The Co-operation Song

THE TWO MULES

Words and Music by
Norman Richardson

based on the Quaker poster:
Co-operation is better than Conflict
The Co-operation Song

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Performance Notes
Use all voices to sing the main refrain ("We’ve got to work together …") and the additional refrain ("Co-operation is better than conflict …"). The verses, which need to be well articulated and expressive, can be taken by one soloist as narrator, or by a succession of different soloists.

The song may be accompanied by guitar instead of (or as well as) the keyboard accompaniment provided here, and other parts (flute, etc.) may be added. Parts for guitar and other instruments can be requested by email from enelarmusic@gmail.com.
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Allegro \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{s}} = 132 \)

Refrain

We've got to pull to-geth-er, work to-geth-er,

No use pull-ing a-part; We've got to think to-geth-er, try to-geth-er,

Work-ing to-geth-er is smart! We've got to smart!

There were two

Solo Voice(s)
mules in a field that the farmer tied together with a tether made of rope, in the
hope that they wouldn't run away, or go astray, so that's how they had to
stay! The farmer brought them their tea, straw and hay, for you see they don't eat the
things that we do (I'm sure you knew that these mules grew by eating hay, and
But the farmer had a plan—he was quite a thoughtful man! He decided what to do, and he split that hay in two. Then with lots of winks and smiles, he placed it, in two piles, at different sides of the field! First one mule head-ed for his hay, but on the way the rope got tight-er, 'cos the other sill-y blight-er had de-
cided to go right a-way to his pile of hay, over there in the cor-ner at the oth-er side of the
field. f So they both strug-gled and strainged and they kicked out at each oth-er; they just ig-
ored the bas-ic rules and carr-ied on like sill-y fools. But the rope re-mained and they
felt quite beat-en, for their food was still un-eaten! They said,"It's sill-y just to fight,'cos we'll
end up here all night. It isn't right, there'll be no winner, and we still have had no dinner; now we're

feeling hot and tired, and we need a cool drink, so let's stop and think! So they both sat down with a very heavy frown, and they had a thinking session till they

learned this simple lesson: we've got to pull together.
work to-geth-er,  No use pull-ing a-part;  We've got to think to-geth-er,

try to-geth-er,  Work-ing to-geth-er is smart!  We've got to

smart!  So then they head-ed for their hay, but they did it both to-geth-er. It was

bet-t-er that way, and it did-n't matt-er wheth-er they were tied with the teth-er or not. Oh no, it
did-n't matt-er a jot!  Be-cause they went to one pile and they ate it with a smile, and then they went and ate the rest.  (It was the shar-ing they liked best.) There was food e-nough for two, and all they had to do was re-lax and take their time, and chew, chew, chew! Those stub-born old mules had learned new rules: There's a bet-ter way than fight-ing; we get
fur-ther by u-ni-ting!  

We've got to pull to-geth-er, 

work to-geth-er,  

No use pull-ing a-part;  

We've got to think to-gether, 

try to-geth-er, Work-ing to-geth-er is smart!  

We've got to smart!  

It's a 

most im-port-ant less-on for each per-son, group or na-tion: If we want to learn to live in peace, let's
try co-op-er-a-tion. Co-op-er-a-tion is bett-er than con-flict; Two heads to-
get-her are bett-er than one. We waste our
time when we quarr-el and fight: Co-op-er-a-tion can set things to
right! We've got to pull to-geth-er, work to-geth-er, No use pull-ing a-part;
We've got to think together, try together, Working together is smart!

We've got to smart! Working together is smart!

Yes, working together is smart!
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This song, based on the well-known Quaker fable of the Two Mules, was originally written for schoolchildren in Strabane and Derry/Londonderry taking part in inter-school, cross-community workshops under the auspices of the Northern Ireland Quaker Peace Education Project in the late 1980s. It was later recorded and used by BBC Schools NI for their ‘One Potato, Two Potato’ series.

The familiar poster of the Two Mules has been used in many different contexts over the years but was originally developed by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in England in the 1930s to promote a message of peaceful collaboration in resolving conflict.
Illustration from

**TWO MULES:**
A fable, a song, a worried teacher, a thoughtful farmer and lots of hay

Text by Norman Richardson; Illustrations by Yvonne Naylor

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[www.corrymeela.org/resources/two-mules](http://www.corrymeela.org/resources/two-mules)