The Wit, Wisdom, and Agriculture of Tomie dePaola

National Ag in Classroom Conference 2011

Melissa A. Campbell

Wills Valley Elementary School

Fort Payne, Alabama
Strega Nona

- Letter Writing: Write to Tomie dePaola and Strega Nona at the following address:
  
  Strega Nona
  c/o Mr. Tomie dePaola
  345 Hudson Street
  New York, New York 10114

- Measurement: Cut white yarn into pieces of varying lengths. Place cut yarn into a pot. Have students spoon out pieces of the yarn to measure.

- Classifying: Purchase packages of a variety of pasta. Provide students with several bowls (or copies of the template) and a cup of the uncooked pasta. Have students separate the pasta into the bowls. Upon completion, have students describe their classifying rule.

- Creative Writing: Encourage students to rewrite Strega Nona’s magic spell using their favorite foods in place of the pasta.
How Long is Strega Nona’s Spaghetti?

1. Use the spoon to dish 5 strands of spaghetti from the pot.
2. Lay each strand of spaghetti by a letter below.
3. Use your ruler to measure each strand of spaghetti and record your results.

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.
Strega Nona
Here is a coloring page for you! Maybe you would like to add some drawing of your own! Why not add STREGA NONA's house, or BIG ANTHONY, or BAMBOLONA, or an animal or two— or trees and flowers. Add anything you want—just have fun! ☾

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Mice Squeak, We Speak

• Patterns: Use animal sounds to teach the concept of patterns. Have students use animal stamps or stickers to create a pattern. Place some students in a line and hand out teacher-selected animal pictures. Have the students make the sound of their animal and have remaining students name the pattern rule or what sound would come next.
• I Have, Who Has: Hand out animal picture/clue cards and have students name the animals.
• Writing: Students use the template to write what they think the animals are really saying when they make their individual sounds.
• Music: Sing the following song to the tune of “Do You Know the Muffin Man?” adding any farm animals you desire and having students guess the animals as each verse is completed:
    Oh, can you hear me moo, moo, moo?
    Moo, moo, moo,
    Moo, moo, moo.
    Oh, can you hear me moo, moo, moo?
    What am I? (cow)
Mice Squeak, We Speak

When a cat purrs, it is really saying ____________________.

When a mouse squeaks, it is really saying ____________________.

When a sheep baas, it is really saying ____________________.

When a cow moos, it is really saying ____________________.

When a duck quacks, it is really saying ____________________.

When a pig squeals, it is really saying ____________________.

When a horse neighs, it is really saying ____________________.

When a chicken clucks, it is really saying ____________________.

When a dog growls, it is really saying ____________________.

When I speak, I say ____________________.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>chicken</th>
<th>sheep</th>
<th>horse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>goat</td>
<td>rooster</td>
<td>donkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pig</td>
<td>cow</td>
<td>turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>dog</td>
<td>duck</td>
<td>cat</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Michael Bird-Boy

- Sequencing: Have students color, cut out, and sequence the process of bees to honey.
- Sequencing/Science: Have students fold a paper into fourths. Each square should be labeled with the name of a season. Students should then draw a picture of that season in the proper box.
- Experiments: Check out the pollution resources and experiments at:
  www.epa.gov/kids/science.htm
  pbskids.org/zoom/activities
- Compare/Contrast: Have students compare and contrast Michael/Boss Lady, city/country, things that help/hurt the environment.
Bees to Honey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bees go back to the hive.</th>
<th>Flowers grow.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bees go to the flower and drink nectar.</td>
<td>Bees make honeycombs from beeswax.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bees turn nectar into honey and put it into the honeycombs.</td>
<td>Boss-Lady's factory produces the honey.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Color each box.
Cut out each box.
Put the boxes in order.
Jamie O’Rourke and the Big Potato

- Technology: Learn interesting potato facts and play potato games at:
  www.thehotpotato.com
  www.idahopotatoes.com/

- Graphing: Have students taste test different toppings and graph what toppings they prefer on their baked potatoes or have them graph the potato “foods” that they like the best.

- Just for Fun: Play hot potato with a twist. When the timer beeps or the music stops, the person holding the potato isn’t out, but rather must share a potato fact with the other players. Remember, if you don’t want to use a real potato, trim the foot from a pair of pantyhose and stuff it for a great facsimile.

- Science: Make potato people with real potatoes. Potatoes should be placed partially down in a plastic cup. As the “eyes” sprout, other facial features can be added by students.
How do we like our potatoes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>baked potatoes</th>
<th>mashed potatoes</th>
<th>french fries</th>
<th>potato chips</th>
<th>potato salad</th>
<th>potato soup</th>
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Watch Out for the Chicken Feet in Your Soup

• Compare/Contrast: Have students compare/contrast the feelings of Joey and Eugene throughout the events of the story.
• Creative Writing: Have students write about a special family tradition, or about something special that they do with a relative.
• Spelling/Language: Give students a bowl, spoon, and some alphabet noodles. Have them spell words from the story.
• Cooking: Use a bread mix to have students bake bread. The bread doll recipe is very special and is included in the book.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eugene</th>
<th>Joey</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When they get to Grandma's house</td>
<td>When they eat soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When they eat spaghetti</td>
<td>When they eat bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When they eat dills</td>
<td>When they eat bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make's bread</td>
<td>Just costs on the bread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Joey and Eugene: How did they feel?
**Charlie Needs a Cloak**

- **Sequencing:** Use the template to have students make a mini book about the life of a sheep or the process from sheep to wool.

- **Art:** Have children trace around their hand on white construction paper. After cutting it out, allow students to use markers to add facial features and cotton balls as wool. Put the completed flock of sheep on display.

- **Creative Writing:** Have students rewrite the story from the sheep’s point of view.

- **Just for Fun:** On YouTube under the title, “Sheep Shearing for Wool,” are a few video clips of the shearing process. *Not for younger children.*
WOOL:
beginning
to end!
SHEEP:

beginning

to end!
Other Tomie dePaola Titles and Ag Topics

- **The Bubble Factory**: states of matter, bubbles, ecology
- **The Cloud Book**: weather, types of clouds, cloud legends
- **The Legend of the Bluebonnet**: Texas history, Indian legends, ecology
- **The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush**: Midwestern/Western U.S. history, Indian legends
- **Little Grunt and the Big Egg**: pets, earthquakes, volcanoes
- **Pancakes for Breakfast**: cooking, farm-home connection
- **The Popcorn Book**: history of popcorn, popcorn legends, types of corn, corn growing cycle, cooking with popcorn
- **The Quicksand Book**: quicksand facts, making quicksand, geography
- **The Quilt Story**: family traditions, pioneers
- **Strega Nona’s Harvest**: gardens, fall harvest, vegetables and growing cycles