

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

## SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

SOCIAL SKILL: FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS  
CASEL COMPETENCY: SELF-MANAGEMENT

### BOOK INFORMATION

Book Title: *Strega Nona*  
Author: Tomie dePaola  
Publisher: Little Simon (subdivision of Simon & Schuster)  
Year: 1975  
ISBN Number: 978-1-4424-3355-7  
Number of Pages: 30 pages  
Reading Level: Pre-K - 6<sup>th</sup> grade

### BOOK SYNOPSIS

This book is based on an old Italian folktale about Strega Nona, which means grandma witch. She has a magic touch and can cure people of illnesses and help them with all their wishes and needs. Getting older, she can no longer care for her home and garden. Big Anthony helps her with her work. She gives him very simple rules---things he should do and one thing he must NEVER do---touch the pasta pot. While she is on a trip, Big Anthony breaks the rule. Pasta overflows the town and he has no idea how to stop the pot. Strega Nona returns and solves the problem.

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

Listen carefully and follow rules. Some rules are extremely important, even though we may not understand the consequences for not following rules.

### LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCED PREPARATION

**Materials:** several aprons; hot pad; big pot and large stirring spoon; 12 strips (approximately 1 ½ inch by 11 ½ inches) of a variety of colored papers

**Preparation:** Cut the strips of paper and gather the items for cooking a magic pot of “following rules”

### KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

**Pasta** - another name for noodles

**Potions** - magic liquids made with strange ingredients, usually playing a part in a fairy tale; when a person drinks a magic potion, the potion is supposed to do something magical

**“Grazie”** - the Italian word for “thank you”

**“Si”** - the Italian word for “yes”

**Convent** - a home for individuals who dedicate their lives to their religious beliefs (Catholic Church); home for individuals are called priests and nuns (also called sisters)

**Sup** - to eat a meal

**Simmer** - to keep food warm while it is slowly cooking, not making the food bubble and boil over the edges of the pot

### PRE-READING DISCUSSION

Show the front cover of the book. Ask students if they have ever seen a really large pot like on the book's cover (point to Strega Nona's pot). Explain that this pot is used for cooking pasta--noodles. Ask if anyone has a favorite recipe with noodles or pasta (macaroni and cheese, spaghetti, ravioli, etc.). Explain that in Italy – where this story takes place – pasta is a common food. Everyone eats lots of pasta.

### READ THE BOOK

### POST READING DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions:

- What was Strega Nona's one rule which she told Big Anthony NEVER to do?
- Why would Big Anthony want to do something he was very clearly told NOT to do?
- Is it really hard to do what you are told to do---- or to NOT do what you are told NOT to do?
- After Big Anthony broke Strega Nona's rule, what happened? What was the consequence of Big Anthony's bad choice?
- How did Strega Nona stop the pasta from coming out of the pot?
- How did Big Anthony make up for his bad choice?
- Have you ever broken a rule and then helped to make things right again?

### POST READING ACTIVITY

#### **Magic Classroom Pot**

Show the big pot, the stirring spoon, aprons, hot pad, etc. Explain that we are going to make a magic classroom pot full of tips for "following rules." Read the following examples and after each example (scenario), select a student to write a short tip for following rules. Examples are bolded in brackets at the end of each scenario. 12 scenarios are included (below). Use 12 colored strips of paper (or less if you do not have sufficient time), writing one tip on each strip of paper. For the younger children the adult will need to write on the strips of paper, but in the older groups (grades 3-6) select a different student to write on each of the word strips. You may choose several students to wear an apron and assist placing the word strips in the pot and then stirring in one word strip at a time. Go through this at a pretty fast pace (only spend a minute or so on each of the scenarios).

## Scenarios:

1. Recess is over, the first bell rings and all students stop what they are doing and get off of the swings and slides. Those who are playing with jump ropes and basket balls hold them still and stop playing. Everyone stops talking and forms a line at the school door. Students walk quietly down the hall to their classrooms. **[Follow playground rules.]**
2. Five girls are laughing loudly and running down the hallway. The school secretary steps into the hall and reminds the girls to walk quietly and safely in the hall. The girls apologize and stop laughing. They walk down the hallway, even after the secretary walks back into the office. **[Keep rules even when no one is looking.]**
3. Grant waits for the cafeteria supervisor's go ahead to clean up his table. He throws his orange peel, milk carton, and wrappers in the trash. He also sees a napkin on the floor which another student dropped. He picks up the napkin and throws it in the garbage can. **[Keep our school cafeteria clean.]**
4. Mrs. Brown reminds the students that they only have 5 minutes before the end-of-school bell rings and it is time to go home. The teacher has tomorrow's assignments written on the board. Alec writes down all of his homework assignments in his notebook, then places the notebook in his backpack. He has his homework folder organized and everything is ready. Mrs. Brown gives a thumbs up and Alec is ready to go home. **[Be responsible.]**
5. Devon is in the school restroom. There are paper tiles crumpled and on the floor. One of the sinks is full of water and it looks as if someone plugged the drain. Water starts to flow over the top of the sink. Devon turns the water facet off and quickly goes to find the janitor for his help. **[Keep bathrooms clean and report problems.]**
6. On the playground several boys and girls are playing a fun game. A new boy, Eric, comes up and asks if he can join in the fun. Michael, Emily, and Jared invite Eric to join their team.
7. Camille is in the school library picking out a good book to read. She has several she really wants to read. She wants to check out several of the Ramona books, but the rule is that a student can only check out one book at a time. As she prepares to leave, she asks the librarian if she could please check out more than one book. The librarian re-explains the "one book" rule. Camille decides on one book and, with a smile, thanks the librarian. **[Follow library rules.]**
8. Jeff and Kit are playing outside the school before school starts. Last night was stormy and windy. They notice that the wind blew paper and plastic wrappers in the bushes and around the school yard. They make a game of seeing who can collect the most garbage and throw it into the garbage can. **[Keep our school clean.]**
9. Kiley, Suzi, and Jerome are in the hall. They are making fun of a Joe who is smaller than the other kids and who has trouble talking clearly. Joe looks very sad and is trying to walk away, but the students keep following him. Lilly walks up and asks Joe to walk with her. She tells Joe that she does not like how the other students are bullying him. **[No bullying.]**
10. Principal Hoopes asks each student to greet those who are new in the school. Mr. Hoopes is visiting the classroom. He says "pair up" and practice greeting others. Sam is rather shy and has a hard time speaking up and greeting others. Randy notices how shy Sam is and offers to practice with Sam. **[Think of others and help out when possible.]**
11. In the winter time our school has a rule, "no snow ball throwing." Jared, Ben, Milly, Steve, and Dan are 6<sup>th</sup> graders who think the rule is for babies. They think that when no one is looking they can throw a few snow balls. No one will notice. Mr. Thompson, the sixth grade teacher, challenges his students to follow all the school rules and that there is a reason for each rule. Jared speaks up and says he sees no need for the "no snow ball" rule. Mr.

Thompson shows the class a scar on his forehead. He tells them about being hit by a snow ball that also had a rock in it. He said that blood looks really red in the white snow---he shudders. Jared, Ben, Milly, Steve, and Dan decide to follow the rule. **[Follow safety rules. Rules are there for a reason.]**

12. Mr. Kelley leaves his colored paper and printer paper on his desk. When he is out of the classroom during lunch, George and Alexis love to draw and talk about how great it would be if they could take some of the paper and put it in their backpacks. They could use it for drawing and doing origami. However, when they talk about it, they both feel it is just not right, even if no one would ever know. They decide to NOT take the paper. **[Do not take what is not yours.]**

## CLOSURE

Hang the poster (provided) in the room and remind students of how important it is to follow rules and directions.



I follow rules

