

SAG-AFTRA FOUNDATION PRESENTS

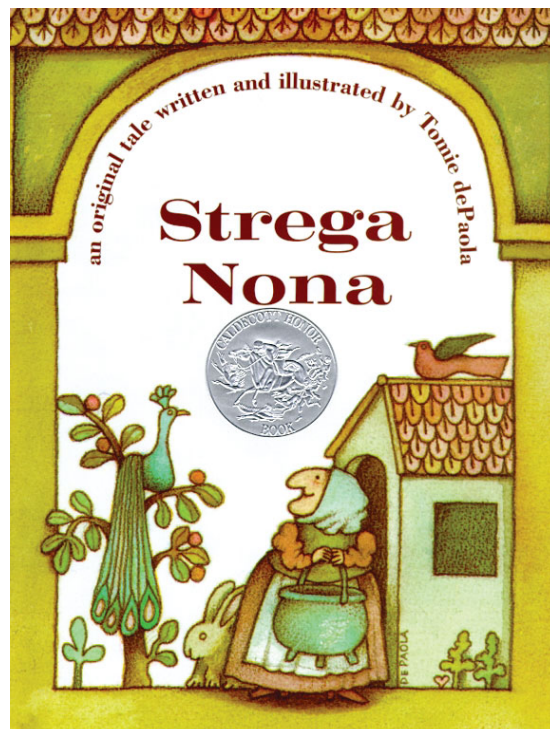
Storyline Online

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ACTIVITY GUIDE

ACTIVITIES RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN AGES 5-7



STREGA NONA

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY
TOMIE DEPAOLA

Watch the video of actor
Mary Steenburgen
reading this story at
storylineonline.net



ABOUT THIS STORY

SYNOPSIS

Strega Nona – “Grandma Witch” – is the source for potions, cures, magic and comfort in her Calabrian town. Her magical ever-full pasta pot is especially intriguing to hungry Big Anthony. He is supposed to look after her house and tend her garden, but one day, when she goes over the mountain to visit Strega Amelia, Big Anthony recites the magic verse over the pasta pot, with disastrous results.

THEMES IN THE STORY

Responsibility, Dishonesty, Consequences, Magic


TALK IT UP!

Use the following questions to discuss the themes of the story:

- Big Anthony is asked to sweep the house, wash the dishes, weed the garden, pick the vegetables, feed and milk the goat, and fetch water in exchange for 3 coins, food and a bed to sleep in next to the goat shed. Do you think that was a fair exchange? Why or Why Not? Would you like to do chores in exchange for your food, clothing and shelter?
- When Big Anthony told everyone in the town square about the magic pot, they said, “Such a lie!” Big Anthony was angry and said to himself, “I’ll show them!” Think about a time when you were telling the truth and no one believed you. How did that make you feel? What did you do to prove that you were telling the truth?
- Big Anthony uses Strega Nona’s pot without permission and is unable to stop the pasta from pouring all over the floor and into the street. Has there been a time when you used something without permission? What happened?
- When Strega Nona sees that Big Anthony was disobedient, she says, “The punishment must fit the crime.” If you were Strega Nona, what punishment would you have given Big Anthony?
- Strega means “witch” and Nona means “grandmother” in Italian. If Strega Nona was your grandmother, what magic cures and potions would you like her to make in her pot?

STAINED GLASS PASTA

Courtesy of *babbledabbledo.com*. The story takes place in Calabria, Italy. Italy is known for the finest and oldest mosaics.

 **Google It:** Find images of stained glass windows in cathedrals and buildings in Italy.



MATERIALS —

Flat pasta, Liquid watercolors or food coloring, Rubbing alcohol, Ziploc baggies, Clear contact paper, Scissors, Painter's tape, Wide-tip black sharpies

This project requires dyed pasta. Watch a [2 minute video](#) to learn how to easily dye pasta using food coloring or liquid watercolors. It is recommended to break the lasagna into pieces before dyeing it.

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

Step 1: Cut out 2 matching sizes of clear contact paper (suggested: 10"X10")

Step 2: Remove the backing from one piece of contact paper and tape it to your work surface using painter's tape. **Sticky side facing UP.**

Step 3: Place pieces of colored lasagna on the contact paper. Break pieces as necessary. Leave at least ¼" gap between each piece.

Step 4: Remove backing from second piece of contact paper and gently place it on top of the finished lay out. Gently rub the gaps with fingertips to seal.

Step 5: Use black sharpie to fill in the gap between the colored pieces for the stained glass effect.



WRITING ACTIVITY: MY 5-SENSES POEM

Strega Nona sang a magic song to fill her pot with hot pasta. Can you create a magic poem that brings your favorite food whenever recited?

MATERIALS —

Internet/tablet (paper, pen/pencil)

PREPARATION TIME —

None

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —

30 minutes

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

Think about your favorite food. Make a list of words that describe the way it looks, smells and tastes. How does your favorite food sound when you are cooking it? How does it make you feel when you are eating it? Once you have your list of descriptive words, see if you can pair words that rhyme. Use the rhyming pairs to make the lines of your poem. Suggested length of poem is 3 stanzas.

Sample stanza:


Make me a pizza as fast as you can

Bake it in the oven in a pan

Top it with lots of extra cheese

And, give me extra slices please

Optional: Record your poem on the computer and use software to add a beat or music.

 **Google It:** “Audio Software” for recording and editing programs.

COOKING ACTIVITY: DEEP-DISH SPAGHETTI PIZZA

“All right, Anthony, you wanted pasta from my magic pasta pot,” Strega Nona said, “and I want to sleep in my little bed tonight. So start eating.” Big Anthony ate all of the pasta that had overflowed out of Strega Nona’s house and into the town. Poor Big Anthony! He probably never wants to eat pasta again...unless it’s disguised as Deep-Dish Spaghetti Pizza!

INGREDIENTS —

8 ounces spaghetti (1/2 box)

3 cups marinara sauce

2 eggs, beaten

4 ounces mozzarella, grated (1 cup)

Kosher salt and black pepper

2 tablespoons, plus 1 teaspoon olive oil

Optional: 2 ounces sliced pepperoni (or another desired topping)



DIRECTIONS —

Cook the spaghetti according to the package directions. Drain and return it to the pot.

Preheat oven to 425° F. Toss the spaghetti with 2 cups of the marinara sauce, the eggs, and ½ cup of the mozzarella. Season with ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper.

Heat 1 teaspoon of the oil in a 10-inch ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add the spaghetti mixture and gently press it down. Top with the remaining 1 cup of marinara and ½ cup of mozzarella, then the pepperoni. Bake until browned, 18 to 20 minutes.

Add a little math to your recipe:

- Estimate: *Which weighs more, dry or wet pasta?* Before actually weighing it, ask child to hold about ten wet pieces of pasta in one hand and ten dry pieces in the other. *Which feels heavier? What makes one piece of pasta heavier than the other?* Last, get out a balance scale and check if you estimated correctly!
- Pasta Patterns: Create patterns (short, short, long; short, short, long) with your pasta. Practice patterns to help counting by 2's, 5's, 10's. Order the pasta from smallest to largest and largest to smallest to work on values on a number line.

EXPERIMENT: IT'S A PASTA PARTY!

Because Big Anthony did not see Strega Nona blow three kisses to her magic pasta pot, he could not to stop the pasta from coming out of the pot! When you have that much pasta to eat, it's more fun to have a party than eat it all by yourself.

MATERIALS —

Dance music, uncooked spaghetti, 2 cups of water, 2 cups of vinegar, 1 tablespoon baking soda, tall clear glass, food coloring (optional)

PREPARATION TIME —

None


LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —

15 minutes

PROCEDURE FOR EXPERIMENT —

Put water and vinegar in the glass. (Add 3-6 drops of food coloring to the water and vinegar mixture). Break spaghetti into 1-inch pieces and add to the mixture. Drop baking soda into the glass.

Are your noodles dancing?? Add more baking soda to get them moving and shaking!

 **Google It:** Search “Dancing Spaghetti” to learn the science behind the dancing.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Strega Nona needed someone to help her keep her house and garden neat and tidy. She hired Big Anthony to help her. Too bad we cannot hire Big Anthony to help us with our chores! Next time you are cleaning at home, make your chores less of a bore!

BEAT THE CLOCK

Big Anthony used Strega Nona's pot without permission. He wanted to stop the boiling pot before she returned. Select an amount of time that is based on age (example: if you are 7, give yourself 7 minutes) and set the timer. Can you clean your room before time runs out?

MUSICAL CHORES

Big Anthony has to sweep the house, wash the dishes, weed the garden, pick vegetables, feed the goat and fetch the water. Next time you have a long list of chores, play some music and when the music stops, move on to a new chore. Continue moving until all the tasks are completed.

PICK A CARD, ANY CARD

Strega Nona put a sign in the town square to find help with her home. To get help with your tasks, using index cards and a pen, write down different job assignments that need to be completed on a daily basis. Include easy and more difficult tasks. Take turns picking a random card (parents/guardians, too!) and completing the tasks as a team.

Field trips are a great way to make a real world connection to the story.

THE BOOT OF ITALY

The story takes place in a town in Calabria, which is located on the toe of the boot (extreme south of Italy). Can you find it on a map? 🔍 Google It for a virtual tour. Learn about its National Parks and beautiful beaches, and discover the famous Riace Bronzes.

RENAISSANCE FAIR

Based on the illustrations in the book, it may be suggested that the story takes place during the 14th – 17th century. Visit a Renaissance Fair and pretend you are living in a village similar to that of Strega Nona and Anthony! Renaissance Fairs are arranged to represent an imagined village in a European country. Find a fair where the merriment is set in the birthplace of Renaissance Italy. Sample a collection of traditional beverages, savor a variety of Italian cuisine, enjoy traditional music and displays of swordsmanship, and shop handcrafted wares. Immerse yourself in the culture and revel in the pageantry of Carnevale Fantastico!

DO SOMETHING

National Parks cover most of inland Calabria. There are things you can do to contribute to the health and sustainability of your local parks. Volunteer to clean up garbage along a hiking or biking trail, or even just on the side of the road. 🔍 Google “National Park Protection” to learn more ways you can get involved.

ABOUT STORYLINE ONLINE

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation's children's literacy website *Storyline Online* streams imaginatively produced videos featuring celebrated actors to help inspire a love of reading. Storyline Online receives millions of views every month in hundreds of countries. Visit Storyline Online at storylineonline.net.

ABOUT THE SAG-AFTRA FOUNDATION

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation provides vital assistance and educational programming to the professionals of SAG-AFTRA while serving the public at large through its signature children's literacy programs. Founded in 1985, the Foundation is a national non-profit organization, independent from SAG-AFTRA, and relies solely on support from grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual contributions to maintain our programs and create new ones. Visit sagaftra.foundation.

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