

INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT	
Story No: 5 & 6	Name:
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MAKING MUSIC TOGETHER

Steven had come to India recently. Today he had his first music class here. Most of the instruments looked strange and new. He saw a set of drums in the corner and sighed. He missed his home, back in America. He absent-mindedly started playing a beat on the drums: one two, one two three four!

To his surprise, he heard the same beat picked up by another boy. It was Vasana, playing on the table. He saw Steven looking at him and repeated the beat saying, "dhadhindha; dhadhindhadhindhindha!"

Steven smiled at Vasana. "That was amazing! How about this beat?" He played another beat, increasing the speed as he went along. Vasana quickly picked up the beat on his table. Then he played a new beat and waited for Steven to play it. Steven was happy to oblige. Soon, they were both playing together, experimenting with different beats and rhythms.

In fact, they were so engrossed in the music they were playing together, that they didn't notice the crowd of students who had gathered around them forming an admiring circle. When Steven and Vasana finished a particularly wonderful piece of music, they paused for a minute and smiled at each other. The entire class burst into cheers.

"Did you know that George Harrison, one of the band members of the Beatles loved Indian music?" asked Steven. "He even learnt the sitar from the great Ravi Shankar. Vasana, we are from different culture and do things differently. But we will both learn from each other and make some great music together."

When different things come together in unity, there is beauty. The rainbow is made of seven colours. Each colour is different but works together to create a rainbow. When we learn about the different cultures around, we develop a better understanding of the world and our minds get broadened. This will help us to improve ourselves and do the best we can.

WEIGHING THE ELEPHANT

A long time ago, people who lived in China knew that a strange, amazing beast called an elephant lived in a faraway land but no one had ever seen one. One day a ruler came to see the Emperor of China. He brought a gift and that gift was a real, live elephant!

Never in China had anyone seen anything like it. As soon as the royal guest left, it was all anyone at court could talk about. "This elephant is bigger than a water buffalo!" said one mandarin. "Are you kidding?" said a second. "It's bigger than a rhino!" "You must be joking," said a third. "This elephant is bigger than TWO rhinos!"

One day the Emperor said to his mandarins, "I want to know how much this amazing elephant weighs. Who can tell me how to weigh it?" "I can!" said the first mandarin who used to be a merchant. "We will just put it on a scale" "Not likely," said the Emperor. "There is no scale that could hold the weight of an elephant without breaking."

"I can tell you!" said the second mandarin who used to be a tailor. He said, "We will measure the elephant." "No," said the Emperor with a sigh. "Even if you measured all the different parts of an elephant, you would still not know how much it weighs."

"I can tell you!" said the third mandarin who used to be a baker. "We will cut up the elephant and cook it. Then we will know". "We will surely NOT do that!" roared the Emperor. "Is there NO ONE who can tell me how to weigh the elephant?"

A small voice said, "I can." All eyes turned to the voice. It was the Emperor's son! "Son!" said the Emperor. "You should be in bed." "But I know how," said the boy. "And we won't need to cook it first." "Very well," said the Emperor with a smile. "Tell me how to weigh the elephant."

The boy described what to do. Here is what the boy said. "You put the elephant in a big boat and take the boat out on the water. Draw a line on the side of the boat where it meets the water at the watermark. Bring the boat back to shore and take the elephant off the boat. Put rocks on the boat, one by one. When the boat sinks to the same watermark line it had when the elephant was in it, bring how much the elephant weighs!"

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" shouted everyone. "It will work!" called out the first mandarin. "What a clever plan!" said the second. "Who knew this child would know?" said the third. And the fame of Emperor's son travelled far and wide.