

The Louisiana Sisters

by

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Children's Literature

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Author's Purpose

The purpose of this story is to entertain young children to enter the whimsical and simple world of Starhill, Louisiana. The genre is realistic fiction. The grade level is third grade and up. The purpose is to document our culture and our real Louisiana stories for young children. This project has helped me gain the perspective of a child and to challenge my writing skills.

The Louisiana Sisters



Once upon a time, there were three sisters who lived in the small town of Saint Francisville, Louisiana, where the Mississippi River runs through, and everybody knows everybody. They grew up in the part of the countryside called Starhill, just a ten-minute drive from town. Starhill is a town where colorful flowers bloom every new season, the houses are scattered between hilly roads and sunshine glistens through the bright green trees. The town called Starhill for the way it created a star when the roads connect, and of course the hills it was placed in. Starhill is a place

full of truly whimsical, ordinary magic, if only one would look for it. The three sisters loved the beautiful countryside, but soon were old enough for college and became grown-ups and had to leave their beloved home.

One gorgeous spring day, Bekah, the youngest of the three sisters, returned to her childhood home, a southern white house with blue shutters, for a weekend of relaxation. She knew just how to relax at home, just as she did when she was younger. She grabbed a quilt, and her pup followed her outside for some sitting in the sun to read a good book--a routine her little dog Colbie knew all too well. Fields of clover grass were like confetti with spring flowers and Bekah felt the cool clover on her bare feet. The delightful banana smell of the yellow flowers sweetened the wind.

Just as she was settling into the story of her interesting book, she heard quiet cheerful voices coming down the long gravel road. She looked up from her book and was happily surprised to see her young neighbors – two sisters just 4 and 5 years old, Avery and Olivia. Bekah knew them since they were babies and they grew into fun, sweet sisters who she got to see ever so often. Avery was riding her bike and Olivia was walking along to Bekah's house. Avery dropped her bright red bike, and ran over to Bekah greeting her with hugs and smiles and grabbed her hand to go play.

“Does your momma know that y’all are here?” Bekah asked the bright-eyed energetic girls as she looked down at the long gravel road that they had just travelled from.

“No, but it’s okay. She knows that we are playing outside,” answered Avery, somewhat mischievously.

The three girls joyfully skipped over to Bekah’s backyard to play, but not with any toys, just the secrets of their imaginations.

“Let’s fight off the evil snake and make him be our friend!” exclaimed Olivia with her imaginative idea of how to start an adventurous story. Little Olivia remembered how the trees talked to them in the last story they made up. They had gone on an adventure in the woods, in the tall pine trees and played by the pond where they imagined a bear resided soon to become a friend. It felt so real!

The girls found some sticks on the ground nearby to use as their wizard wands. They fought off the evil snake and goblins, and the grand finale was fighting off the jaguar hidden behind the oak tree. Each evil character became a colored balloon that floated away up, up into the blue Louisiana sky. Soon enough they could see a rainbow of balloons covering them above, cluttered by the trees.

“Look, there they go! Up into the sky!” they all said as they looked up. They giggled and thought of what to do next, careless of what their momma might be thinking back at home. They just wanted to play!

“Let’s make a gumbo!” said Bekah, thinking creatively.

The girls made a “gumbo” of fallen leaves and spring flowers in order to poison the last goblin who wouldn’t seem to go away. The little girls laughed and the wind in the trees seemed to laugh along as they played out their silly stories. The sun shined on their bright young faces and long blonde hair. Their feet were bare in the soft green grass and tickled their toes as they ran around creating more stories and characters to defeat. Soon, their fantasies came to an end when they heard their momma in the distance.

“Avery! Olivia!” the girls’ momma yelled. The three girls could faintly see her coming down the road.

“Hide! Hurry!” exclaimed little Avery. The tiny girls hid behind the oak tree in every effort to hide from their momma. They knew they weren’t supposed to come this far down the road, but they were just having too much fun playing with their older neighbor Bekah. Bekah laughed as she knew they couldn’t hide for long.

Finally, their momma made it to their house down the gravel road and fussed at them. She took her time knowing they were in safe hands but made sure to let her daughters know the rules.

“Y’all can’t just leave our front yard to come down the road this far,” Avery and Olivia’s momma said.

The country girls listened and said, “yes ma'am," with their sweet southern accents and tiny voices, but were happy they got to play while the summer sun was still out at night. They travelled home after some visiting to a fish supper after a fun night of play and hard work fighting off the imaginary snakes and goblins. The stars covered the vast Louisiana sky and the characters they creatively imagined went to rest for another time of play.

The girls grew to love the use of their imaginations and the stories their minds could make up. The old and tall oak trees remained in the country filled with little girls’ stories and the sky clouded with past balloons of evil characters beaten. The faces of the trees grew old even as their childish ways disappeared with time. Growing up as a child in Louisiana was slow, simple, and sweet. The stories they made engraved in their minds as they grew older and became grown-ups and became memories of the secret magical place they grew up in, called Starhill.

Vocabulary

Engraved: be permanently fixed in (one's memory or mind).

Exclaimed: cry out suddenly, especially in surprise, anger, or pain.

Finale: the last part of a piece of music, a performance, or a public event, especially when particularly dramatic or exciting.

Gumbo: (in Cajun cooking) a spicy chicken or seafood soup thickened typically with okra or rice.

Mischievously: to show a fondness for causing trouble in a playful way.

Resided: have one's permanent home in a particular place.

Whimsical: playfully quaint or fanciful, especially in an appealing and amusing way.

References

Louisiana Believes State Standards. (2011). https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-curriculum/standards---k-12-social-studies.pdf?sfvrsn=24665cc3_39

Social Studies

Standard 4: People, Land, Environment

- 3.4.1 Compare and contrast the physical features of various regions of Louisiana
- 3.4.6 Distinguish between urban, suburban, and rural communities in Louisiana
- 3.4.5 Describe how humans affect the environment in Louisiana

Louisiana Believes State Standards. (2022). https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-toolbox-resources/k-12-ela-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=52b98a1f_38

English Language Arts

Key Ideas and Details

- Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

Craft and Structure

- Distinguish the student's point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)

Works Cited

Alcott, L. M. (2004). *Little women*. New York: Signet Classic.

Cleary, B. (1955). *Beezus and Ramona*. New York, NY. Morrow.


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Author's Bio

Rebekah "Bekah" Leming is a sophomore at University of Louisiana at Lafayette majoring in Elementary Education. She is from St. Francisville, Louisiana. She loves to play tennis, make art, to travel, and listen to music. She hopes to become a second-grade teacher, travel the world, and keep writing as she journeys through life living for Jesus.

