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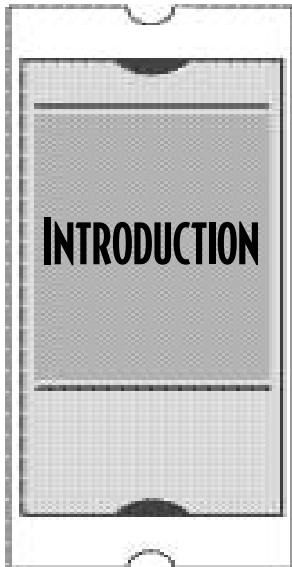
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= total number of parts



Fluency instruction provides a bridge between being able to “read” a text and being able to understand it. Readers who decode word by word sound plodding and choppy. They are too busy figuring out the words to think about what they are reading. Fluent readers are accurate, quick, and able to read with expression. They make the reading sound interesting. Beyond the experience of the listener, fluent readers are also demonstrating skills that are crucial to their understanding of what they read. Fluent readers recognize words at a glance, group words into meaningful phrases, and move beyond the struggle to decode individual words. They are able to focus on making sense of what they read.

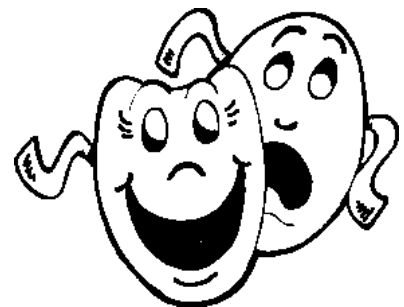
Reader’s Theater is an exciting way to help children improve reading fluency without being too time intensive for the teacher. It requires no props and no additional teaching skills on your part, and it is not difficult to manage. Reader’s Theater promotes better reading comprehension because children who have learned to read a passage expressively also come to better understand its meaning. In addition, research says that these gains transfer well to new text. Reader’s Theater also addresses standards in listening while providing a fun environment for everyone involved. When children practice their lines, they read and reread the same passages. Under your direction, they gradually add more expression, read more smoothly, and find any subtle meanings in the passages.

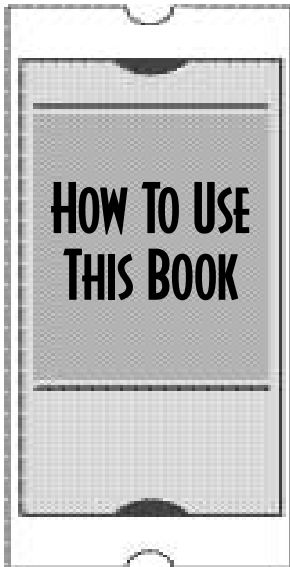
The scripts in *Fairy Tales Reader’s Theater* are designed for fluency instruction. The overall purpose is to provide children with text at their reading level that is fun to read. The scripts serve another useful purpose—they introduce children to stories originally passed along in the oral tradition. Fairy tales are part of our history. However, many children may be unfamiliar with them, and, as they get older, often miss allusions to them in more

complex literature. Use these scripts to fill that literary void and to introduce children to stories enjoyed by their ancestors. In addition, all the scripts provide the following hallmarks of a good Reader’s Theater text:

- fast-moving dialogue
- action
- humor
- narrative parts

The scripts in *Fairy Tales Reader’s Theater* are intended to be read in groups of 5 to 8 children. Each script is prefaced by information that helps you direct learning and is preceded by reproducibles that support extended learning and reading comprehension.





Each Reader's Theater script should be covered over the course of five practice days (although those days do not need to be consecutive). The first day should include some or all of the elements of the suggested reading instruction. It should also include an expressive reading by you of the script as children read along silently. On each of the following days, give children an opportunity to practice their reading. On the final day, have each group read its script for the class.

Four sections that support reading instruction precede each script:

- **Script Summary** provides a plot summary for the script.
- **Reading Rehearsal** features detailed notes for fluency instruction.
- A brief description of each **Part** introduces children to the characters. (See page 5 for more information),
- The **Drama Coach's Corner** provides comprehension activities, suggestions for discussion of the story of the script, and directions for the accompanying reproducible.

On the first day of instruction, use the background and information about each character to tell children what the script will be about and describe the characters.

Read aloud the script, modeling clear enunciation and a storyteller's voice.

Do not be afraid to exaggerate your expression—it will hold the attention of your audience and stick more firmly in their minds when they attempt to mimic you later. Model the pacing you expect from them as they read.

Finish the reading instruction by discussing the fluency tips with children and having them complete any activity described in this section.

Now it is time to give children a copy of the script! Use the following schedule of child practice for a five-day instruction period.

<p><b>Day 1</b></p>	<p>After following the steps outlined on page 4, give each child a personal copy of the script. Have children place the script in a file folder and help them staple the pages in place. Invite them to decorate the cover of the file folder.</p> <p>Read aloud the script together as a class, in small groups, or in pairs.</p>
<p><b>Days 2 and 3</b></p>	<p>Assign children to a group. Have children gather to read aloud the script as many times as time permits. Have them change roles with each reading.</p> <p>Move from group to group, providing feedback and additional modeling as needed.</p> <p>At the end of day 3, assign roles or have children agree on a role to own.</p>

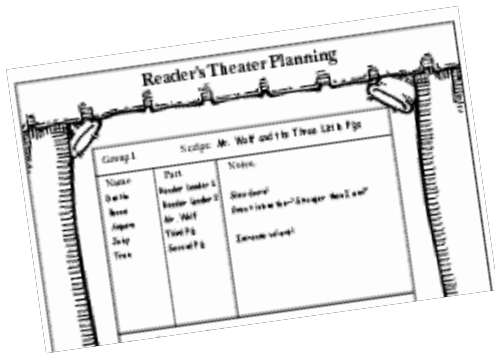
<b>Day 4</b>	Have each group read aloud the script. Move from group to group providing feedback. Have children discuss their favorite lines at the end of each reading and why the manner in which they are read works well. Repeat. Encourage children to check out a script for practice at home. Have children make placards from tagboard to identify their character.
<b>Day 5</b>	Have each group perform its script for the rest of the class (or other audience members provided by buddy classes and/or school personnel).

Throughout the week, or as time permits, provide children with the comprehension activities described in the Drama Coach's Corner. These are optional and do not have to be completed to provide fluency

instruction; however, many provide children with additional background information that may help them better understand the characters or setting of the script.

### Additional Tips

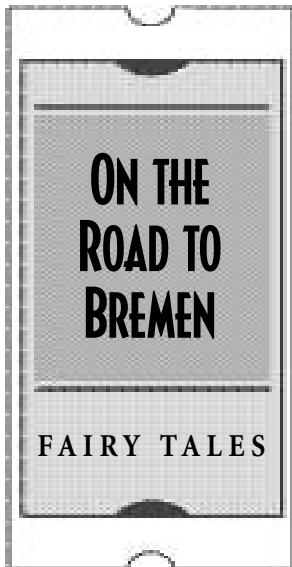
- Use the Reader's Theater Planning reproducible (page 6) to track the assigned roles for each group and to jot down any informal observations you make for assessment. Use these observations to drive future fluency instruction.
- Notice that there are no staging directions in the scripts. These plays are written to be read expressively in a storyteller's voice. If the focus is placed on *acting out* the script, children will shift their focus from the reading to the movement. If children become enchanted with a script and want to act it out, invite them to do so after they have mastered the reading. Then, have the group go through the script and brainstorm their own staging directions. Props should not be included until all fluency goals have been met.



- To fit fluency instruction into an already full day of instruction, it will work best to have all groups work on the same script. This will permit you to complete the first day's activities as a whole class. Children will enjoy hearing how another child reads the same lines, and some mild competition to read expressively will only foster additional effort.
- The roles with the greatest and least number of words to read are noted in the Parts section. The 🏠 and 🐷 indicate a higher or lower *word count*. They are not a reflection of reading level. The Reader Leader parts usually reflect the highest reading level. However, less fluent readers may benefit from having fewer words to master. More advanced readers may benefit from the challenge of the greater word count.
- **First-Grade Teachers:** For the first few months of the year, you may wish to try poems and songs as choral reading in parts to prepare children for independent reading of roles in Reader's Theater.
- **Second-Grade Teachers:** Your children may not need all of the scaffolding presented in the Reading Rehearsal section. Present only what you deem necessary, and move on to the next section.
- Any part can be read in unison. Encourage less fluent readers to pair with more fluent readers for choral reading of a part.

# Reader's Theater Planning

<b>Group 1</b> <b>Script:</b> _____		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Part</b>	<b>Notes:</b>
<b>Group 2</b> <b>Script:</b> _____		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Part</b>	<b>Notes:</b>
<b>Group 3</b> <b>Script:</b> _____		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Part</b>	<b>Notes:</b>



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## SCRIPT SUMMARY

*On the Road to Bremen* is based on the fairy tale *The Bremen Town Musicians*. Set the stage by asking children if they have ever had somewhere to go (school, the movies, ball practice) and they stopped to pick up others along the way. Everyone had the same destination but joined the group in sequence. That is what this tale does.

All the animals in the story have the same problem. They all end up with the same solution. But this script has a surprise ending! Before reading the script to the class, write the words *music* and *musicians* on the board. Have children read and discuss the meaning of each word.



## READING REHEARSAL

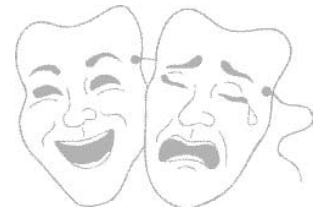
When you read aloud the script for children, have them listen for the following:

- You try to communicate some of the animal in its voice. How would a donkey sound? Point out the word *bray*. Discuss its meaning, and have volunteers model a donkey's *hee-haw* bray. Would it be different than the sound of a rooster, cat, or dog?
- When the animals are happy, their voices sound different than when they are sad. Read aloud the lines **Old Hound:** *Howl! Yowl! Oh, I am old and cannot hunt as I used to. I heard my owner say he was going to get rid of me.* and **Old Hound:** *Oh, thank you! That sounds great!* Have children notice the difference in pace and modulation (there is generally more variation in pitch when you're happy).

Have children practice their "animal voices" to imitate the four main characters of the story. Write one part of the script from each animal on the board. Practice with children reading each part using the animal voice they practiced earlier. Then, copy the script on overhead transparencies, and display them. Read the script, but pause to allow children to read from the transparencies the parts they practiced earlier. Read the whole script again, with children joining in as they are able.

## PARTS

Reader Leader 1      Old Hound  
Reader Leader 2      Melody Cat  
Reader Leader 3      🍷 Roscoe Rooster  
🏠 Dunn Donkey



## DRAMA COACH'S CORNER

### Focus on Sequence

#### OBJECTIVE

Place the events of the story in order.

#### ACTIVITY

Give each child an **On the Road to Bremen Story Map (page 9)**. Have children draw and/or write a key event from the beginning, middle, and end of the story in each section. Then, have children select a partner, and ask them to retell the story in their own words, using the story map as a reference.

### The Story of My Trip

#### OBJECTIVE

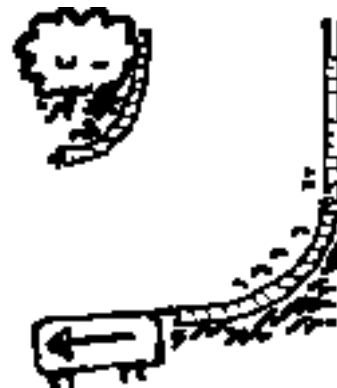
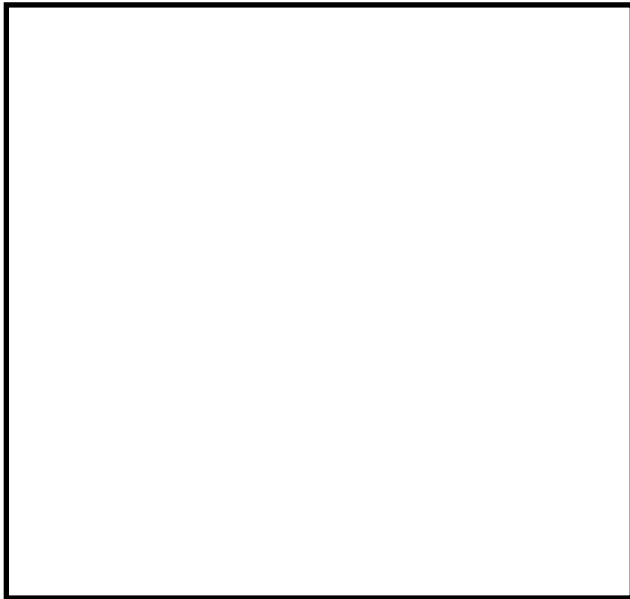
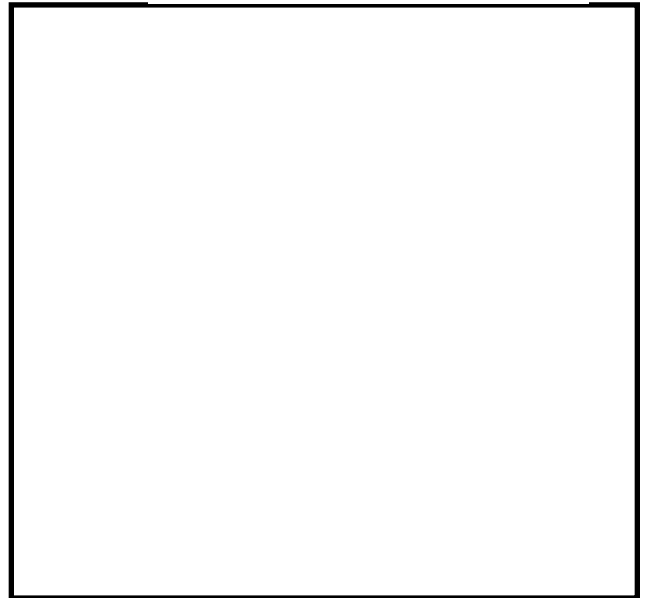
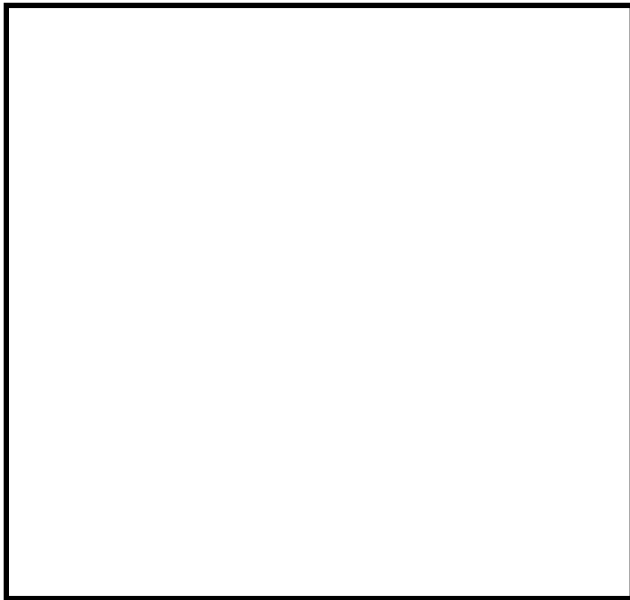
Have children relate the trip in *On the Road to Bremen* to a trip in their own lives.

#### ACTIVITY

Give each child a **My Trip reproducible (page 10)**. Invite the class to discuss trips they have taken together or trips they have each taken with their own families. Encourage children to share where they went, the purpose of the trip, who accompanied them, and any interesting events that occurred on the trip. Then, have children complete the reproducible. Display their finished work on a bulletin board titled *Our Travels*.

## On the Road to Bremen Story Map

**Directions:** Think about the story. Draw or write in each box to show the order in which each character joined the trip to Bremen. Use your story map to retell the story to your partner.

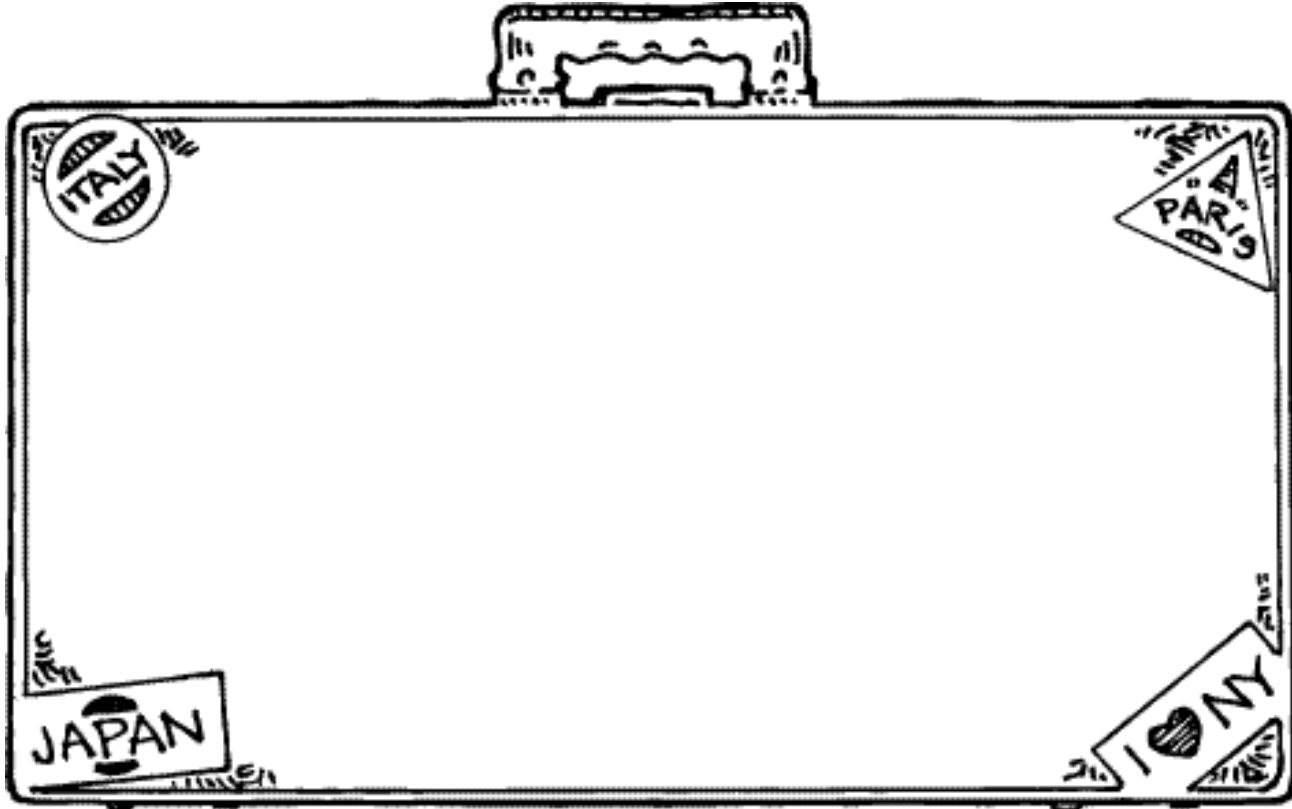


Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# My Trip

**Directions:** Draw a picture of a place you went on a trip. Then answer the questions.



Where did you go? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who went with you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why did you go there? \_\_\_\_\_

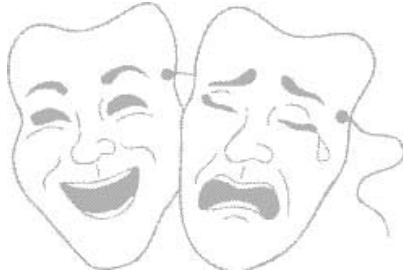
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## ON THE ROAD TO BREMEN

Retold and adapted by Margaret Allen



### PARTS

Reader Leader 1  
Reader Leader 2  
Reader Leader 3  
Dunn Donkey  
Old Hound  
Melody Cat  
Roscoe Rooster



**Reader Leader 1:** There once was a man who owned a donkey named Dunn. All day the man and Dunn Donkey would go back and forth to the mill.

**Reader Leader 2:** Dunn carried sacks of grain on his back. It was hard work. Dunn was tired. As he was eating his hay one night, he heard the man talking.

**Reader Leader 3:** The man told his wife that Dunn Donkey was done! He was too old to carry grain now. The man would have to get rid of him!

**Dunn Donkey:** I cannot believe this! Every day I have carried sacks of grain for that man. Every day I have worked hard. And now, he wants to get rid of me. I cannot believe this! What am I to do? I know! I will go to Bremen. I can bray. Hee-haw! Hee-haw! I will be a town musician! The road to Bremen is long, but I will take my time.

**Reader Leader 2:** Before sun up, Dunn Donkey started down the road to Bremen. He had not gone very far.



## ON THE ROAD TO BREMEN

**Reader Leader 3:** He came upon Old Hound, who was panting hard.

**Dunn Donkey:** Old Hound, why do you pant so? Are you okay?

**Old Hound:** Howl! Yowl! Oh, I am old and cannot hunt as I used to. I heard my owner say he was going to get rid of me. I ran away. But now I do not know what to do.

**Dunn Donkey:** Why don't you come with me? I can bray. You can howl. We will go to Bremen. We will be musicians together, Bremen town musicians.

**Old Hound:** Oh, thank you! That sounds great!

**Reader Leader 1:** So Dunn Donkey and Old Hound started back on the road to Bremen. They walked a while.

**Reader Leader 2:** Soon, they saw Melody Cat sitting on the road. She was very sad.

**Dunn Donkey:** Melody Cat, what are you doing on the road?

**Old Hound:** And why are you so sad?

**Melody Cat:** Meowwww! Meowwww! Oh, I am old and cannot chase mice as I used to. I heard my owner say she was going to get rid of me. I ran away. But now I do not know what to do.



## ON THE ROAD TO BREMEN

**Dunn Donkey:** Then come with us! I can bray. Old Hound can howl. And you can meow a song. We will go to Bremen and be musicians together.

**Melody Cat:** Oh, thank you! That sounds great!

**Reader Leader 3:** So Dunn Donkey, Old Hound, and Melody Cat started back on the road to Bremen. They walked a short time.

**Reader Leader 1:** Soon, they saw Roscoe Rooster sitting on a fence next to the road. He was crowing as loudly as he could.

**Roscoe Rooster:** Cock-a-doodle-dooooooo!

**Dunn Donkey:** Roscoe Rooster, why are you so loud?

**Melody Cat:** You are making enough noise to hurt our ears!

**Roscoe Rooster:** Oh, I am old. Sometimes I forget to crow! I am practicing. I heard my owner say he was going to get rid of me. So I came here to practice. But now I do not know what to do.

**Dunn Donkey:** Then come with us! I can bray. Old Hound can howl. Melody Cat can meow a song. And we know you can crow louder than any rooster we have ever heard! Let's all go to Bremen and be musicians together.

**Roscoe Rooster:** Oh, thank you! That sounds great!



## ON THE ROAD TO BREMEN

**Reader Leader 2:** So Dunn Donkey, Old Hound, Melody Cat, and Roscoe Rooster started back on the road to Bremen. They walked until dark. They saw a house with lights on inside.

**Dunn Donkey:** Let's stay there tonight. I am sure if we sing them a song, they will feed us and let us sleep in the barn.

**Reader Leader 3:** They walked to the house. The window was very high, so Dunn Donkey stood in front of the window. Old Hound stood on his back. Melody Cat stood on top of the dog. And Roscoe Rooster perched on Melody's head. Roscoe peeked in the window.

**Dunn Donkey:** What can you see in there, Roscoe?

**Roscoe Rooster:** Robbers! They have money bags from a bank. They have a huge feast on the table. I am very hungry. If only we could get inside to eat.

**Dunn Donkey:** When I tell you, make as much noise as you can. Ready, set, GO!

**All Animals:** Hee-haw! Hee-haw! H-o-w-l! H-o-w-l! Meowwww!  
Meowwww! Cock-a-doodle-dooo!

**Reader Leader 1:** Dunn Donkey brayed. Old Hound barked. Melody Cat meowed a song. And Roscoe Rooster crowed as loudly as he could. What noise!



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## ON THE ROAD TO BREMEN

**Reader Leader 2:** The robbers were so scared, they jumped up, ran out of the door, and were never seen again. They left the money and the food on the table—right where it was!

**Reader Leader 3:** And Dunn Donkey, Old Hound, Melody Cat, and Roscoe Rooster? They never made it to Bremen. They stayed in the house, ate the food, and spent the rest of their lives together—friends forever!