



## Gator Gumbo: A Spicy-Hot Tale

*Candace Fleming , Sally Anne Lambert (illustrator)*

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**A new take on *The Little Red Hen* -- Cajun style**

Poor Monsieur Gator is getting old and is moving so slow he can't catch himself a taste of possum or otter, or even a whiff of skunk. Day after day those animals tease and taunt him until, finally, he decides to cook up some gumbo just like Maman used to make. But who will help him boil, catch, sprinkle, and chop? Certainly not rude Mademoiselle Possum, ornery Monsieur Otter, or sassy Madame Skunk. But when the gumbo is ready, they're more than eager to enjoy the result of Gator's hard work and as they run to get a taste - "Slurp! Slip! Plop! Them animals go into the pot." "Mmm-mmm," says Monsieur Gator. "Now, this is gumbo just like Maman used to make."

Illustrated with wit and whimsy, this mischievous tale will have young readers laughing out loud.

## Gator Gumbo: A Spicy-Hot Tale Details

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## From Reader Review Gator Gumbo: A Spicy-Hot Tale for online ebook

### Lauren Cody says

Gator Gumbo by Candace Fleming highlights a gator who was getting picked on because he didn't have any food so he decides to make a special recipe and trick his friends. In the end all his friends want some of the gumbo. This book is appropriate for Pre-K to first grade. This book is a fantasy story and allows the children to use their imagination when listening and reading the story. The guided reading level for this story is a level L.

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### Kim says

Possum, Otter, and Skunk don't give Gator any respect now that he's old and moves slow. One day, he decides he's had enough and begins to make a big pot of gumbo. In the style of The Little Red Hen, Gator asks the other three for help with various tasks and when they refuse, he does it himself. Of course, when it's time to taste the gumbo, all three find that they have plenty of time for that. But there's a twist to this tale: as Possom, Otter, and Skunk move up to the pot to sample the gumbo, a little nudge makes them part of it... and Gator has the gumbo that he had planned all along.

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### Eme87 says

Retelling of the Little Red Hen.

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### Jessica says

Hilarious retelling of the Little Red Hen... with a twist.

Bust out your best Cajun accent and you are good to go!

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### Alana says

On a trip to New Orleans, I knew I had to return with a book for my godson, but choices were a bit limited. I returned with this one, a rather amusing little tale with a somewhat dark streak of humor in it, but I didn't mind it much.

Old Monsieur Gator is getting up there in years and he can't chase after (and eat) the other animals the way he used to. This means the other animals flaunt their safety by teasing him... But the clever, crafty Gator

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wins out in the end. The book comes complete with a recipe for gumbo, which might not be any good, but is a cute touch -- particularly for my godson, as his mother is a big fan of cooking and cookbooks.

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### **Karmen Smallcombe says**

"Gator Gumbo" is story similar to the fable "The Little Red Hen" but with a cajun twist. The Gator is growing old and the other animals know it, so they tease him and bully him and refuse to help him get ingredients for his gumbo. Eventually, without the help of the other animals, Gator finishes his gumbo just how his mama made it because the animals who were teasing him fell into the pot. They then became an essential part to the Gator's gumbo.

This fable uses personified animals to create a story with morals, in an entertaining way we learn that you shouldn't bully or tease others and it is the right thing to do to help out. I would probably read this story to an older age group like fourth or fifth grade because it might frighten a younger age group that doesn't quite understand the moral that the story is trying to point out. Overall I thought this was a clever story and I loved the very detailed and colorful illustrations.

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### **Heidi-Marie says**

A Louisiana version of the Little Red Hen with a fantastic twist at the end! I didn't feel sorry for those animals at all. Funny how harmless books can make me feel that way about creatures that would turn my blood cold. I like the little touches of French. It would be a fun one to read aloud if I choose to, but I would certainly say "Sacre bleu" instead. Sorry, but I can't take the Lord's name in vain (no matter how innocent) even in a different language!

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### **Jordan Paxston says**

Gator Gumbo: A Spicy-Hot Tale

By Candace Fleming, illustrated by Sally Lambert

Published March 9th 2004 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR)

Picture book, trickster tale

-Poor old Gator is slow and cannot hunt anymore, which the other animals frequently tease him about.

Clever Gator tricks them and makes gumbo just like his mama used to.

-I included this mischievous tale because through its silliness it has a great plot that will make young readers laugh. Would be a great book to talk about motives in a grand conversation.

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### **Sariah Shellman says**

(2004) This book would be an entertaining fable with a moral for students 2-5. It uses a lot of southern slang that could be inaccessible to most young students living in Washington state, so I might hold off on using it in K-1.

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## Alice says

This book was read to me at a conference. It is a spin on the little red hen. So, with that thought...the language is so red neck that I ain't gonna say no more. I know that is regional "Looseeana" lingo bit there are only so many "mon sewers" and "aint's" I can take. It was good and I really couldnt see the pictues but it was still a good book. ! Maybe we could get it for my library...then again....

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## Kelsey Bansek says

Monsieur Gator is getting old, and he moves soooo slow. He's so slow that he is always eating veggies because he cannot catch the other animals. He starts to get tired of veggies and decides to make gumbo, just like his mother's. No one wants to help him make it, but he continues through all the steps to make it just right. When he finishes, the other animals want to help eat it, even though they did not want to help make it. Sneaky Gator lets them take a sip and as soon as they lean over the pot... plop! There they go into the gumbo. Now his gumbo is perfect and ready to eat.

I really enjoyed this complex picture book! The repetitiveness and rhyming keep the reader engaged throughout the entire story. Each page leaves the reader wanting to flip to the next. It is a silly book that students would find enjoyable, as they would easily be able to interact with the reader.

I think it would be a fun read aloud in my future classroom. It would also be a good story for students to practice making predictions with. The gator goes through many steps as he makes his gumbo and students could predict what the next steps are. The illustrations throughout the book are very detailed and would allow students to write a creative story about one of the pages before reading the book. With this, students could practice their creative writing skills. Math could also be incorporated. On the back of the book, there is a recipe for 'Maman's Spicy-Hot Gumbo.' Students could practice measurement by creating their own gumbo recipe as a class.

While reading this book, I was completely engaged the whole time. There was not a time where I did not want to keep reading. Candace Fleming does a wonderful job with engaging the reader. The illustrations depict the story in a fascinating way!

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## Luann says

If you replace the little red hen with old Monsieur Gator, switch out the lazy farmyard animals with a possum, an otter, and a stripe-tailed skunk, make gumbo instead of bread, and set the whole thing in the bayou, you've got Gator Gumbo by Candace Fleming! Read this aloud with a cajun accent and a little sass and you've got a recipe for a fun, slightly sinister read-aloud. If you are reading this to very young children, you might want to prepare them for the end by making sure they know that alligators are predators. This twist on the familiar tale is a lot of fun, and Sally Anne Lambert's illustrations go with the story perfectly. The recipe for Maman's Spicy-Hot Gumbo on the back cover is a nice touch.

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## Connie says

The language used (presumably authentic for the region) is very rich and it really sets the tone for the whole book.

This is a version of the Little Red Hen where the not-helping animals are really rude instead of just lazy - and they get what they deserve when, after begging for Just One Taste, they fall right in the pot!

A few notes that struck me as odd, though many kids would probably not notice. First, the animals go into the pot without being skinned or even taking off their clothes. Uh, ew? And second, they fall in of their own accord - the gator doesn't help them in any way, they're just that greedy. That's a little weird to me. I understand why it was done, but I would've expected some sign that the alligator pushed them or something. \*shrugs\*

Really funny book, nice set-up to a great ending, though.

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## Melanie says

Monsieur Gator is getting old. He doesn't get around as well as he used to. This means that he doesn't have the energy or strength to catch other animals to eat. The other animals know this and tease and taunt him. One day he has a terrible craving for gumbo. No one will help him pour the water in. No one will help him catch, peel and throw in the crayfish. No one will help him pick and chop up the okra. No one will help him put in the spices or the rice. So he does all of these things by himself. When his gumbo is ready everyone else is ready to eat it. But Monsieur Gator does not want to share. Besides, they didn't help, did they? But he eventually gives in. Guess what? All of the other animals jump into Gator's pot and Gator has a fabulous dinner!

A wonderful retelling of The Little Red Hen.

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## Matthew says

The best way to encapsulate this story would be to compare it to The Little Red Hen, with the understanding that this one has a more vicious nature. Gator is too old to hunt his former pray, and they know it. Therefore, they've taken to bullying him mercilessly. As unlikely as it seems, Fleming manages to turn the former pray into the unlikable aggressors. You'll find yourself rooting for the gator to catch them pretty early on. Then, because this gator is no fool, we hatches a plan to make some gumbo that none of the animals will help him with. This is the part that has The Little Red Hen written all over it. Then, because he makes such an enticing gumbo, the other animals find themselves unable to resist, and that's when he manages to turn the tables on his bullies. You'd never expect to be so happy for a gator to snap up some tiny, seemingly defenseless creatures, but happy you will be. Clever book. Very enjoyable.

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