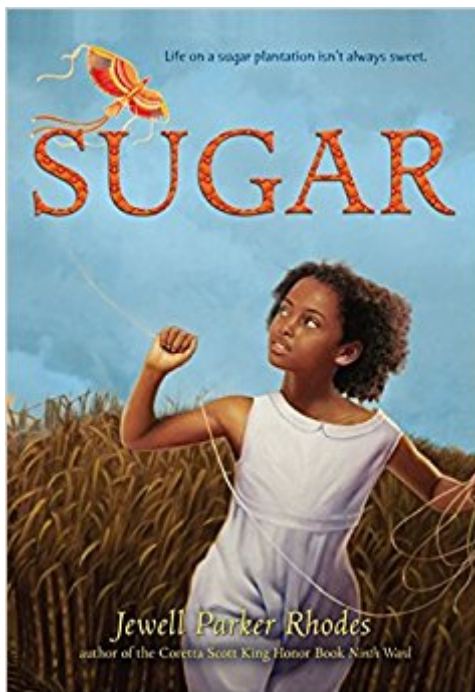


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# Sugar



## Synopsis

From Jewell Parker Rhodes, the author of *Towers Falling* and >(a Coretta Scott King Honor Book and a Today show AI's Book Club for Kids pick) comes a tale of a strong, spirited young girl who rises beyond her circumstances and inspires others to work toward a brighter future. Ten-year-old Sugar lives on the River Road sugar plantation along the banks of the Mississippi. Slavery is over, but laboring in the fields all day doesn't make her feel very free. Thankfully, Sugar has a knack for finding her own fun, especially when she joins forces with forbidden friend Billy, the white plantation owner's son. Sugar has always yearned to learn more about the world, and she sees her chance when Chinese workers are brought in to help harvest the cane. The older River Road folks feel threatened, but Sugar is fascinated. As she befriends young Beau and elder Master Liu, they introduce her to the traditions of their culture, and she, in turn, shares the ways of plantation life. Sugar soon realizes that she must be the one to bridge the cultural gap and bring the community together. Here is a story of unlikely friendships and how they can change our lives forever.

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #58,765 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #32 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American](#) #77 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s](#) #89 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Prejudice & Racism](#)

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8-Through the sharp eyes of a 10-year-old, readers experience the hardship of life on a Louisiana sugar plantation after Emancipation. Clever, courageous, and perceptive, Sugar is

basically an orphan. Her mother died, and her father was sold five years before the story begins. She lives alone next door to Mister and Missus Beale, who have become her surrogate parents. Sugar wonders why she still can't do what she wants and why she still must work and live under miserable conditions. When she becomes friendly with Billy Wills, the son of the plantation owner, she can't understand why their friendship must be secret. Her feistiness and sense of loyalty shine in the poignant scenes when she insists on being with Billy when he is sick. When Mr. Wills hires Chinese workers to fill the void left by former slaves going north, Sugar is fascinated by their ways and their stories. She loves the Br'er Rabbit trickster tales Mister Beale tells in which Rabbit outsmarts the seemingly more clever hyena. As in *Ninth Ward* (Little, Brown, 2010), Rhodes has created a remarkable protagonist as she artfully brings American history to life. She shines a light on bigotry and the difficulty former slave owners and former slaves had adjusting to "freedom," and her skillful prose creates vibrant images of the story's milieu. Above all, though, this beautiful novel instantly grips readers' attention and emotions, holding them until the last word. --Renee Steinberg, formerly at Fieldstone Middle School, Montvale, NJ

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Ten-year-old Sugar, named after the cane she sharecrops with other freed people, hates her name. It makes her think of her father being sold off into slavery, her mother who died from the hard work in the fields, and her own life of toil. She would rather be playing, but she is the last little one around after all the other young people left the plantation to live in the North. However, her own way of life is threatened once she learns through her verboten friendship with the plantation owner's son that his father plans to bring in labor from China. Rhodes creates a unique cultural snapshot of Reconstruction Era Louisiana by introducing Chinese immigrants to the mix. Drawing inspiration from Lucy M. Cohen's *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South* (1984), Rhodes creates a cross-cultural exchange that includes trickster tales, food appreciation, and good old-fashioned friendship. Sugar is an appealing, adventurous heroine full of curiosity and joy, an element sorely needed in light of the heavy subject. Grades 3-5. --Courtney Jones --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

It's 1870, five years after the Emancipation Proclamation put an end to slavery, but life hasn't changed on the sugar plantation where ten-year-old Sugar lives. She and the others former slaves in the compound still work day and night to plant and harvest sugarcane. When Mr. Wills, the

plantation owner, brings in a group of Chinese men to work the cane, the older plantation workers are afraid this will mean the end of their jobs and the meager pay they receive. But Sugar is fascinated by the Chinese men and soon becomes their friend, just as she made friends with Billy, Mr. Wills' son against everyone's wishes..Sugar is a high-spirited character who isn't afraid to question a life that requires her to work long hours while Billy takes lessons and plays. She leads the way in bringing changes to the attitudes and behavior of the black and white adults. With a reading level of 2.9, this would be an excellent book for elementary school classrooms and family reading.

I loved this book it really captures the felling of the little girl and how she lives effects her lifestyle and how she feels to live on the plantation at first when I first looked at the book I thought the book was about a girl that was named sugar and I also thought that she would love sugar!but she hayes it!and I was likeÃfÂ Ã ÅÃ ÆœÃ â ¢. And the book has some exiting twists!#ÃfÂ Ã ÅÃ ÆœÃ Â•ÃfÂ Ã ÅÃ â ¤Ã â “ thisbook

The book was good the grandchildren enjoyed the stories in the story . IS tale of hope a.d people being different but the same.

Amazing Book. Will surely reread

I read this book with my 4th graders during summer school. It is an important story to tell and is well told. Rhodes is to be commended for her handling of this topic.

This is a very interesting book to readÃfÂ Ã ÅÃ ÆœÃ â ¤. I love the main character being so open minded and exploring everyday living. I could relate to book because I am from Louisiana.

My daughter loves this book, she can't wait for the author to writer another one.

My child loves this book.

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