

Ant Restaurant

Written and Illustrated

by

Taylor Reid

Author's Purpose

The purpose of this story is to introduce young children to the idea of realistic fiction. This story is appropriate for elementary students to engage in problem solving and is aligned with ELA and Social Studies standards from the *Louisiana Believes* curriculum. Imaginary play is a huge part of early development, and this story demonstrates how children interact and play.

Dedication

To my sister Olivia who was never afraid to get in trouble with me.



Ant Restaurant

It's a Saturday afternoon. When my older sister Olivia and I have no school, we do our favorite thing, which is playing pretend. So far, we have been hairdressers, teachers, models, football players, and more. Today, we are professional wrestlers.

I'm about to do my finishing move and win the championship belt. I attempt to jump off the top rope of the wrestling ring, which is also my bed, but I missed and hit the floor. A loud crash traveled through the house, along with the sound of us laughing.

"Y'all go outside and play!" Mama said.

Mama spent all morning preparing to make gumbo for our family.

There isn't much to do outside. We knocked on the doors of our neighborhood friends, but no one answered. We couldn't wrestle on the hard concrete. All I saw as I looked around was the large tree in our yard and the ant piles surrounding it. Suddenly, I had an amazing idea.

"We should make some gumbo for the ants." I said to my sister, "They must be hungry out here, too!"

"Good idea. I'm older, so I can be the head chef, and you can be my sous-chef. Let's get our ingredients!" Olivia responded.

We walked to the backyard and briefly looked around. There was an empty bucket, which was perfect for mixing our gumbo. I took a branch off the tree to stir with.

"First, we need to make a roux," Olivia said. "I need one cup of flour and a cup of butter."

I used the branch to scoop some dirt in the bucket and used the hose out front to add a little water.

"While that cooks, get me some sausage, shrimp, and chicken," Olivia said.

I gathered blades of grass, leaves from our trees, and little sticks. As Olivia stirred, I added these ingredients to our mixing bowl, along with some more water.

Finally, our gumbo was complete.

“Okay, food is ready! Our customers are waiting, let’s go!” I said.

We walked back to the front yard and kneeled in front of the ant pile with our gumbo. Olivia poured the gumbo next to the ant pile.

“Good, on to the next table. Let’s make another roux.” I said.

Before I could get more dirt, we heard the front door swing open, and Mama walked out.

“Girls! It’s getting dark, come back inside!”

Mama walked closer to us. “Why are y’all playing in the dirt?”

“It isn’t dirt” Olivia said. “It’s gumbo, and we’re chefs at a gourmet restaurant for ants.”

“Okay chefs! Let’s go inside and clean up. Then, we can eat some real gumbo,”

Mama responded with a smile on her face.

Our favorite thing to do after playing is telling our parents about who we were that day. After we cleaned up, Olivia and I recounted our idea and recipe to our parents as we all sat around the table and enjoyed our gumbo. When we laid down to sleep that night, I wondered what our job would be tomorrow.

References

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University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, LA.

Vocabulary

Briefly- for a short amount of time.

Gather- to come together or bring together.

Gumbo- a soup that is popular in Louisiana usually flavored with meat, shellfish, and some kind of stock.

Ingredient- any of the foods or substances that are combined to make a particular dish.

Professional- engaged in a specified activity as one's main paid occupation rather than as a pastime.

Recipe- a set of instructions for making something from various ingredients.

Recount- tell someone about something; give an account of an event or experience.

Roux- a mixture of fat (especially butter) and flour used in making sauces.




Sous-chef- the top assistant in a professional kitchen.

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About the Author

Taylor Reid was born in Laplace, Louisiana, but she currently lives in Lafayette, Louisiana to attend the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She is a sophomore working towards an Early Childhood Education degree. After graduating, Taylor plans on becoming a kindergarten teacher. Her hobbies include reading and watching engaging television shows and movies.