



Sabrina's Secret Life

Curriculum Statement

Mission: To support and promote positive social learning by providing engaging models of character development and life skills while entertaining 9 – 12-year-olds.

Need: Parents of grade school children (ages 7 - 12 years) consistently identify such characteristics as honesty, perseverance, independence, self-efficacy, respect for diversity, and such life skills as getting along with others, literacy, good study habits, helping, sharing, and general civility as critical to their children's development. Moreover, they as consistently complain about the difficulty of locating television programs that model positive attributes such as these for young viewers.

There is little question that children can benefit from such programming. Between the ages of eight and twelve, children's lives change dramatically. The years between the end of grade school and junior high mark a transition from relative dependence to relative independence – from a world in which most activities still revolve around the immediate family to one marked by growing mobility and contact with new people, new situations, new ideas. During these years, children face the task of figuring out how to continue to relate and interact in the family at the same time they begin to establish independence and to explore new information and respond to new demands from “outside” the family.

This is not an easy task. New situations confronting children as they approach junior high school create a good deal of uncertainty. These ‘twens’ begin to experience a pull between the world of “my family” and the world of “me and my friends.” They explore how to function as independent beings at almost the same moment their concern with the opinions and evaluations of others – particularly other kids – begins to grow. Small wonder that many find the world a scary place. Small wonder that so many parents and teachers bemoan the dearth of models and “scripts” that can help show children how to get along with others, develop self-reliance and good character, establish individuality and fit in at the same time. Small wonder parents call for more television programming portraying the kinds of values and behaviors that help promote children's successful navigation of these critical years.

Concept: Sabrina at fourteen...half mortal, half witch, struggling to master both roles as she enters the confusing world of junior high school. Sabrina's lessons in how to be a good witch are demanding, but no more so than what she must learn in order to be a good human. Witching lessons in levitation, incantation, and prestidigitation are tough, but

learning such human attributes as loyalty, honesty, self-efficacy, tolerance, perseverance, independence...these are true challenges. Each week, as Sabrina confronts her two sides, she discovers that the magic of becoming human is even more demanding and more powerful than the magic of the Netherworld.

Approach: Mix one fourteen-year-old witch in the making, one centuries old wizard trapped in the edgy persona of an urbane black cat, and two 400-year-old Netherworld aunts in the bodies of young adults. Add one junior high populated by a nasty full blooded witch named Cassandra, a dream-boat called Harvey, a best friend and confidant named Maritza, and assorted teachers, coaches, classmates, and hangers-on. Blend in some homework assignments, drama tryouts, cookie-selling competitions, and assorted junior high school catastrophes. Then add an occasional warlock, dragon, bogeyman, or Attila the Hun. If you think newts and lizard tails make a potent potion, wait 'til you see the wild, wacky and wonderful prosocial lessons that bubble up from this brew!

Sabrina – thirteen years old, half mortal, half witch, and in love with life. She approaches school, friendship, and growing up with enthusiasm. No challenge is too big, but life can sometimes be terribly confusing. As she struggles to understand and master her human side, Sabrina provides an excellent role-model for the nine to twelve year old audience. She is young, enthusiastic, cool (what half witch wouldn't be?), and faces many of the same kinds of issues and problems that most contemporary tweens encounter. And she deals with these issues and problems in concrete ways that are relevant to the lives of today's kids.

Sabrina is positive, self-reliant, competent...and open to new ideas. She listens, learns from her mistakes, and does what is necessary to reinforce the lesson for others. With the help, guidance, and explicit comments of Salem (an ancient wizard turned into a sardonic but insightful cat) and Hilda and Zelda (four-hundred-year-old, "aunts" assigned to help Sabrina become a fully functioning witch), both Sabrina and the viewing audience confront and engage important information about what it takes to become a positive human being.

Attractive characters; entertaining story lines that mirror the kinds of issues and situations that concern children in middle childhood; and stories that examine those issues in concrete, explicit terms that children can understand – all these make *Sabrina's Secret Life* a prime example of the power of combining entertainment and education.

E/I ISSUES & SYNOPSES

SAS111

AT THE HOP

Trying to help Sabrina, Maritza asks Harvey to a girl's choice dance in order to save her from Cassandra. When Sabrina finds out about her best friend "dating" Harvey, she gives Maritza no chance to explain. She accuses her best friend of betraying her, and even goes so far as to team with Cassandra to seek revenge on Maritza. Fortunately, Sabrina eventually discovers that good friends must trust each other, and her friendship is saved.

E/I Issue(s): friendship; trust

SAS112 **SCHOOL SPIRIT**

Because she is frustrated at continually coming in second best into Cassandra, Sabrina ignores Mr. Snipe's admonition that "doing one's best is far more important than being the best," and resolves to do whatever it takes to be best...to win at all costs. A contest to see who can sell the most cookies to raise money for the school turns into pandemonium because Sabrina uses forbidden magic to help her attain her goal. Ultimately she learns that one does not have to *be* the best to be a winner; the important thing is simply always to do one's best.

E/I Issue(s): doing one's best

SAS113 **I'M A SLAVE FOR WHO?**

Harvey is involved in so many activities that he has little time for Sabrina. If only her were different! Sabrina finally becomes so frustrated that she casts a spell that turns Harvey into her "love slave." But she finds that having Harvey fawning over her every minute of the day is no fun, and much more than she bargained for. But when she tries to turn him back into his old self, she messes up the spell, and Harvey becomes someone who loves himself more than anything in the world. Before things get straightened out, Sabrina learns how important it is to appreciate people for who they are, not who she would like them to be.

E/I Issue(s): accepting people as they are

SAS114 **PUTTING OFF**

Sabrina often puts things off until the last possible minute...cleaning her room, straightening her closet, and this time, writing an important history report on Attila the Hun. When it turns out that her assumption that Salem knew all about Attila is wrong, the only thing left to do is call the Hun back from history. Trouble is, he doesn't want to return to history, and neither does Ghengis Kahn, who also shows up. The two are on the verge of conquering Greendale. Sabrina must figure out how to get them to return to their own century – and she must face the fact that procrastination leads to all sorts of unfortunate consequences.

E/I Issue(s): Procrastination

SAS115 **JUST A RUMOR**

When Sabrina helps spread and then becomes a victim of a rumor, she decides to find out who is spreading them. It appears to be Cassandra, and in an attempt to teach her a lesson, Sabrina goes to the Rumor Mill, the source of all rumors. She tries to start one little, harmless rumor about Cassandra to teach her a lesson, but ends up letting hundreds of rumors free – so many that they threaten to take over Greendale. Before she figures out a way to get rid of them, Sabrina learns that there is no such thing as a harmless rumor – and that only the truth shall set you free.

E/I Issue(s): spreading rumors

homework. She assumes that Salem, as family, would never give her a failing grade. He does, of course, and Sabrina is quite upset. Salem decides he is a terrible teacher and resigns his position at just about the same time that Sabrina realizes how irresponsible she has been. Ultimately, Sabrina has to coax Salem back from retirement, and show him that she has learned that she should not take advantage of friends, but must be responsible for her own actions.

E/I Issue(s): Personal responsibility; studying

SAS121 **PET PEEVE**

When Salem discovers that Sabrina's new pet is really a dangerous, transforming warlock, no one will believe him because of his history of being "stingy with the truth." Even as the pet/warlock drains Sabrina's powers, she accuses Salem of lying because he is obviously jealous of the new pet. And after all, Salem is a notorious liar. Before the warlock is subdued and sent back to the Netherworld, Salem has to face the fact that it is hard for people to know when to believe a liar.

E/I issue(s): the consequences of lying

SAS122 **HALF THERE**

Sabrina and Cassandra are involved in an escalating battle of "gotcha," each trying to "get even" by making the other look sillier than they just looked, themselves. But when Sabrina mistakenly concocts a brew that will make one invisible and uses it to fool Cassandra, and Cassandra steal the invisibility lotion to turn the tables on Sabrina, things begin to spin out of control. And to make things even worse, Sabrina discovers that the using the invisibility potion can make each of them invisible forever! Ultimately the two must work together to put things right – and both must learn that revenge leads only to trouble.

E/I Issue(s): vengeance; getting even

SAS123 **MATCHMAKER SABRINA**

In spite of the rules, Sabrina decides she can meddle in other people's personal lives and casts a forbidden love spell. Before the day is over, she has both Mr. Snipe and Ms. Magrooney making love-sick fools of themselves. And no matter what she tries, she is unable to put things back the way they were. Ultimately, Enchantra helps Sabrina find a way to put things right, but not before Sabrina learns a hard lesson about ignoring rules and about meddling in other people's personal lives.

E/I Issue(s): meddling; ignoring rules

SAS124 **SABRINA, PART TWO**

Sabrina is pretty quick on the trigger when it comes to making promises – and almost as quick when it comes to breaking them. But when she breaks a promise not to use advanced magic by creating a double of herself to stay after school while she attends one of Harvey's parties, the consequences of breaking a promise suddenly become dire. The double represents Sabrina's "dark side," and has no intention of returning to the Netherworld. Before Sabrina can regain control, chaos ensues, and Sabrina learns a hard lesson about keeping promises.

E/I issue(s): keeping promises

SAS125 **SPELL-ING BEE**

The Greendale witches school is invited to enter a team in the annual Netherworld spell-casting contest. Problem is, the emphasis is on *team*, and since Sabrina and Cassandra are the only two students, they must be the team. Trying to convince these two to work as a team is a monumental task – so monumental that it leads to a bit of forbidden magic. The magic backfires, of course, and Sabrina and Cassandra wind up a team in the fullest sense of the word: they are fused together in one body! Before the contest is over and things can be put back to normal, the two must learn what teamwork really means.

E/I Issue(s): teamwork; cooperation

SAS126 **BEST OF SHOW**

Sabrina is tired of always coming in second best to Cassandra and having Cassandra rub it in. She just has to win at something! It becomes an obsession, and when she discovers that Cassandra intends to enter the same dog show that she is helping Harvey train his dog for, that obsession takes over. Forget Harvey's desire to just have fun! She wants to win at all costs! Sabrina enters her own "dog" to compete with Cassandra's, and the two young witches' efforts to win *no matter what* turn the dog show into pandemonium. In the end, neither wins, and Harvey teaches them both a lesson about having fun rather than sacrificing everything to winning.

E/I Issue(s): obsession with winning

SAS127 **FOOD 'TUDE**

When Salem inadvertently shrinks Sabrina's jeans, she becomes convinced she is overweight. Her response is to diet ... indeed, to quit eating altogether. As she grows more and more exhausted due to her lack of food, events spin out of control. It is only when Greendale school is besieged by General Cheesehead and his legion of healthy foods that Sabrina understands that crash diets are foolish – and dangerous.

E/I Issue(s): health; crash diets

SAS128 **AND BABY MAKES THREE**

Sabrina and Maritza are disgusted that they are treated like "children." After all, they are almost adults, and how difficult can being an adult be? Their disgust turns to outrage when they find themselves stuck with a babysitter. Sabrina tries a spell to make the baby sitter a bit younger, but goes too far. Suddenly she and Matritza are faced with a real, live baby, and all of the adult responsibilities that go with taking care of an infant. They discover that being an adult is pretty tough after all, and before the evening is over they give up the idea of growing up too fast, realizing that being a teenager has a great many advantages.

E/I Issue(s): growing up too fast; adult responsibilities

SAS129 **HOT ITEM**

When Sabrina takes something from the Netherworld that does not belong to her, she does not think of it as stealing – she was just picking up a souvenir, a pretty little rock to

soon realizes that friendship is never to be taken lightly, and the two girls are again united as “best friends for life.”

E/I issue(s): Friendship

SAS134 **CAT MAN DO**

Toc Toc, a warlock from the ancient past, is coming after Salem. It seems that long ago Salem stuck Toc Toc with the blame for something Salem did. Sabrina agrees to help her cat by transforming him into a teenager and letting him hide at Greendale High, but Toc Toc figures it out and also transforms himself into a teen. When Salem and Sabrina realize that Toc Toc has also taken the form of a Greendale student, they resolve to get him put into detention by blaming him for things he did not do. Trouble is, they foist the blame onto the wrong student, a real boy who is unjustly placed in detention. And when Toc Toc decides the boy is really Salem and sets out to punish him, things begin to spin out of control. Before it is over, both Sabrina and Salem learn how wrong it is to blame others for one’s own actions

E/I Issue(s): accepting responsibility for one’s actions

SAS135 **WITCHYCOLOGY**

Cassandra’s nonchalance about littering, and her jealousy over Maritza earning attention from a “hot” skateboard champion, drives her to the Netherworld and into the arms of an angry young witch named Olivia. She unknowingly becomes part of a plot to spread pollution and toxic waste throughout the Netherworld, pollution that poisons all “magic people.” Fortunately, Sabrina and “anti-pollution expert” Martitza come to Cassandra’s rescue, and Cassandra begins to understand just how important it is for people to fight environmental pollution.

E/I issue(s): pollution; littering

SAS136 **MIDSUMMER’S NIGHTMARE**

Sabrina and Cassandra’s continual bickering and fighting is turning the school production of *Midsummer Night’s Dream* into a nightmare. Things go from bad to worse when Puck, the real fairy the play is based on, shows up. He says he is helping Cassandra get her way, but really he is spreading mischief and chaos. Finally, when Sabrina wakes up to how she has been behaving and apologizes for putting her own jealousy ahead of what is good for the group, she and Cassandra join forces, work together, get rid of Puck, and save the play.

E/I issues: cooperation; getting along