

Greatest Of All Time

by

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Author's Purpose

To document our Louisiana culture through stories for young children and to give an authentic voice on how a child truly feels. Writing a children's chapter book based on my own personal experience with Louisiana culture allows me to dive into the mindset of a young child today and show a part of my childhood growing up in a little town, north of the famous I-49, Carencro, Louisiana. The town of blue and gold, as one might say. For me this town is more than a pinpoint on a map, it's my home, where all my memories and adventures reside and by writing this story, I was able to bring the memories and adventures of Shubee and Shu Shu to life.

Greatest Of All Time



“Mama, Mama, Mama!” cried Ava Claire.

“What, Ava Claire?” said Mom

“Mama, Mama, Mama!” said Ava Claire. “Mama, why are there yellow paw prints all over the street?”

“Well Ava Claire, it is the Louisiana State Football Championships, and the Carencro High School football team is competing in the championship this weekend. So, to recognize and celebrate the team, the city painted those yellow paw prints, which represent the high school *mascot*, the Golden Bear, throughout the entire City of Carencro,” said Mom.

“Mama, Mama, Mama!” said Ava Claire.

“Yes, Ava Claire,” asked Mom.

“What is that super tall circle thing with a whole bunch of legs?” asked Ava Claire.

“That is a *water tower*, Ava Claire. That's where all the water for Carencro is stored,” said Mom.

“Really?” asked Ava Claire.

“Yes, your dad and your grandpa worked there,” Mom responded

“Wow, you think I could go swimming in it?” asked Ava Claire.

“No silly. It's the water that we drink. It's stored in the round part of the tower.

You can ask Paw all about it when we get to his house,” said Mom.

“Mama, Mama, Mama,” said Ava Claire.

“Yes, Ava Claire. What's your question now?” asked Mom.

“We almost at Maw and Paw’s?” Ava Claire asked.

“Yes, we are almost there,” Mom said with slight frustration.

Ava Claire was always asking a million and one questions. By the time, they arrived at Maw and Paw’s, Mom had had her fill of questions for the day and was so excited to be back on the farm. Maw and Paw lived on a boar goat farm. The *boar goats* were raised for breeding and showed by 4-H’ers throughout Louisiana in *livestock* competitions. For Ava, Maw and Paw’s was more like a zoo and she often thought that these animals as her very own.

“Mama, Mama, Mama,” said Ava Claire

“Yes, Ava Claire we are finally here. Now before you do anything else make sure to give them hugs and kisses before taking off to the barn,” said Mom

“But Mama, Mama, Mama that's not fun,” fussed Ava Claire.

“Ava Claire it's about respect and showing love for your grandparents,” Mom said in a stern voice.

“Okay. Fine. If you say so,” Ava Claire said in defeat.

Before both of them were even out of the car they were greeted with warm hugs and smiles from Paw, but something was different about him today. He walked as if he was hiding something and that grin on his face was sneaky. Before

too long they both quickly realized what his little secret was and it was standing right on the side of him.

“Mama, Mama, Mama! Look what Paw has!” screamed Ava Claire as she was filled with excitement.

On the side of Paw was a very small little boar goat. Her fur was as white as snow, her head was as brown as dark chocolate, she was super shiny, and her little nose wiggled just like a baby bunny.

“Mama, Mama, Mama!” exclaimed Ava Claire.

“Yes, Ava Claire,” said Paw

“Not you Paw. Mama, Mama, Mama!” shouted Ava Claire as she tugged on her mother’s pants.

“Yes, Ava Claire?” addressed Mom.

“Can I keep it?” Ava Claire asked.

Paw immediately chuckled and interrupted, “This is a new baby goat.

Unfortunately, her momma wasn't doing very well and is incapable of keeping her nice and well, so Maw and I are going to be her parents until she is old enough to take care of herself,” explained Paw.

Ava Claire, without hesitation, asked, “Are you going to have to sleep in the barn with the baby goat? Will Maw have to give it a bath? Who's going to feed it?”

Ava Claire was filled with a ton of questions. But Maw and Paw knew exactly how to handle this situation. This wasn't the first time that a baby goat had to be taken in and kept in the house, but this baby goat was a bit different, and they all knew it from the very beginning. It was something with that little wiggly bunny nose that just didn't seem like all the others.

Paw and Maw quickly scooped up the baby goat and to the house they went. "Paw and Maw, you really gonna keep a baby goat in your house?" Ava Claire asked in *amazement*.

"Yes, Shubee, we will," responded Maw and Paw simultaneously.

Shubee was the name that Paw had given Ava Claire as a young child. Even though it had no formal meaning, history or reasoning, it was Ava Claire's favorite nickname out of all of them.

"The baby goat will have to stay with us until she is well enough to live on her own or until her mother is better," said Paw.

"So, I can keep him? I can bring him to my house, and I can feed him, and I can bathe him and I can put some clothes on him and I can put some bows in his hair?"

Paw in the loudest chuckle stated, "He is a she and no silly, a goat cannot wear bows."

"But I wear both big, big pink bows." Ava Claire responded.

Although she was bald until she was almost one year old, now at three, her hair was thick and curly and would bounce like a basketball. More importantly, no matter what she was doing or where she was going, she insisted on having a bow in those springing curls. Sometimes the bow was bigger than her head itself. It quickly became obvious that both Shubee and the goat had a very special bond.

“Mama, Mama, Mama,” called Ava Claire.

“Yes, Ava Claire,” said Mama.

“Can I please take the goat home?” Ava asked for the hundredth time.

“No Ava Claire. The goat must stay here at Maw and Paw’s where it can be taken care of. Please do not ask again. No is no,” exclaimed Mom.

“But Mama, I can keep it like my baby dolls in the stroller and I can feed it a bottle. Please Mama, Mama, Mama,” begged Ava Claire

“Ava Claire, I said No,” said Mom in the strongest voice ever. “Are you going to change its messy diaper here?” asked Mom.

“Ew, yuck! I am not doing that,” said Ava Claire with about as much force as she could muster.

Maw and Paw were left in stitches

“Shubee,” called Paw.

“Yes,” responded Ava Claire.

“How about I give you the special task of naming this baby goat?” he spoke.

Ava Claire's eyes filled with joy as she answered, "That is so cool. I can name the baby goat?"

"Yes, and we will make sure that this goat remains on the farm, just for you," he said.

"So, I can keep it?" ask Ava Claire.

"Yes," replied Paw. "But the goat must stay here with Maw and me. You are welcome to come and see your baby goat anytime you want. Is that a good deal?" asked Paw.

"It's a deal," said Ava Claire.

Ava Claire quickly ran back outside to meet her mom and Maw who had been sitting on the front porch.

"Mama, Mama, Mama!" shouted Ava Claire.

"Yes, Ava Claire?" Mom replied.

"Paw said I could name the goat and Paw said it could be all mine and Paw said..."

Ava Claire was so excited, Maw and Mom could barely understand a single word she was trying to say.

Mom interrupted Ava Claire, "Hold on Ava Claire, slow down. What did Paw say?"

"Oh yeah. I get to name the goat!" Ava Claire responded with excitement.

“Well, that's a very important task,” said Mom. “Do you know what you're going to name that baby boar goat?”

“Um?” Ava Claire pauses for a brief moment. “I know,” said Ava Claire. “I'm naming it, Shu Shu.”

“I love it,” said Paw. “It's perfect just like your name, Shubee.”

“I know we're both so perfect and special,” said Ava Claire.

Paw, Maw and Mom looked to each other and just chuckled. What else were they supposed to say or do with this larger than life three-year-old. Everyday Ava Claire came up with a clever reason to go to Maw and Paw's. Thank goodness Maw and Paw lived in the city not far from Ava Claire. Although the address was in the city, some would say Maw and Paw lived in a rural area or so the back yard seemed to be that way. Behind Maw and Paw's house, in the middle of the city, was a huge farm and lived there during the time the city was just considered a village and the nearest neighbor was at least a mile away. For as long as they were there, Paw raised cows, chickens, horses, rabbits, guineas, llamas, sheep, a donkey or two and now boar goats which was Maw's idea. It was a zoo. And it was one of Ava Claire's favorite places to be. Now with a baby goat in the house it was the only place Ava Claire wanted to be.

As the days passed Shu Shu kept getting bigger and bigger. Before long she was no longer taking a bottle and had started eating grain and hay right out of our

hands. Too often you could catch Ava Claire and Shu Shu eating bags of Cheetos. Goats being goats, they will eat anything they can get their hands in. Maw and Paw would find Ava Claire having the biggest conversation with Shu Shu and too often Paw sometimes thought that they were actually having a conversation. Their favorite corner to hang out was a hallway which was filled with many different types of books. These books were Maw's pride and joy, but it quickly became Shu Shu's main course.

"Hey, Shu Shu," asked Ava Claire. "What are you going to teach me today?"

Maw looked at the both of them with the oddest expression.

Maw asked Ava Claire, "What are you and Shu Shu talking about?"

"Shu Shu is teaching me all kinds of things," said Ava Claire.

Mom looked at Ava Claire very puzzled and asked, "Like what did she teach you so far?"

Mom is expecting a conversation about rainbows or Ava's favorite stuffed animal Lily or Play-Doh or Barney, but rather Ava Claire responded, "An apple is red, the sun is yellow, the grass is green, and the sky is blue."

Mom is frozen in shock. She knew Ava had been working on her colors, but this seemed to be much more than what Mom had taught her.

Maw being amazed at how well Ava Claire knew her colors, she responded, "Carry on, then."

Before Maw turned and walked away she noticed something different about the baby goat. She wasn't able to pinpoint exactly what it was, but something was different.

Before she walked away Maw said, "Now Shubee, do not let Shu Shu eat any more of the books' pages. If she keeps eating my books, you and I won't have any stories to read together."

"Okay," replied Ava Claire.

Her and that little goat sat there for hours, eating Cheetos and just talking and "baaaaing" away.

One afternoon, as the sun was going down, Ava Claire's mom came to pick up Ava Claire from Maw & Paw's. Before she could even sit down, Ava Claire tackled her at the knees.

"Mama, Mama, Mama!" shouted Ava Claire. "Guess what She Shu taught me today?"

Mom chuckled, "What did you learn from your goat today?"

"Did you know the *American flag* is blue, white and red? Did you know there are 50 white stars in a blue rectangle and 13 stripes that are red and white? asked Ava Claire.

Mom turns to Paw with a smirk, "Good job, Dad! Happy to know you are teaching Ava Claire all about History, your favorite subject."

“I didn’t teach her that,” responded Paw in shock. “Shubee, who taught you that?” asked Paw.

“Shu Shu did,” she responded with such enthusiasm.

Maw, Paw and Mom stared at each other puzzled.

“That is one smart goat,” mom said with sarcasm.

“She is the smartest goat ever,” said Shubee. “She knows all kinds of things.”

“Like what?” asked Paw.

“She knows about animals, plants, the planets and the birds, but she really loves to talk about History,” said Ava Claire.

Mom knew that Ava Claire had an imagination beyond what anyone could describe but for a three-year-old this seemed a little out of sorts.

“She is the most amazing goat ever,” said Ava Claire.

“What do you mean?” asked Paw.

“She’s the greatest goat of all time,” said Ava Claire.

Ava Claire began to explain how the books Shu Shu ate gave her magic powers. The more pages of the books she ate, the more knowledge she would gain.

“Every time I give her Cheetos,” said Shubee, “she wrinkles her nose like a baby bunny and she and I can talk.”

Shubee continued to explain that Shu Shu will share and teach her about whatever she ate that day.

“But you have to give her Cheetos,” Ava said, “or else she won’t talk.”

All three adults froze in complete surprise. None of them knew what to say, how to respond or what to believe.

“Well, at least she is teaching Shubee all about History,” Paw chuckled.

“How can you make a joke in a time like this dad!” exclaimed Mom.

“Not to mention, that goat is eating all of my *prize possessions*.” Maw stated.

Vocabulary

1. **Mascot;** *noun*.

A person or thing that is supposed to bring good luck or that is used to symbolize a particular event or organization.

2. **Water Tower;** *noun*.

A tower supporting an elevated water tank, whose height creates the pressure required to distribute the water through a piped system.

3. **Bore Goats;** *noun*.

A goat of a hardy breed, originally from South Africa.

4. **Livestock;** *noun*.

Farm animals regarded as an asset.

5. **Amazement;** *noun*.

a feeling of great surprise or wonder.

6. **American Flag;** *noun*.

The stripes represent the original 13 Colonies, and the stars represent the 50 states. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well; red symbolizes hardiness and valor, white symbolizes purity and innocence, and blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice.

7. **Prize Possessions;** *noun*.

an item of property; something belonging to one.

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

1. 3.4.1 Compare and contrast the physical features of various regions of Louisiana
2. 3.4.6 Distinguish between urban, suburban and rural
3. 3.9.2 Investigate the responsibilities and characteristics of various jobs

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

ELA

Key Ideas and Details

1. 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.
2. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
 1. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
3. Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

References

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Author's Bio

Ava Claire Broussard is currently enrolled at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette studying Early Childhood Education Pre-K-3rd grade.

She is a member of the UL Chapter of Kappa Delta Gamma Kappa and a taekwondo martial arts instructor outside of school.

You can usually find Ava Claire in boots and a cowboy hat or a pink ruffle dress twirling with a huge smile. Growing up, she beat to her own drum, dreamed enormously, and had the most vivid and full imagination.

Every day, Ava Claire tries to either splash in the puddles, dance her heart out, sing at the top of her lungs, to smell the roses or eat cake for breakfast. Always remember, life is a gift from God so, embrace and live in the present.