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WEEK 5 · CALABRIA, ITALY

a read-aloud trip with

Strega Nona

Companion activities for the book by Tomie dePaola

Activities to go with *Strega Nona* by Tomie dePaola. Find it at your local library!
This free kit is not affiliated with or endorsed by the author or publisher.

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FIND CALABRIA

Strega Nona lives in a little town in Calabria, a region in the south of Italy. Italy is shaped like a boot, and Calabria is the toe!



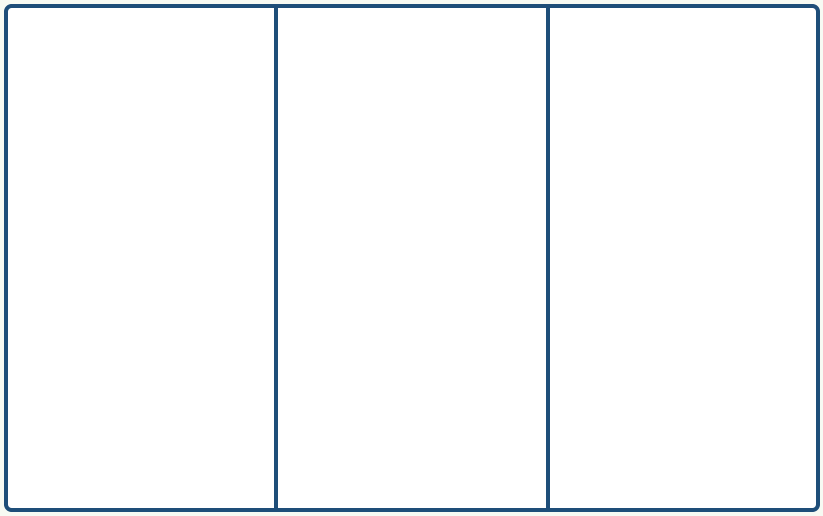
1. Trace the boot. Then color Italy **green**.
2. Draw a pasta pot on the toe of the boot, where Strega Nona lives.
3. Draw a star on Rome, the capital of Italy.
4. Color the sea **blue**. Water on three sides makes Italy a _____

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ITALY FACT FILE

Every traveler needs to learn about the place they're visiting. Color Italy's flag below, then fill in the blanks as you learn more about this beautiful country.

THE FLAG OF ITALY



green white red

Italy is shaped like a _____

The capital city of Italy is _____

People in Italy speak _____

Strega Nona's home is in the region of _____

A LITTLE PASTA HISTORY

People in Italy have been making pasta for hundreds of years. Long ago, fresh pasta was hung on racks to dry in the sun, sometimes right out in the street!

Tomatoes didn't grow in Italy until explorers brought them from the Americas in the 1500s. So the very first pasta had **no tomato sauce** at all.

If tomatoes were not available, what would you put on your pasta?

_____

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FACT OR FIB?

Pinocchio's nose grows every time he tells a fib. Some of these sayings about Italy are facts, and some are fibs! Read each one out loud, color your guess, then flip the page to check.

1 ANCIENT ROME

Long ago, Rome ruled a huge empire. The Romans built roads so well that people still walk on some of them today.

○ fact ○ fib

2 SPAGHETTI TREES

In parts of Italy, spaghetti grows on trees. Farmers pick it every spring and hang it out to dry.

○ fact ○ fib

3 THE COLOSSEUM

About 2,000 years ago, the Romans built a giant stadium in Rome. It could hold around 50,000 people!

○ fact ○ fib

4 THE LEANING TOWER

The Tower of Pisa started leaning while it was still being built, because the ground under it was too soft.

○ fact ○ fib

5 PIZZA'S BIRTHPLACE

Pizza was invented in America. Sailors brought it to Italy about 100 years ago.

○ fact ○ fib

6 A PIZZA FLAG

People say Pizza Margherita was made to match the Italian flag: red tomato, white cheese, and green basil.

○ fact ○ fib

The fibs are #2 and #5. Spaghetti is made from flour and water, not picked from trees. And pizza comes from Naples, Italy!

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FACT OR FIB? PART 2

Can you catch the rest of the fibs? Read, guess, and color. Then flip the page to see how many you got right.

7 A CITY ON WATER

In Venice, many of the "streets" are canals. People get around by boat, even to go to school!

○ fact ○ fib

8 NO FORKS ALLOWED

In Italy, it's against the law to eat pizza with a fork.

○ fact ○ fib

9 FIRE MOUNTAINS

Italy has volcanoes. Mount Etna, on the island of Sicily, is one of the most active volcanoes in the world.

○ fact ○ fib

10 SWIM TO SCHOOL

In Venice, kids swim to school through the canals every morning.

○ fact ○ fib

11 TALKING HANDS

Italians talk with their hands! Pinch your fingertips together and shake your hand. It means "What do you want?"

○ fact ○ fib

12 PINOCCHIO

The story of the wooden puppet whose nose grows when he fibs was written in Italy, more than 140 years ago.

○ fact ○ fib

The fibs are #8 and #10. There's no pizza-fork law (lots of Italians eat pizza with a knife and fork!). And kids in Venice walk or ride a boat to school.

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MEET TWO ITALIAN ARTISTS

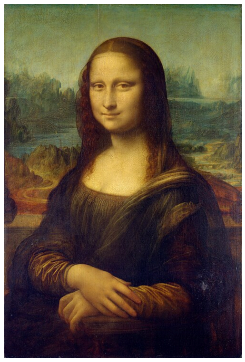
About 500 years ago, Italy was home to some of the most famous artists who ever lived. Read about two of them, then try their tricks yourself!

ARTIST AND INVENTOR

LEONARDO DA VINCI

- He painted the **Mona Lisa**, one of the most famous paintings in the world.
- He filled notebooks with ideas for inventions, like flying machines.
- He often wrote **backwards**, so his notes are easiest to read in a mirror!

Try it: write your name backwards like Leonardo. Then hold it up to a mirror!



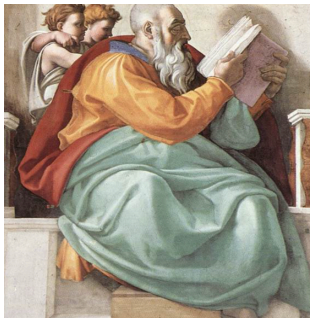
Mona Lisa, about 1503

SCULPTOR AND PAINTER

MICHELANGELO

- He carved the statue **David** out of one giant block of marble. It's about 17 feet tall, almost as tall as a giraffe!
- He painted the ceiling of the **Sistine Chapel** in Vatican City, a tiny country inside Rome. It took him about four years.
- He stood on tall wooden platforms and leaned back to paint above his head.

Try it: tape this page under a table, lie on your back, and draw a picture on the ceiling (the back of this page). Is it harder than it looks?



The Prophet Zechariah, Sistine Chapel ceiling, about 1509

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SPEAK A LITTLE ITALIAN

Practice the Italian words below. When you think you've memorized a word, color the star, and try using it at dinner tonight with your family!

BEING POLITE

Ciao
say: **chow**
hello or goodbye

Grazie
say: **GRAHT-see-eh**
thank you

Per favore
say: **pehr fah-VOH-reh**
please

Sì
say: **see**
yes

AT NONNA'S TABLE

Nonna
say: **NOHN-nah**
grandma

Strega
say: **STRAY-gah**
witch

Mangia!
say: **MAHN-jah**
eat!

Buon appetito
say: **bwohn ah-peh-TEE-toh**
enjoy your meal

Strega Nona means _____ (hint: look above!)

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WRITE A MAGIC POT SPELL

Strega Nona sings one song to start her pasta pot and another to stop it. Write your own song! Try to make the lines rhyme using the suggestions in the rhyme bank.

RHYME BANK

pot · hot · lot · not

bubble · trouble · double

noodle · doodle · poodle

stop · drop · pop · top

cook · look · book

TO START THE POT

TO STOP THE POT

Then blow three kisses. Color a heart for each one.

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STREGA NONA SAYS!

Play this game like Simon Says. A grown-up calls out "Strega Nona says..." and an action. If they skip "Strega Nona says," don't move!

1. **STIR THE POT**
   Make big circles with both arms.

2. **BUBBLE, BUBBLE**
   Bounce up and down like a bubbling pot.

3. **BLOW THREE KISSES**
   One, two, three!

4. **RUN FROM THE PASTA**
   Run in place as fast as you can.

5. **SWIM THROUGH THE NOODLES**
   Do your best swimming arms.

6. **PRETEND TO SLURP A LONG NOODLE**
   Make the slurpiest noise you can!

7. **SWEEP THE FLOOR**
   Grab a pretend broom, just like Big Anthony.

8. **WIGGLE LIKE SPAGHETTI**
   Wobble your whole body like a cooked noodle.

BASTA! When the grown-up shouts "Basta!" (that's Italian for "enough!"), freeze like a stiff, uncooked noodle.

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PASTA JOKES

Read each joke to someone in your family. Can they guess the punchline? Flip the page to find out!

1

What do you call a fake noodle?

An impasta!

2

What is a ghost's favorite pasta?

Spook-ghetti!

3

How do you fix a broken pizza?

With tomato paste!

4

What did the mama noodle say at bedtime?

"It's pasta your bedtime!"

5

Why did the spaghetti go to the doctor?

It was feeling a little drained.

WRITE YOUR OWN PASTA JOKE

ANSWER KEY FOR GROWN-UPS

Find Calabria: peninsula. **Fact file:** boot · Rome · Italian · Calabria. **Speak a little Italian:** Strega Nona means "Grandma Witch."