

STREGA NONA

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By Tomie dePaola (Simon & Schuster)

Themes: Folktales, Magic, Respect

Grade Level : K - 2

Running Time: 9 minutes

SUMMARY

Big Anthony finds himself knee-deep in trouble—and pasta—when he uses Strega Nona’s magic pasta pot without her permission.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about Italian culture.
- Children will appreciate the importance of listening and observing carefully.
- Children will understand the importance of respecting others.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book *STREGA NONA* with children. Then ask:

- How are the homes in the book different from ours?
- How is the clothing different?
- How do you think the townspeople traveled from place to place?
- How well do you think you would have known your neighbors?
- What would you do if you were one of the townspeople with a problem?
- What special Italian words were used in the book for “grandmother” and “thank you”?

Locate Italy on a map, on the continent of Europe.

Show how far Italy is from where the children live. Talk about Italy’s climate and neighbors in Europe who speak all different languages.

Explain to children that the story takes place in Italy where the word for grandmother is *nonna*. Encourage children to watch for other signs that indicate that the story takes place in another country.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Supply a large pot that can be used to represent the pasta pot in the film. Then have children talk about the kinds of things they would like to see appear from the pot and the special verses they might recite to make the magic. Have children draw pictures of what they wish to see in the pot. Work with children to print their own original verses that will help make the magic happen. Then place the drawings and the verses inside the pot. Have children take turns closing their eyes and drawing a picture or verse from the pot. Let children share them with the class. Later, display the pictures and verses with the “pasta pot” in the classroom.

Supply a large refrigerator box or large appliance box that children can use to make Strega Nona’s house. Work with children to cut windows and a door from the box. Then have children take turns pretending to be Strega Nona and the townspeople who come to her with problems. Encourage children to use their imaginations as they think about what problems they might have as towns-

people. Also encourage creative thinking as children pretending to be Strega Nona describe their magic potions.

Emphasize to children the importance of showing respect for adult family members and other authority figures. Then help children recall the way Strega Nona helped the townspeople in the film. Ask:

- How did the townspeople show respect for Strega Nona?
- How do you think that made Strega Nona feel?
- How did Big Anthony behave disrespectfully toward Strega Nona?
- How do you think Big Anthony felt when Strega Nona discovered what he had done?
- How do you think Strega Nona felt?

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