u>now</u> she <u>wants</u> to <u>make</u> me <u>pay</u> .	C	<u>Not</u> <u>cock-a-doodle-doo</u> .	D
I <u>was</u> a <u>little</u> <u>bit</u> <u>risqué</u> ,	C	I’ll <u>be</u> an <u>op’ra</u> <u>star</u> .	M
I <u>sang</u> <u>La donna mobile</u> .	C	<u>Sing-ing</u> my <u>repertoire</u> .	M
That <u>is</u> a <u>song</u> from <u>opera</u> .	F	<u>And</u> <u>when</u> you <u>hear</u> <u>me</u>	A
I <u>really</u> <u>like</u> to <u>sing</u> . ____	G	<u>You</u> <u>all</u> will <u>cheer</u> <u>me</u>	A
I <u>like</u> to <u>sing</u> in <u>op’ramore</u>	F	<u>Shout-ing</u> my <u>name</u> ____	N
Than <u>any</u> <u>other</u> <u>thing</u> . ____	G	<u>Ed-die</u> <u>Pensier</u> ! ____	O

Stanzas 1-4 are all the same. Stanzas 5-6 are different – rhythm utilizes a “rest” beat at the end of lines 2 and 4 / rhyme scheme changes to alternating lines in stanza 5 and rhyming only lines 2 and 4 in stanza 6. Stanza 7 only contains two lines of text that both rhyme. The rhythm changes, putting the beat on the first syllable in each line instead of the second. Stanzas 8-10 return to the original rhyme scheme and keep the beat on the first syllable of each line, except for the first line of stanza 8.

ANSWER KEY

Activity Worksheet 2: Alliteration

Did you know...?

1. The words of a song in an opera (the lyrics) often come from poetry
1. An aria is a song in an opera sung by one character. "I'm Running Away" is an aria, and the lyrics work exactly like the lines and stanzas of a poem.
2. When a poem is set to music it becomes a song. The rhythm of the poem usually matches the rhythm of the music.

Alliteration is the use of the same consonant sounds in words that are near each other.

Find the alliterations in the following stanzas from *The Bremen Town Musicians* and circle the consonant sound.

Shhhh!! Very slyly, sneaking, sneaking into the woods we all will go.

Very softly we all are creeping while we stand on the tips of our tippy toes.

Very softly we'll sneak while we stand on our tippy toes.

Just follow me as softly as can be. Don't be slow, here we go.

Very slyly, sneaking, sneaking into the woods we all have come.

Sneaky sneak, creepy creep, we will go on tippy toes.

Listen to the song: <http://www.operatales.com/bremen/Very-slyly-sneaky-sneaky.mp3>

How does the music add to the effect of the alliteration used? List some things about the music that match the concepts in the text.

Answers will vary. Example: soft music = sneaking, rhythmic pulse is like walking on tip toe, etc.

ANSWER KEY**Activity Worksheet 3: Metaphors | Similes | Adjectives**

A metaphor compares two things without using the words "like" or "as."

Example: His room is a pig sty.

A simile compares two things using the words "like" or "as."

Example: His room is as messy as a pig sty.

An adjective is a word that describes a noun.

Example: His messy room needs to be cleaned.

Label each example below as an example metaphor, simile or adjective. (Hint: some examples have more than one descriptive type and some have none!)

1. Through sunny days and stormy weather we will always be together.

Metaphor, Adjective

2. When the fog is thick as soup our Captain stands upon the poop.

Simile

3. There's no one as mean as me, sir.

Adjective

4. Who's that lily-livered, barnacle-bottomed, scurvy donkey?

Metaphor (bonus – Alliteration)

5. I am a rooster on the run.

None – saying with action verb

What does each example mean?

1. "sunny days" = good times, "stormy weather" = bad times
2. "fog is thick as soup" = the fog is so thick you can't see through it
3. "as mean as me" = not nice
4. "lily-livered" = coward, "barnacle-bottomed" – dirty, "scurvy" - sick
5. "rooster on the run" = he's hiding or running from something

ANSWER KEY 4**Activity Worksheet 4: Foreshadowing**

Using hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in the story is called foreshadowing. This technique is found in poetry and storytelling in general.

After hearing the story of *The Bremen Town Musicians*, underline the lines in the following stanzas that contain foreshadowing.

Eddie:

Oh no, oh no,

What have I done?

I am a rooster on the run.

Now am alone.

Where can I be?

I need some friends

To rescue me.

"We're pirates, true"

We don't have manners, we're not polite

We never try to do what's right.

For we are tough and very rough

And we may even steal your stuff!

What events happen later in the story that are foreshadowed in the stanzas above?

"I need some friends to rescue me" = Eddie will need his friends' help later in the story

"And we may even steal your stuff!" = the pirates steal General Boom's drum