

# Transcript

Welcome to Easy Stories in English, the podcast that will take your English from OK to Good, and from Good to Great.

I am Ariel Goodbody, your host for this show. Today's story is for beginners. The name of the story is *The Piper of Hamelin*. You can find a transcript of the episode at [EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Piper](https://EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Piper). That's [EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Piper](https://EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Piper). There, you can also download the episode as a PDF.

OK, I'll just explain some words that are in today's story.

A **piper** is someone who plays the pipe. The pipe is a musical instrument. Pipes are long, thin wind instruments. A piper blows into their pipe to make music, [blows]. These days, pipers aren't very popular. Guitarists and piano players are much more popular than pipers.

When we say something **times** something, it is the same as multiplying in mathematics. We use a cross, or an X, to show multiplying or 'timesing' something. For example, two times two is four ( $2 \times 2 = 4$ ), three times two is six ( $3 \times 2 = 6$ ) and ten times two is twenty ( $10 \times 2 = 20$ ). If someone is fifty times stronger than you, then they are very strong indeed.

The **mayor** of a town or city is the person who makes big decisions about it. They are the leader, the "president", of the town or city.

When you don't want something anymore, you can **get rid of** it. Getting rid of something is like throwing it in the bin. You don't have it in your life anymore. For example, maybe you have an old TV that you never watch anymore. You could get rid of it by throwing it away, or you could get rid of it by giving it to someone.

When you walk and someone follows you, you are **leading** them, and the past tense is **led** – I always spell this wrong! Leaders are people who lead. If you are leading someone, you should be careful where you are going. You might lead them into danger!

When someone **drowns**, they fall into water and die. If you can swim, then it is harder to drown, because you can swim out of the water. But maybe the water is very deep, or you are in the sea and the land is far away, or you are very hurt. In those cases, you might drown. You can also drown another person, but I don't recommend it!

When something goes away or stops being, it **disappears**. For example, some people can use magic to make themselves disappear. If you are hiding from a dangerous animal, you probably want to disappear. If you put a chocolate cake in front of me, it will quickly disappear. Magic!

When someone **limps**, they walk in a slow way. Normally, when we walk, we move both our legs in the same way, but when you limp, you move one leg in a different way. This may be because one leg is bigger than the other, or one leg is injured. So people often limp for a few weeks after an accident.

Someone who is **blind** cannot see. Some people are blind from birth, and never see the world. Some people become blind because of an accident or disease. Some people are partially blind, and some people are fully blind. Blind people usually wear black glasses to show that they are blind, and some use sticks to walk around. You can also be colourblind, which is when you can't see certain colours.

Someone who is **deaf** cannot hear. Some people are deaf from birth, and others become deaf later in life. Deaf people often use sign language to communicate – they speak by making signs with their hands.

OK, so listen and enjoy!

## The Piper of Hamelin

Once, there was a town called Hamelin. Hamelin was a happy town. Everyone had enough to eat and drink, and children played happily in the streets. But then, one day, the rats came.

These were not normal rats. They were **three times** as big as normal rats, and their hairs were four times as long. Their teeth were like knives, and they were hungrier than a lion in the desert.

The rats took everything. They ate all the food that the people had worked to make. They drank the water and made it dirty. The children were too afraid to play outside, because the rats played in the street. People sent cats to kill the rats, but the cats were afraid of the rats, too.

The people did not know what to do. They thought they might have to leave Hamelin and go to another city. But then, one day, a piper came to town.

The piper's clothes were beautiful. They were red and gold, and everyone looked at him as he walked into town. The rats stopped playing and looked at him. Who was this strange and beautiful man?

The piper went to speak to the **mayor**.

'Mr Mayor,' he said. 'I can help you with your rat problem. All animals love music, and I can play the pipe ten times better than any other man. I will use my music to **get rid of** the rats.'

Normally, the mayor would say, 'Get out!' because he couldn't believe that music could get rid of rats. But these were not normal rats.

'How do I know you can really do that?' he said.

The piper picked up his pipe and played some music. A bird flew in through the window and sat on his shoulder.

'Well, well,' said the mayor. 'You do play very well. Of course, we will pay you after the rats are gone. How much do you ask for?'

'Oh, not much! A thousand pounds,' said the piper.

The mayor couldn't believe it. A thousand pounds! That was as much money as he made in a year.

'Well, well, that is a lot of money, but you're sure you will get rid of *all* the rats, aren't you?'

'I will,' said the piper.

'You will get rid of ALL of the rats. Every last one. And then we will pay you a thousand pounds, yes?'

'That sounds good,' said the piper.

'Just to be clear, you will get rid of ONE HUNDRED PERCENT of the rats, yes?'

'Can I start now?' said the piper.

'Alright then. You can start whenever you're ready.'

'Thank you.'

So the piper went into the street and played his pipe. Immediately, all the rats stopped eating and playing and listened to him. They ran to the piper. Soon, there was a big circle of rats around him. The piper changed his music, and the rats moved into a line. All the people watched from their windows.

The piper played his pipe and walked through town, **leading** the rats behind him. As he walked, more and more rats came. The line was very long, and it was hard to see the end of it.

The people said, 'Where is he leading them?' They thought he might lead them out of town, but then they would just come back.

But no. The piper led them into the river. Of course, the river wasn't very deep, and the piper was tall, so he could walk in it and still play his pipe. But the rats were not so tall. The piper led them into the river, and they couldn't swim, and so they **drowned**. One by one, the rats followed him into the river and drowned. The people watched and **cheered**.

The mayor watched, but he did not cheer. *Every last rat* drowned. One hundred percent of them.

Afterwards, the mayor sent his men into town and asked them to find more rats. He was sure that one or two rats had not heard the piper. But they couldn't find any rats. The piper had done what he said: he had got rid of every last one.

The people gave the piper food and drink, and they sang songs and played music all night. The next day, the piper went to the mayor and asked for his money.

'Ah,' said the mayor. 'You see, there is a problem. I asked you to get rid of *every last rat*. One hundred percent of them. But you didn't. There was one you did not find.'

The mayor opened a drawer and took out a rat. In the night, he had sent one of his men to another city and told him to bring back a rat. Of course, this rat was much smaller than the rats of Hamelin. It did not have long hair or teeth like knives.

'That rat came from somewhere else,' said the piper. 'I *know* I drowned all the rats. But if you like, you can pay me nine hundred pounds instead of a thousand.' He **laughed**. 'Just think! That rat cost me a hundred pounds.'

The mayor **cleared his throat**. 'I am sorry, but I don't think you understand business. You told me that you would get rid of every last rat, and you did not. So I cannot pay you any money. Sorry, that's just how business works.'

For a moment, the piper said nothing. The mayor was afraid. Could this man hurt him?

But no. He was only a piper. And the mayor wasn't a rat!

'Are you sure you want to do this?' said the piper.

'I will pay you a hundred pounds,' said the mayor quickly, 'and I will give you a full bag of food for your journey, and—'

'Don't worry,' said the piper. 'I won't need it where I'm going.'

And the piper walked outside. For a moment, the mayor felt better. He had got rid of the rats, and he didn't have to pay the piper any money!

But then, the piper started to play. He stood in the streets of Hamelin and played a very different kind of music.

This time, it was the children who came. They stopped playing and all ran to the piper. The mayor thought this was nice, but then the children moved into a line. The piper played his pipe and led the children through town.

Every child followed him. Every last one.

The piper walked out of town and the children followed. The mayor watched and could not believe it. The children's parents were all at work, or sleeping after the party, so they did not know what was happening.

'Stop, stop!' **cried** the mayor.

He ran into the street, but the children did not stop. He pulled at them and told them to go home, but the children did not listen. They could only follow the piper. The mayor tried to

follow, but he was old and afraid. So he went back into his house and shut all the doors. Then, he hid near a window and watched.

The piper led the children up into the hills. He led them through the forest. Finally, he led them to the mountain.

The mayor thought that he must stop here, because the mountain was tall and hard to climb. But as the piper played, the mountain opened up. It opened like a door, and the piper walked inside, and of course, the children followed him.

One by one, the children of Hamelin **disappeared** with the piper into the mountain.

Later, the parents came home and saw that their children were gone. But three children came back to town. One of the children had a **limp**, one was **blind** and the other was **deaf**.

‘What happened?’ asked the parents.

‘The piper played his music,’ said the boy with the limp, ‘and all the children went to him. I tried to follow, but I couldn’t. When they went up the hills, I could not climb because of my limp.’

‘I followed them to the forest,’ said the blind girl, ‘but then I got lost. I could not find the way because I am blind.’

‘I did not hear the music,’ said the deaf girl. Actually, she said it in **sign language**, and her mother spoke her words. ‘All the children danced and followed the piper, and I thought that was strange. So I followed them to see where they were going. When they came to the mountain, it opened up and they all went inside. They just disappeared. I tried to see what was inside, but it was dark. I’m glad that I’m deaf, because after the last child went inside, the mountain closed again.’

‘But why would he do that?’ said the parents. ‘He was so friendly last night!’

‘I heard him talking to the mayor,’ said the blind girl. ‘The mayor didn’t want to pay him.’

That was all the parents needed to hear. The music was in their ears, and it was a very different kind of music. They went to the mayor’s house, and they did not ask for him to open the door. He was a rat, and you don’t talk sweetly to rats.

And so, the parents of Hamelin cried for their lost children, and no music was played in the town for hundreds of years. There had once been a mayor in the town, too, but one day he disappeared, and everyone quickly forgot about him.

## THE END

If you enjoyed today’s episode and want to be able to read my stories in a physical format, then good news! I have a book of ten short stories called, well, [Easy Stories in English](#). Get it on Amazon, Apple Books or Google Books, or go to [EasyStoriesInEnglish.com/Book](#) to find out all the places it’s available. Thank you for listening, and see you in two weeks!