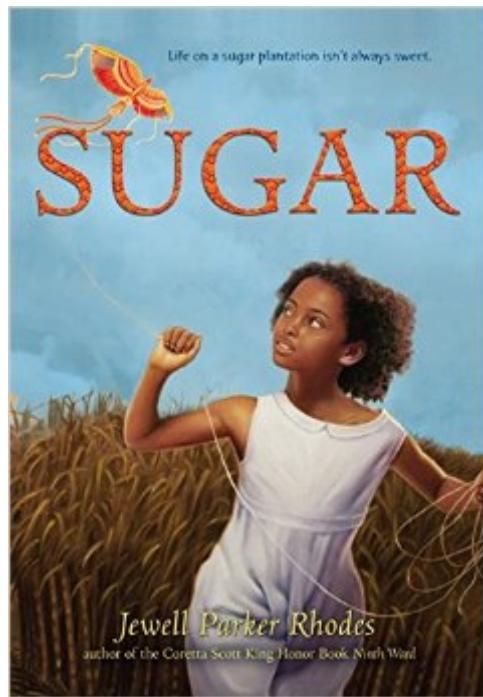


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# Sugar



## **Synopsis**

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. From Jewell Parker Rhodes, the author of *Ninth Ward* (a Coretta Scott King Honor Book and a Today show Al's Book Club for Kids pick), here's another tale of a strong, spirited young girl who rises beyond her circumstances and inspires others to work toward a brighter future.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 288 pages

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ISBN-10: 0316043060

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Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.9 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (45 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #47,704 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American #64 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Prejudice & Racism #73 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

Sugar tells the story of a 10 year old former slave working on a sugar cane plantation immediately following Emancipation. She is a fascinating character and the author captures both her voice and the period with unerring accuracy and authenticity. Sugar hates her name; in fact she hates

anything to do with sugar. Cutting cane is hard work for anyone, and when you are 10 years old and find yourself all alone, it's hard to work every day when all you want to do is play. Even though Sugar is officially free, she doesn't feel free as she watches all of her friends travel "North" while she remains with all of the other older slaves on the plantation where she was born. The only other young person on the plantation is the son of the owner, and Sugar is forbidden to play with him. When a group of Chinese men come to take the place of all of the slaves who have gone north to seek their fortunes, Sugar becomes aware of the big world that exists off the plantation. Sugar serves as a bridge between cultures and attitudes as the white men of the South struggle to adapt to change and the slaves struggle to adapt to the idea of true freedom and a larger world view. There is so much going on in this book that it would make a wonderful supplement to any lesson plan covering this period. It looks at things from a different view. I have never read anything that featured the role of Chinese immigrants in the South's reconstruction for this age group. I admired the author's inclusion of Bre'r Rabbit stories in this novel. I know what an important role story telling played in African American culture at this time, and the way she compares the Bre'r Rabbit stories to the dragon stories of the Chinese makes for some interesting parallels.

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