

# Lesson Plan 1 - Brava Strega YOU!

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**THEME:** This lesson is based on children's literature, specifically *Brava Strega Nona!* by Tomie dePaola.

**GRADE LEVEL:** 1st grade

**GOAL/ACTIVITY:** Students will complete their own version of "Brava Strega Nona!" with details of their own life.



Teacher Example

**DEVELOPMENTAL RATIONALE/PRIOR LEARNING:** Students will be entering or already in the Lowenfeld's Schematic Stage as first graders. This assignment will allow students to practice drawing while using symbols and recognizable items (people, food, objects) but does not focus on mastery of technique or accuracy of a particular subject matter. Students will not be graded based on the "quality" of their drawings or given a visual goal to judge themselves, but will be asked open-ended questions about their responses. This lesson also develops students' understanding of other languages and cultures and how people who are different from them can be similar by introducing them to Italian words and comparing their own habits with given examples and their fellow classmates.

**HISTORY/BACKGROUND:** *Strega Nona*, published in 1975, is a children's book written and illustrated by Tommie dePaola classified as a folk-tale. It tells the story of Strega (Witch) Nona (Her name, one letter off of "Nonna", meaning Grandmother) who owns a magic pasta pot. She is known for helping her town with problems throughout her life, but as she ages

she needs to hire Big Anthony to help her with the household chores. She tells him to never touch her pasta pot but, of course, he does and it floods the entire town with pasta. Strega Nona stops the pasta from flowing and sentences Big Anthony to eat all of the leftover pasta.

dePaola, born in Connecticut, passed away in 2020 and is remembered for his work as a teacher and professor alongside his large collection of stories. He was, for most of his life, a closeted gay man. The *Strega Nona* series consists of eleven books including *Brava Strega Nona!*, a shorter and more accessible story narrated by Strega Nona herself. She teaches the Italian words for family, eat, friends, patience, celebrate, and love and with each word gives a small story about her life. The original story of *Strega Nona* is referenced throughout the book but is not the main focus, nor does it need to be known to understand *Brava*. *Brava* is a wonderfully crafted and interactive pop-up book with multiple items to pull-out or open.

### **STANDARDS:**

**Re.7.1.1a:** Select and describe works of art that illustrate the daily life experiences of one's self and others.

**Cr3.1.1a:** Use art vocabulary to describe choices while making art.

**Cr2.2.1a:** Demonstrate safe and proper procedures for using materials, tools, and equipment.

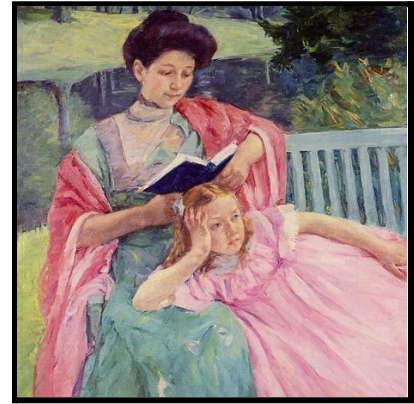
**Cn11.1.1a:** Understand that people from different places and times have made art for a variety of reasons.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

**Cognitive-Head:** Students will be able to identify listed Italian words in order to associate them with the English terms.

**Psychomotor-Hands:** Students will be able to create drawings of their lives in order to illustrate what is important to them.

**Affective-Heart:** Students will be able to identify similarities and differences in their lives and Strega Nona's/their fellow students' in order to better understand others' lives.



1. Seurat, Georges. *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. 1886. The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago.
2. Bloch, Carl. *In a Roman Osteria*. 1866. National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen.
3. Cassatt, Mary. *Auguste Reading to her Daughter*. 1910. Private Collection.

**SUPPLIES:** Pre-printed booklets (stapled), pens, pencils, colored pencils, crayons, markers, cut paper, glue.

**RESOURCES:** *Brava Strega Nona!* book (as well as alternate language version(s)), and other dePaola works (Art-Mail Series April First 2016 and Bronte Tomie Jarrett 2016), historical paintings depicting people's lives (*A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* by Georges Seurat, *In a Roman Osteria* by Carl Bloch, *Auguste Reading to her Daughter* by Mary Cassatt) (full citations above). Created booklet by teacher - [LINK](#).

**TEACHER PREPARATION:** Print and staple booklets. Prepare bins of varied art supplies for each table of students. Cut paper strips for students who finish early.

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** Students will have previous experience in art class using common mediums (markers, crayons, colored pencils). Students will be comfortable sharing information about their lives with their classmates. Students will have discussed what

different languages are and will understand that words in another language have English counterparts.

### **TEACHING | *Motivation/Spark***

Class will start with a short PowerPoint showing *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* by Georges Seurat, *In a Roman Osteria* by Carl Bloch, and *Auguste Reading to her Daughter* by Mary Cassatt. Students will be prompted with questions to see how the people in the paintings' lives are similar and different to theirs ("In this painting, all of these people are sitting and watching the river. Have you ever done this? What else do you see people in this picture doing?" "This woman is being silly with her friends and has a napkin on her head! Are you guys silly with your friends at lunch?" "Does anybody read with their family?"). dePaola will be introduced with his Art-Mail illustrations and similar questions will be asked. Strega Nona will be introduced- "Now this is Strega Nona- as I'm reading her book, keep an eye out for things in her life that are the same or different to yours."

### **TEACHING | *Step-by-Step***

1. PPT described above which will also include definitions of Illustration and Pop-Up.
2. Read aloud *Brava Strega Nona!*
3. During the reading, repeat the Italian vs. English words and have students parrot them back ("Student what was the word we just said?" "Amore!" "And Other Student, what does that word mean?" "Love!")- help students along with mouthing words/making the initial noise or using hand symbols + motions.
4. "Today, we're all going to be Stregas! What did Strega mean again?" (Witch)
5. Pass out workbooks to students and have them write their names or offer to write students' names for them (Class One ends here).



6. Walk students through the pages, doing more parroting responses with the words (“Can anyone remind me what “Famiglia” means?” “So, on the Family page, what do you think you should draw?”)
7. Dismiss students table by table to get art supplies from the counter.
8. Walk around and help individual students if they are struggling with supplies (“Do you notice any difference when you press down hard with the crayon versus pressing lightly?” “When you press down super hard with markers, it’ll bleed through onto the other page. Do you want to do that?”).
9. Continue walking around while students are working, asking questions and having them show you their work (“What are you doing for this page?” “Are you going to add anything else to this illustration?”)
10. During clean-up and set-up between classes, start and end class by seeing if students remember the vocabulary words (both Italian/English words and the listed vocabulary).
11. Students who finish early will need to get their booklet “approved” by the teacher in order to get paper and glue for Extended Activity.
12. At the end of the last class, students will participate in the activity described below.

### **TEACHING | *Closure***

Students will be given a word based on the pages of the book- “Family”, “Eat”, “Friends”, and “Love”. They will be assigned groups with one student of each word in the group and share that page of their booklet with each other. Students will then share their group’s work with the entire class.

**VOCABULARY:** **Illustration** (n.) a drawing depicting what is happening in a book, comic, etc., **Pop-Up** (n.) an illustration in a book made of folded paper which “pops up” and off the page. **Contour Line** (n.) a drawing of the outline and interior structure of a form without

shading. Given Italian words: **Strega** (Witch), **Famiglia** (family), **Mangia** (eat), **Amici** (friends), **Pazienza** (patience), **Celebrazione** (Celebration), **Amore** (love).

**ASSESSMENT:** Students will present their group's discussion to the class (which person did "Love" and what did they say? etc.) for 10pts. Booklets will be turned in and graded based on: Name on Cover (2 pts), Completion (5pts) (students needing extra time will be given), Neatness/Craftsmanship (5pts), Accuracy to terms used (ex. Not drawing "friends" on the "family" page) (5pts), and Classroom Etiquette (5pts).

**ACCOMMODATIONS/MODIFICATIONS/ADAPTATIONS:** Crayons and markers with large grips and blunt points will be provided. Because the book is translated into multiple languages, a written non-English version will be provided for an ELL student to read along (to their ability) while the teacher is reading aloud to the class.

**EXTENSIONS:** Students who finish early will be given the option to create drawn or cut paper decorations for their book to attach to accordion fold paper. This will make their book a "pop up book" like the original book. Two words (Patience and Celebration) from *Brava* are not included in the booklet material, so students can also create an extra page for their booklet based on those two words.

**CORRELATED ACTIVITY:** Students will create a collaborative paper mural of a "meal" consisting of foods their families make. This could possibly be a Thanksgiving activity.

## **TIME BUDGET:**

### **Class One**

Introductory PPT (15min)

Read Story (20min)

Pass out Booklets/have students write their names (5min)

Collect Booklets/Wrap up (5min)

### **Class Two**

Review words and go through booklet page by page (10min)

Work time (30min)

Clean up/Wrap up (5min)

### **Class Three**

Review words (5min)

Work time- time to finish up! (30min)

Clean up/Wrap up (10min)

### **Class Four**

Review words (5min)

Group students (5min)

Students talk with their groups (10min)

Students present to the class (20min)

Clean up/Wrap up - Collect booklets for grading (5 min)

**REFERENCES:** *Strega Nona* and *Brava Strega Nona!* by Tomie dePaola. Illustrations Art-Mail April First 2016 and Bronte Tomie Jarrett 2016 by Tomie dePaola. *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* by Georges Seurat, *In a Roman Osteria* by Carl Bloch, *Auguste Reading to her Daughter* by Mary Cassatt. Lowenfeld's Stages of Artistic Development.