

**WINNER, LEVEL 1****Alexis Saenz****Grade 4****Grant Elementary School****Santa Monica***Proud to be a Blacksheep*, Roberta John**Dear Ms. John,**

Your book *Proud to be a Blacksheep* gave me confidence to be proud of who I am. I am a Native American just like Shundeen.

In your book I remember when Shundeen thought about her first day of school. When she introduced her name and her clan, most of the kids laughed at her.

“What kind of a name is that?” one kid said.

“Who would want to be a black sheep?” another kid cried.

I was wondering if other kids would laugh at me. My favorite part was when Shundeen accepted who she was. So I accepted who I was, too.

Right after I read your book, I went to my Navajo grandma’s house and talked to her a lot about cultural things, like pow-wows, Navajo food, Navajo dancing, and famous Navajo people.

“Why do you want to know so much about this?” she asked. “You never did before.”

“Just because,” I said back. Your book made me open my eyes to learn more about my background. I started reading books about Navajo people. I learned some Navajo words and even learned how to dance! So that is what your book did for me. It helped me accept who I am. It is amazing what a book can do for a person. Now I just want to shout out to the world who I am.

When I finally introduced myself to my friends, they thought that was so cool. After that I was never scared to tell anyone who I am. Thanks so much Ms. John. Your story helped me so much.

***Your reader,******Alexis***

*My name is Alexis, I am 10 years old, and in the 4th grade at Grant School in Santa Monica, California. I have an older brother and two parents who love me very much. I am Native American Indian and my tribe is Navajo on my mother’s side. On my dad’s side I am Mexican American, and when you put both sides together you get a beautiful girl.*