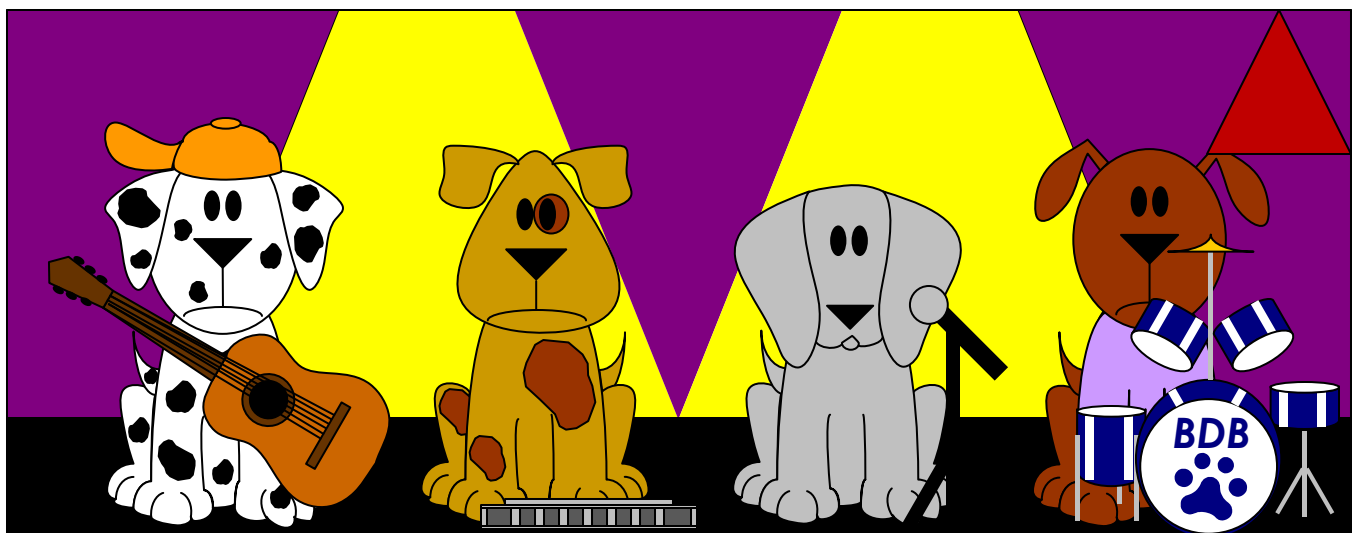


The Big Dog Band Plays the Blues

Written and Illustrated by Jennifer Cheatham

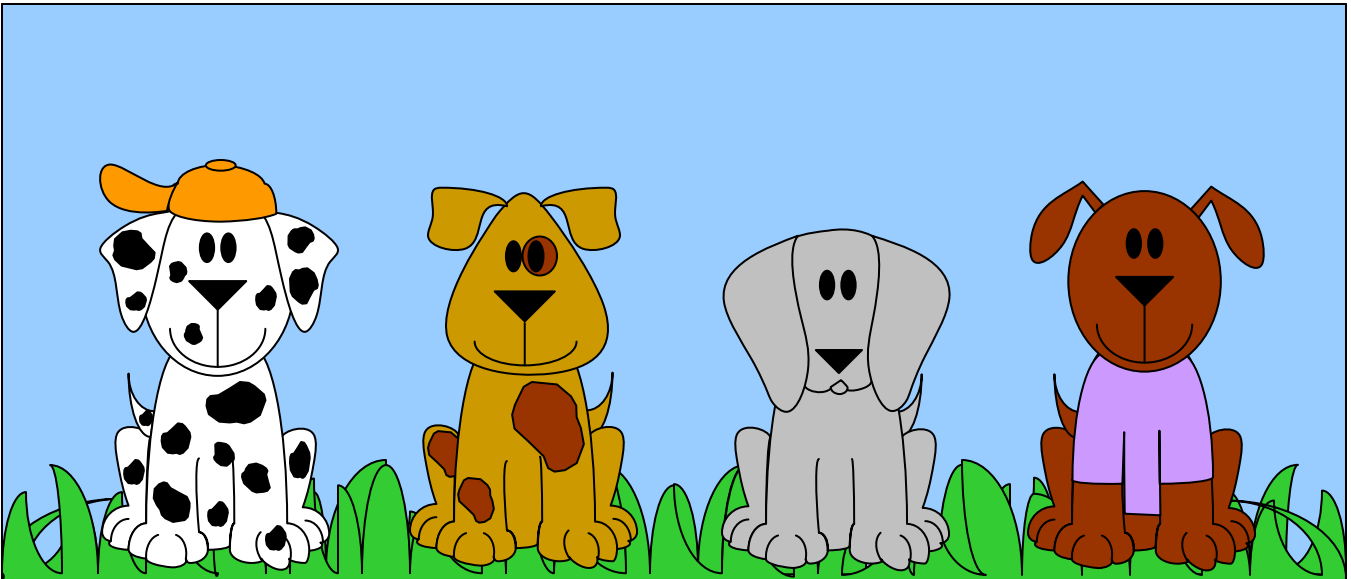
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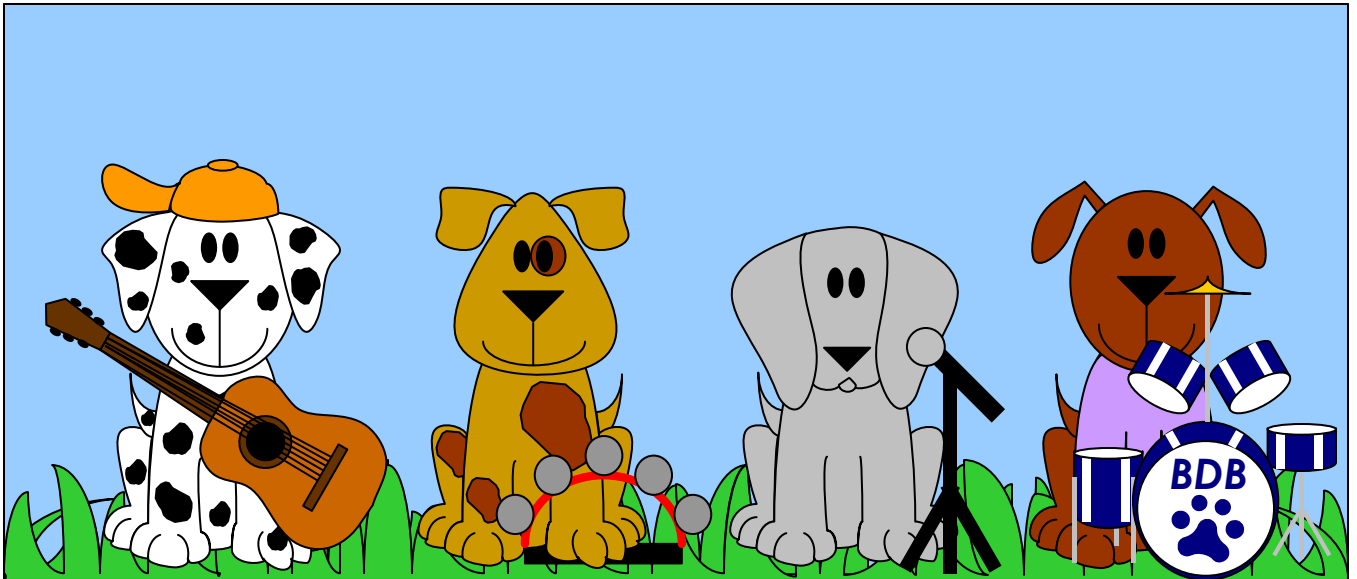
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Big Dog Band is a very good band. Everyone likes to hear their fast and fun music. They play a lot of concerts and



parties. Everyone has a great time when the Big Dog Band
2 is playing.



There are four dogs in the Big Dog Band. They play bells, guitar, and drums, and one dog sings. They like to play music for people. The fun and fast music they play makes everyone smile and dance.



Big Dog Band,

I will have another party. Will you make

music so we can jam? It will be



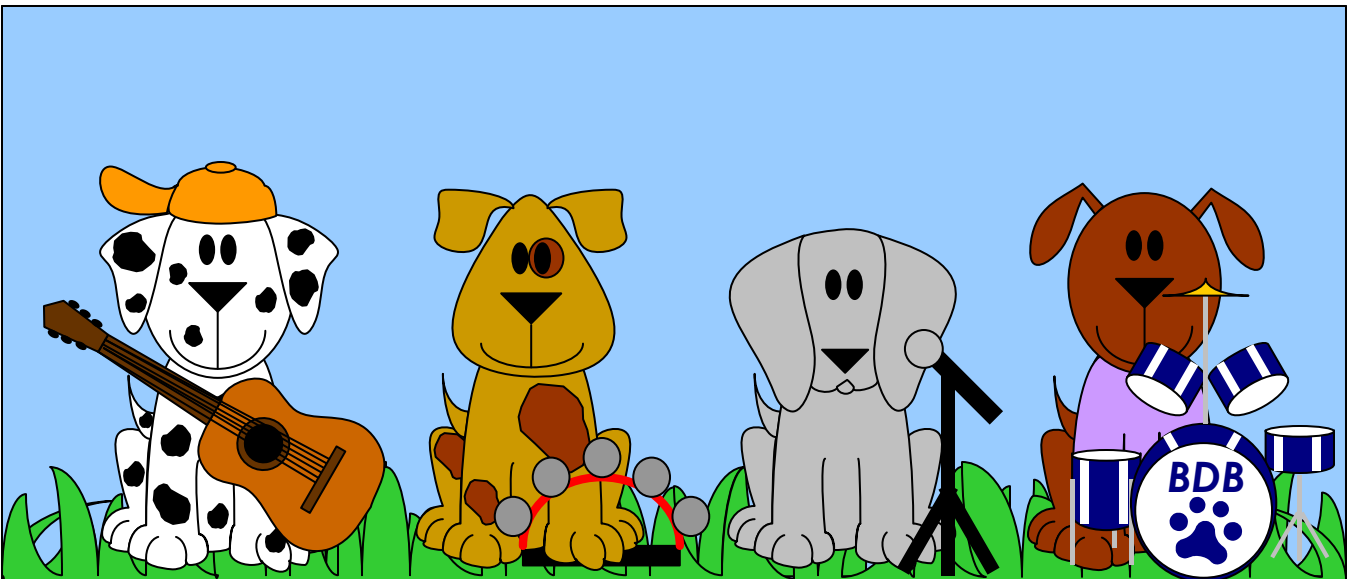
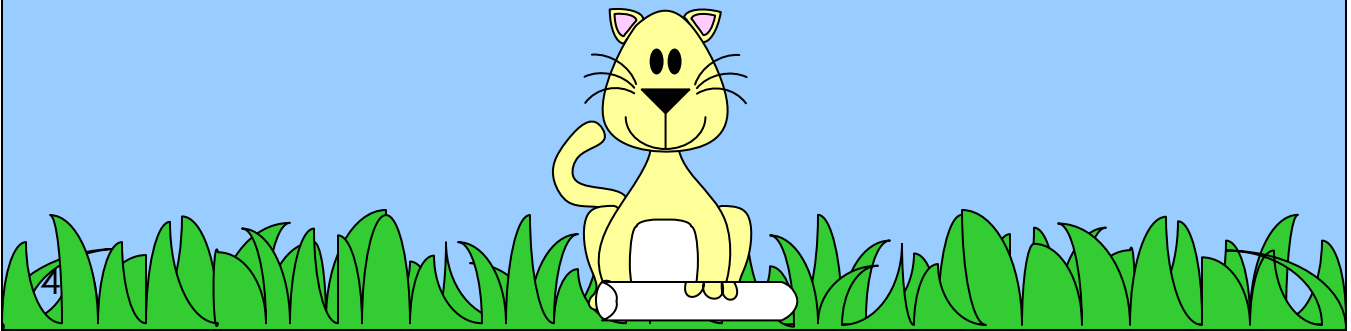
a lot of fun.

Time: 6:00

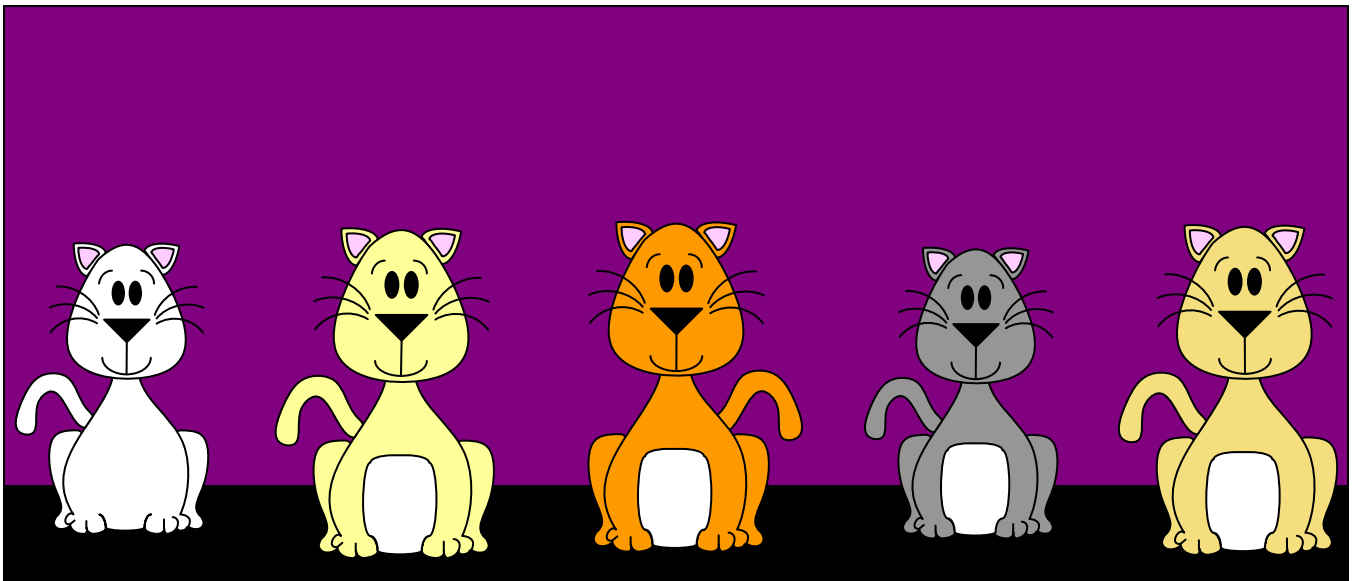
Place: My house

From,
Ken the Cat

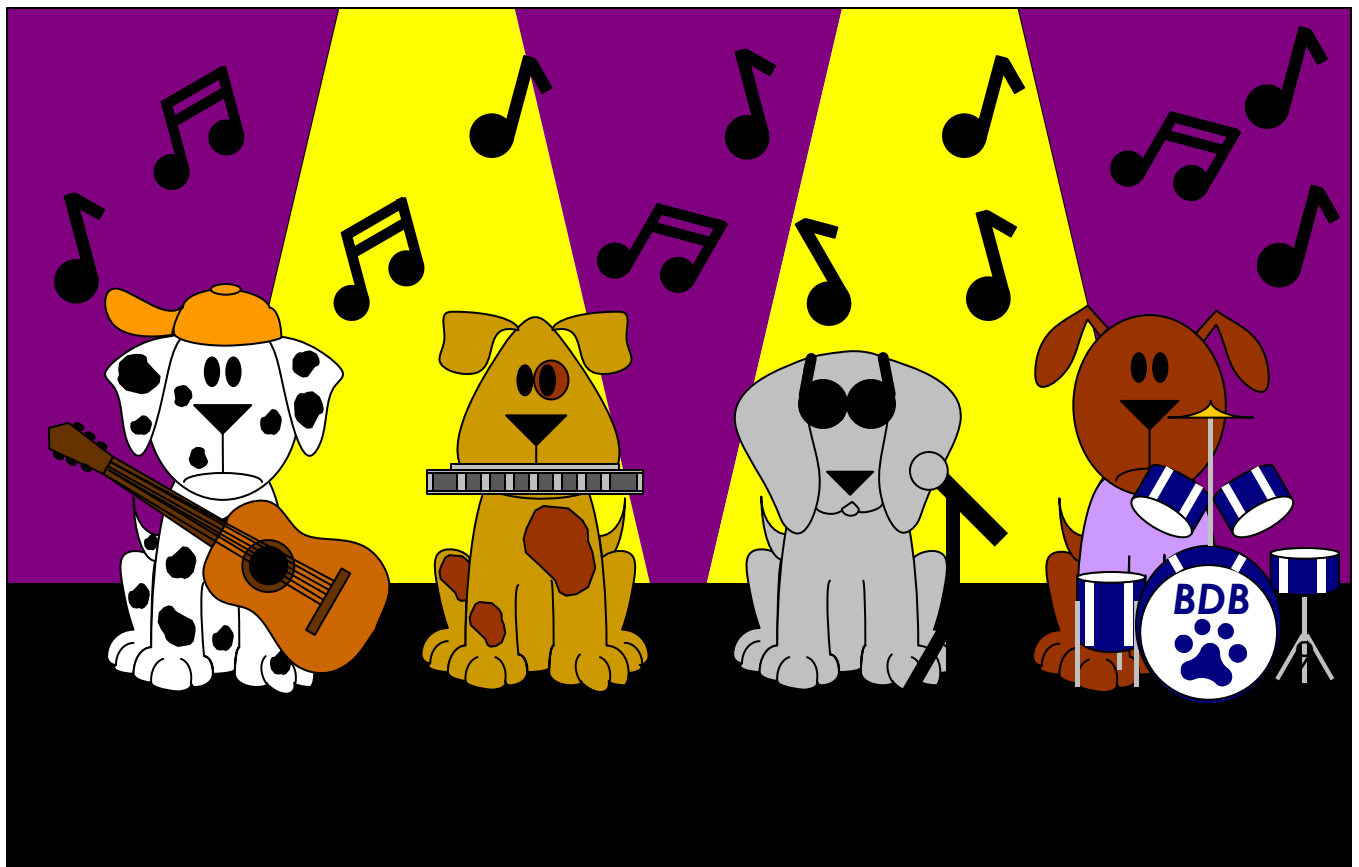
One time Ken the cat had a party and the Big Dog Band played. Ken and all his friends had so much fun at the party. Now Ken was going to have another party. Since they all had so much fun at the last party when the Big Dog Band played, Ken asked the Big Dog Band to play again at the next party. Ken sent the Big Dog Band a note to ask them to play at his party again.



The Big Dog Band got Ken's note. They thought it would be fun to play for Ken again. They sent a note back to Ken and told him they would be happy to play at his party.



When the day of the party came, everyone was very excited. Ken's party was so much fun last time. It was going to be great again. The cats waited for the Big Dog Band to start playing. They were all so excited!



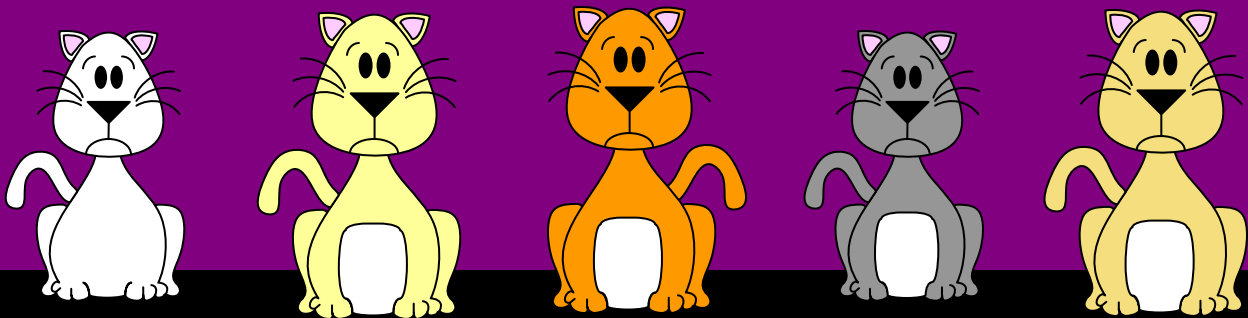
The Big Dog Band went to play, but the dog who played the bells did not have the bells. He had a harmonica. The band started to play slow, sad music.



One dog put on sunglasses and sang, "We are four dogs (dum, dum, dum, dum, dum), and we are so sad (dum, dum, dum, dum, dum). If we had more stuff (dum, dum, dum, dum, dum), then we would be glad..."

The sad song went on.

8



Ken and his friends wondered what was going on. They did not clap. They did not jump or dance. The music was not



fun or fast. It was sad and slow. The cats did not know what to do.

10

When the song was over, before the next song began, Ken went up to the Big Dog Band.

“Hey, Big Dog Band,” said Ken, “what is going on? Why are you not playing fun and fast music?”

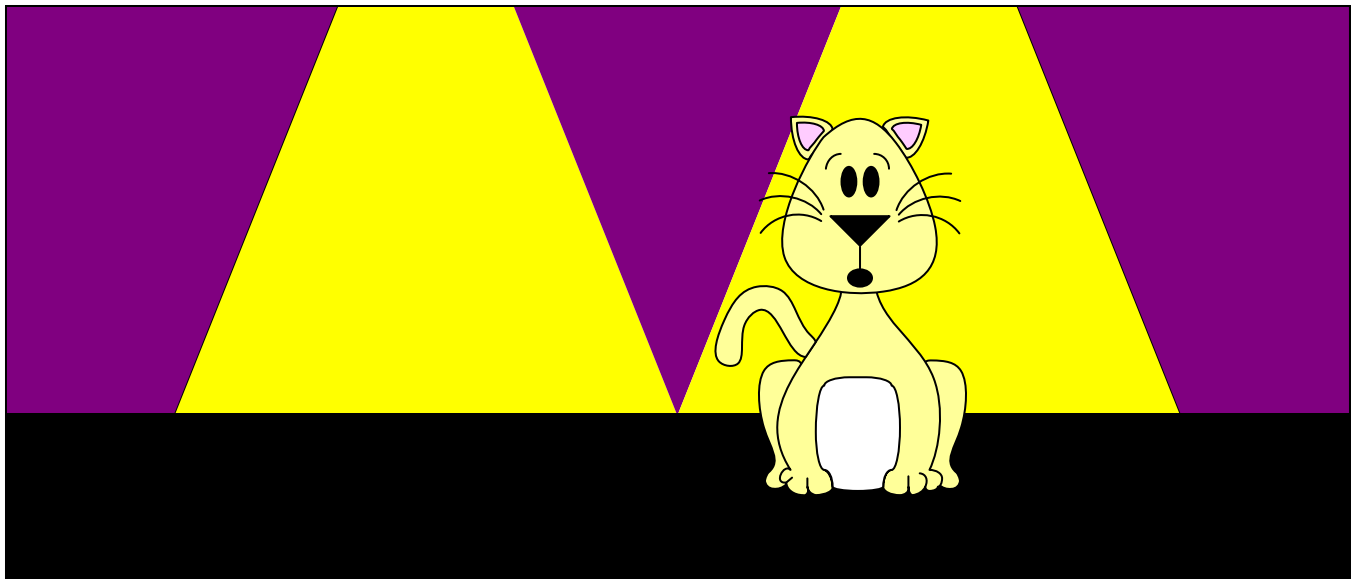


One dog said, “We are playing the blues. We play the blues now because we are so sad, and the blues is what you play when you are sad.”

“But why are you so sad?” asked Ken.

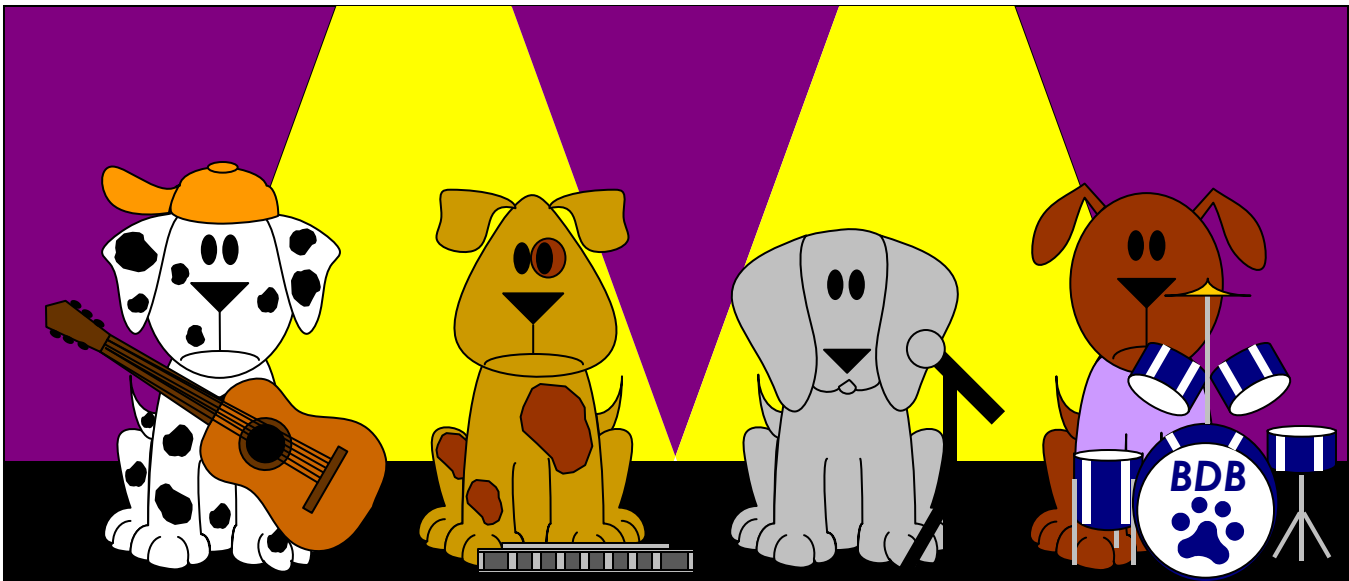
Another dog said, “We are so sad because other people have so many more things than we do. We wish we had more things.”

11



“What?” said Ken? “That isn’t right at all! Things do not make you happy! You can have everything and still not be happy.”

13



12

“If we had more things, like new clothes, new toys, and a nicer house, then we would be happy,” said another dog. “Having things is what makes you happy. Until we have more things we can only play the blues.”

“That doesn’t sound right,” said one of the dogs. “I like getting new things. I am happy when I get a present or a new toy. Things are what make me happy.”

“Well yes, it can be fun to get new things. But after a while, don’t you want more new things?” asked Ken. “No matter what you get, you will always want more.”

The Big Dog Band thought about what Ken said. Was he right? It did seem like every time they got something new they still wanted more new things.

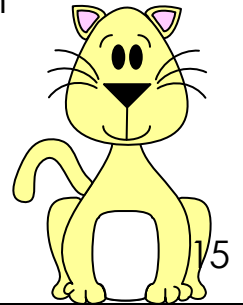
“Ken,” said one dog, “if things can’t make us happy, then what can?”

14

“Well,” Ken said, “just be thankful for what you do have. Think about all the things you have and be thankful for all of them. You have a lot of things that other people do not have. You have a house that keeps you safe and dry. You have food to eat every day. You have clothes to put on. You even get to pick out what to put on because you have so many clothes. You have the skills to play music and you



get to share it with other people. Most of all, you have family and friends who care about you. You can be thankful for so many things.”



New Words

music



“You are right, Ken!” said one dog. “We have not been thinking right. We do not need more things. We already have so many things. We were being greedy. We need to just be thankful for what we have. We can be thankful for so many things. We should not play the blues. We do not have any reason to be sad. Let’s jam with some fast and fun music!”



The Big Dog Band played fun and fast music. Ken and the other cats clapped, jumped, and danced to the music.



Everyone had a great time at the party. The Big Dog Band never played the blues again.

