





This booklet is the result of a pilot project between Our Lady of Mercy Waterford Secondary School and the Waterford Sustainable Living Initiative (SLÍ) and is the brain child of Aoife Byrne and driven by Helen McTighe, both teachers at the school.

The goals of this Project are to:

Provide students an opportunity to share stories from their families, their culture or their own creativity

Demonstrate that many of the challenges that face us today have always been with us and as a world community we have always been resilient

Establish a link between our current solutions, as seen in the Sustainable Development Goals, and those of our forebearers

We hope to expand this Project in the coming year to include more students, stories and schools.

Thank you to the students at Our Lady of Mercy Waterford and Ms. McTighe for inviting SLÍ to be a part of this work.

Jen & Sarah
SLÍ

All images are used with an open license.





Photo by [Pascal Bernardon](#) on [Unsplash](#)

The Mice and the Cat

This folktale was submitted by Anna Stanziale. It is a traditional Italian folktale and the original text can be found is available at: oaks.nvg.ozg.

Anna says the lesson of this tale is that people may be better judged by what they do rather than by how they look.

Many mice dwelt in a hole in the wall. Once they saw a cat who was lying on the floor. The cats head hung low and he looked sad. After looking at the car for a long while, one of the mice said: "This creature seems to be quite harmless and gentle and pure of mind. I want to speak to him and become friends with him," When the mouse had said this and approached closer, he was seized by the cat and torn into pieces. When the saw this, the rest of the mice to one another: "No, we should not rashly put our trust in someone else's looks.



Photo by [Alessio Roversi](#) on [Unsplash](#)

The Lady in White

This folktale was submitted by Lia Maurer. It is a traditional Swiss folktale and the original text can be found is available at: oaks.nvg.ozg/swise.html. Lia says this tale is from her home country of Switzerland and her parents told it to her when she was growing up and the moral is trust is rewarded.

Not very far from the crumbling walls of Haldenstein Castle is a fine spring of clear water. People tell of a charming vision that was often seen there: A lovely maiden, dressed in a long white gown, used to linger on the sunniest spot by the edge of the spring, dabbing her hands in cold water.

A hunter once came to this place, saw the beautiful maiden, and heard her weeping softly. At once he drew near and looked at her with such compassion that she told him: "If you will only hold my hand and not let it go until I tell you to, you will release me from a spell that makes me grieve so much."

Without hesitation the young man took her palms. The hand felt cold as ice. While he held it tight, trying to bring a little of his own warmth to the chilled fingers, a tiny old man came out of the castle and silently offered him a diamond basket full of gold.

Although the huntsman could easily have secured this treasure by stretching out one hand, he kept on keeping the maiden's hands in his. He was soon rewarded by feeling a little warmth steal into the slender hand he held so firmly. At the same time the girl's sad eyes beamed with pleasure, a slight flush stole into her pallid cheeks. Looking up at him, she joyfully exclaimed, "You have proved trustworthy! You may now let go of my hand and take that basket as a sign of my gratitude." The maiden softly drew her hands from his, gave him the treasure, and disappeared with a gentle smile.

Since then the White Lady of Haldenstein has not been seen by mortals, but the spring became know far and wide for healing powers.



The Raccoon and the Chicken

This is an original folktale written by Lauren Hetherington and Angel Moran.

Lauren and Angel say that the lesson from this story is that it is better to share and to not always think of yourself.

Once upon a time, there was Rocky the Raccoon was busy eating everyone's crops which meant that no one had any crops of their own. The Prince of the Raccoons was told and he knew he had to do something to solve it. The Prince requested to see Rocky the Raccoon.

Photo by [Zhen Hu](#) on [Unsplash](#)

He sent his knights out to inform her that the Prince wants to see her. When Rocky arrived she was sent to the Prince's office to talk. The Prince told Rocky that if she stayed away from everyone's crops for two days she would be granted all the food she needs and solve the hunger in Raccoon town. Rocky agreed but she knew it would not be easy.

Rocky left the Castle and on the way home she walked past a pumpkin patch. Rocky entered the pumpkin patch and got ready to take some pumpkins when she remembered what the Prince had said. She stood there trying to make a decision. Rocky the Raccoon decided to do the right thing and leave the pumpkin patch empty handed and went home. When Rocky got home she went to bed. The next day Rocky was out on a walk with her friend Nancy the Chicken and told her what had happened. She also told her she was not sure that she could do one more day. Nancy explained that doing one more day would help everyone and how much happier the town would be. Rocky did one more day even though it was very very hard. After the two days, the Prince called Rocky back to the Castle and she was rewarded with what she deserved.



Image Source: Fine Art America

This parable was submitted by Evalina DeSilva and is a traditional Bulgarian story provided here both in the original Bulgarian and translated into English. Evalina says that the moral of the story is that we should be working alongside nature rather than always trying to destroy it.

Слънцето помага на сиромаха да си върне нивата

The sun helps the poor man regain his land

Като разбира, че няма правда на земята, сиромахът отива да се оплаче на слънцето. То го научава какво да направи. И след три дни изгрява вместо от изток от запад. Сиромахът печели облога си с лихварят и си спасява нивата.

Realizing that there is no justice on earth, the poor man goes to complain to the sun. It teaches him what to do. And after three days it rises from the west instead of the east. The poor man wins his bet with the moneylender and saves his fields.

The tale of the
greedy magpie



The Tale of the Greedy Magpie

This is an original folktale submitted by Giulia Amari and Maleah Blecker along with the artwork on the previous page. Maleah and Giulia say that the moral of this story is about caring about other people's feelings more. There is so much hate and ignorance flowing around in the world, especially on social media at the moment, it just pains to watch all of this. So to everyone who reads this: Take a step back for once and focus on the positive things in life, the things you have and you love. Don't steal away happiness from others but give them sympathy. You may dislike others for not sharing your own opinion but that does not mean you have to force a different one on them. Still helping them with love and kindness can make such a huge difference without causing harm when given to the right people. It can feel so great. Not everyone is that way, nonetheless that's also alright. Everyone is the way they are. We simply wanted to spread this little positive thought into the world with our folktale.

Have a wonderful rest life!" People are mirrors. If you smile, a smile will be reflected."- Yona of the Dawn, Mizuho Kusanagi

There once was a greedy magpie living at the edge of the little forest. He loved shiny things more than anything — they looked simply too beautiful sparkling in the sun. One day while flying over the humans gardens nearby, he spotted a small golden ring reflecting the sunlight like a rainbow over its surroundings in the fresh green grass. The magpie, at first, overwhelmed by the ring's astounding beauty, flew fast down to pick it up as a new addition to his collection.

Full of joy about his brand-new find, he didn't notice the little boy following him. Just when he reached his nest, the human child spoke up.

"Hey!" he said and the magpie nearly fell out of his tree due to the shock.

"What do you want from me?" he cried back after turning around.

The boy, maybe 7 years old, answered with a serious face. "You stole my sister's ring. She just got married and this is her symbol of love for that. She is probably shattered by now...give it back."

"I don't understand what you are saying" said the Magpie, "I found this ring, so therefore it is mine now.

"Don't you know that stealing what has meaning for someone is wrong?"

The Magpie stopped muttering. Was he actually stealing, not just finding things? Was he bad?

"Show me" the Magpie demanded, "show me that my way is wrong."

The little boy waited for him to follow. So he led the Magpie to the garden and showed him his sister, crying for her lost treasure.

The greedy bird was ashamed and started to feel sympathy toward the young married woman. With a great pain in his chest, he flew down to the boy and gave him the stolen ring. After this act, the Magpie actually felt better than before. He was not greedy anymore, helping others gave him much greater joy. After some time, the tale became known in the village that the Magpie does not steal but saves shiny things.

Chinese Proverbs

These proverbs were submitted by Shiyu Huang.



Photo by Johannes Plenio on Unsplash

让我们荡起双桨，	Let's sway twin oars,
小船儿推开波浪，	Our little boat's plowing across the ripples,
海面倒映着美丽的白塔，	The beautiful white pagoda casts its shadow
四周环绕着绿树红墙。	In the lake surrounded by greenery and red wall
小船儿轻轻飘荡在水中，	The little boat's freely floating in the water
迎面吹来了凉爽的风。	And the cool breeze's caressing our faces.
红领巾迎着太阳，	The sun scatters its light on the lake surface
阳光洒在海面上，	And so striking in sunlight are red scarves,
水中鱼儿望着我们，	Fishes in the water are looking at us
悄悄地听我们愉快歌唱。	And listening quietly to our joyous songs,
小船儿轻轻飘荡在水中，	The little boat's freely floating in the water
迎面吹来了凉爽的风。	And the cool breeze's caressing our faces.
做完了一天的功课，	Having done the day's homework,
我们来尽情欢乐，	We come here to enjoy happiness,
我问你亲爱的伙伴，	I asked you, my dear playmates,
谁给我们安排下幸福的生活？	Who has given us the happiness of life?
小船儿轻轻飘荡在水中，	The little boat's freely floating in the water
迎面吹来了凉爽的风。	And the cool breeze's caressing our faces.
小船儿轻轻飘荡在水中，	The little boat's freely floating in the water
迎面吹来了凉爽的风。	And the cool breeze's caressing our faces.



Photo by Kuan Fang on Unsplash

This folktale was written by Nadie Maw, Caoimhe Power and Hennrietta Coj as part of our workshop on folktales and story telling.

The Dolphin

Once upon a time there lived a dolphin named Dingle. Dingle was environmentally aware. He often spends his time picking up plastics, returning nets and lost items of humans. One day he was doing his usual clean up and he heard a cry. Unsettled by the cry, he followed the sound. He found a dolphin stuck in a fishing net. He tried to help him but sadly this led to his death. The dolphin, so grateful to him that he too cleaned up oceans and taught others to do so as well.

The Woodcutter and the Axe

This folktale was submitted by Nadie Maw. She says she remembers her mother telling her this story when she was a small child.



Once upon a time there was a woodcutter. One day he went out by the river to cut trees. As he swung to cut the tree, he let go of his axe and it fell into the river. The woodcutter cried and cried because he cherished the axe and without the axe couldn't do his job.

Suddenly an Angel appears and asks him what's wrong. The woodcutter explained the situation and she brought out a gold axe, a silver axe and the woodcutter's axe. She asked him which one was his and the woodcutter replied back honestly and took his own axe. The Angel moved by this gave him the gold and silver axe too.

Soon the woodcutter became rich and helped the poor. One day his friend asked him how he managed to become rich and the woodcutter explained what happened.

So the friend who is a fellow woodcutter heads off to the river, purposely threw his axe and called the Angel. When the Angel presented him with the axes he lied and that made her furious. She knew he lied and took away the gold and silver axe and his own axe.

Town Musicians of Bremen

This folktale was submitted by Meret John. It is a traditional German folktale and the original text can be found is available at: <https://www.bremen.de/tourismus/sehenswuerdigkeiten/das-maerchen-der-bremer-stadtmusikanten> Meret remembers her parents telling her this tale when she was growing up. The moral of the story is about teamwork and how working together is the best way forward.



Once upon a time there was a man who had a donkey that had been carrying the sacks to the mill for many years. But now the donkey's strength was running out. So the owner thought of giving him away. But the donkey realised that his owner had something evil in mind, ran away and went to Bremen. There, he thought, he could become a town musician.

When he had been walking for a while, he found a hunting dog lying on the road, howling miserably. The dog said: "I'm old, getting weaker every day and can't go hunting any more, my owner wanted to shoot me dead. So I run away. But what am I to do now to earn my bread?"

"I'll go to Bremen and become a town musician. Why don't you come with me?" said the donkey. The dog agreed, and they went on together. It was not long before they saw a cat. The cat said "Because I'm old now, my teeth are getting blunt and my wife wanted to drown me. I was able to sneak away."

"Go with us to Bremen! You can become a town musician there." The cat thought that was good and went along. As the three of them walked along, they passed a farm. The rooster was sitting on the gate and screaming at the top of his lungs. "Why do you scream?"

"The housewife has ordered the cook to cut off my head tonight," he said.

"Well," said the donkey, "you'd better go away with us, we'll go to Bremen, you'll find something better than death anywhere. You have a good voice, and when we make music together it will sound wonderful." The cock liked the suggestion, and they all four went away together. But they could not reach the city of Bremen in one day. So they were searching for place to sleep. Soon they saw a brighter-lit robber's house. The donkey, being the biggest, approached the window and looked in. He said: "I see a table laid with beautiful food and drink, and robbers sitting all around having a good time!"

"That would be something for us," said the cock. The animals thought about how they could start to chase the robbers out. At last they found a way. The donkey stood on the window with his front feet, the dog jumped on the donkey's back, the cat climbed on the dog, and finally the rooster flew up and sat on the cat's head. When this was done, at a sign they began to make their music: the donkey brayed, the dog barked, the cat meowed, and the cock crowed. Then they rushed through the window into the parlour so that the windows rattled. The robbers went up in the air at the horrible screaming.

Now they sat the four companions down at the table and ate as much as they can. When they had finished, they turned out the light and each sought a place to sleep according to his taste. The donkey lay down on the dung, the dog behind the door, the cat on the cooker by the warm ashes, and the rooster flew up on the roof. And because they were tired from their long journey, they soon fell asleep.

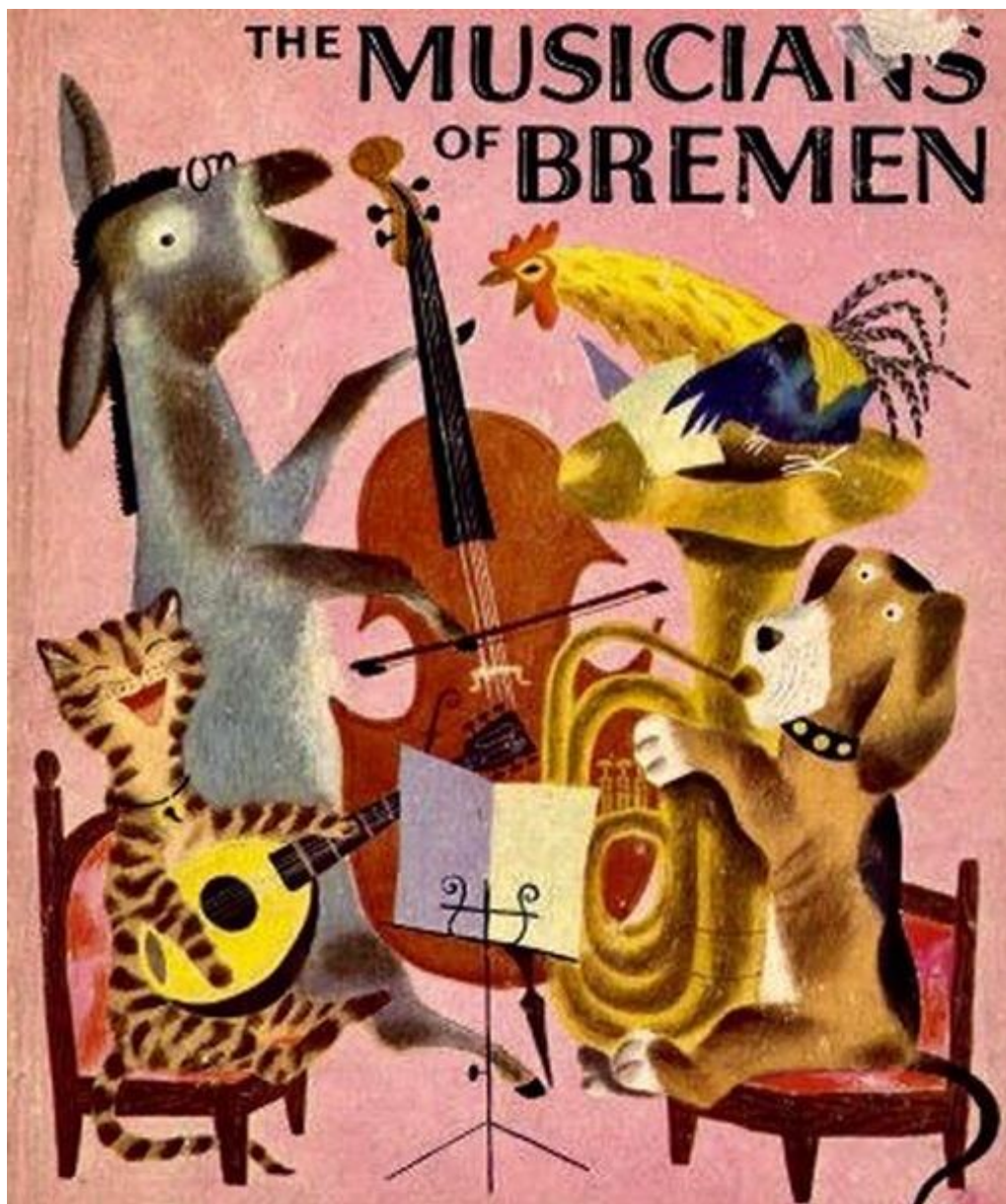


Photo Credit: <https://www.slaphappylarry.com/town-musicians-of-bremen/>