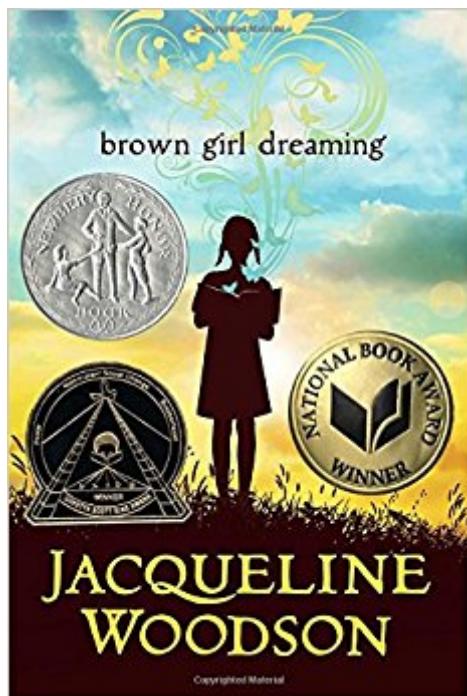


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# Brown Girl Dreaming (Newbery Honor Book)



## Synopsis

A New York Times Bestseller and National Book Award Winner Jacqueline Woodson, the acclaimed author of *Another Brooklyn*, tells the moving story of her childhood in mesmerizing verse. Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become. A National Book Award Winner A Newbery Honor Book A Coretta Scott King Award Winner Praise for Jacqueline Woodson: Ms. Woodson writes with a sure understanding of the thoughts of young people, offering a poetic, eloquent narrative that is not simply a story . . . but a mature exploration of grown-up issues and self-discovery. • The New York Times Book Review

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #14,222 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Literary #23 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Women #27 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural

Age Range: 10 - 13 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

\* *The writer's* passion for stories and storytelling permeates the memoir, explicitly addressed in her early attempts to write books and implicitly conveyed through her sharp images and poignant observations seen through the eyes of a child. Woodson's ability to listen and glean meaning from what she hears lead to an astute understanding of her surroundings, friends, and family. • *Publishers Weekly*, STARRED REVIEW\* *Mesmerizing* journey through [Woodson's] early years. . . . Her perspective on the volatile era in which she grew up is thoughtfully expressed in powerfully effective verse. . . . With exquisite metaphorical verse Woodson weaves a patchwork of her life experience . . . that covers readers with a warmth and sensitivity no child should miss. This should be on every library shelf. • *School Library Journal*, STARRED REVIEW\* *Woodson cherishes her memories and shares them with a graceful lyricism; her lovingly wrought vignettes of country and city streets will linger long after the page is turned. For every dreaming girl (and boy) with a pencil in hand (or keyboard) and a story to share.* • *Kirkus Reviews*, STARRED REVIEW\* *[Woodson's] memoir in verse is a marvel, as it turns deeply felt remembrances of Woodson's preadolescent life into art. . . . Her mother cautions her not to write about her family but, happily, many years later, she has and the result is both elegant and eloquent, a haunting book about memory that is itself altogether memorable.* • *Booklist*, STARRED REVIEW\* *A memoir-in-verse so immediate that readers will feel they are experiencing the author's childhood right along with her. . . . Most notably of all, perhaps, we trace her development as a nascent writer, from her early, overarching love of stories through her struggles to learn to read through the thrill of her first blank composition book to her realization that words are [her] brilliance.* The poetry here sings: specific, lyrical, and full of imagery. An extraordinary • indeed brilliant • portrait of a writer as a young girl. • *The Horn Book*, STARRED REVIEW\* *The effect of this confiding and rhythmic memoir is cumulative, as casual references blossom into motifs and characters evolve from quick references to main players. . . . Revealing slices of life, redolent in sight, sound, and emotion. . . . Woodson subtly layers her focus, with history and geography the background, family the middle distance, and her younger self the foreground. . . . Eager readers and budding writers will particularly see themselves in the young protagonist and recognize her reveling in the luxury of the library and unfettered delight in words. . . . A story of the ongoing weaving of a family tapestry, the following of an individual thread through a gorgeous larger fabric, with the tacit implication that we're all traversing such rich landscapes. It will make young readers consider where their own threads are taking them.* • *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, STARRED REVIEW\*

“Woodson uses clear, evocative language. . . . A beautifully crafted work.”  
Library Media Connection, STARRED REVIEW

Jacqueline Woodson ([www.jacquelinewoodson.com](http://www.jacquelinewoodson.com)) is the 2014 National Book Award winner for her New York Times bestselling memoir BROWN GIRL DREAMING, which was also a recipient of the Coretta Scott King Award, a Newbery Honor Award, the NAACP Image Award and the Sibert Honor Award. Woodson was recently named the Young People’s Poet Laureate by the Poetry Foundation. She is the author of more than two dozen award-winning books for young adults, middle graders and children; among her many accolades, she is a four-time Newbery Honor winner, a three-time National Book Award finalist, and a two-time Coretta Scott King Award winner. Her books include THE OTHER SIDE, EACH KINDNESS, the Caldecott Honor Book COMING ON HOME SOON; the Newbery Honor winners FEATHERS, SHOW WAY, and AFTER TUPAC AND D FOSTER, and MIRACLE’S BOYS which received the LA Times Book Prize and the Coretta Scott King Award and was adapted into a miniseries directed by Spike Lee. Jacqueline is also the recipient of the Margaret A. Edwards Award for lifetime achievement for her contributions to young adult literature, the winner of the Jane Addams Children’s Book Award, and was the 2013 United States nominee for the Hans Christian Andersen Award. She lives with her family in Brooklyn, New York.

Less than one day. That is how long it took me to take the journey with Jacqueline Woodson through her book BROWN GIRL DREAMING---and boy was it worth every moment. Woodson has a way of telling a story through words that is a true gift. Whether utilizing the simplicity of the Haiku like HOW TO LISTEN (Even the silence \* has a story to tell you. \* Just listen. Listen) or sharing a narrative about God, Family or Herself, we are able to get snapshots into what helped her become the woman she is today. There are the clever poems about her identity and wanting an afro as well as the realization of wanting to be a writer and how some might see that as not wanting enough. There are the poems I can definitely connect with about Faith and God and wanting to please Him---and not wanting to leave others that we love behind. Throughout it all there is hope: something that is not always easy to hold on to when you are going through challenges both inside and outside yourself---but it is definitely necessary if you are going to survive. Brimming with nostalgia and a real grasp of the power of words, BROWN GIRL DREAMING is the realization of a dream for readers.

My daughter loves this book. I try to find books that she will enjoy reading without struggle and this

one is perfect. The stories are also thought provoking and it tells the story of Jacqueline's childhood growing up in a racial society and a loving family.

A memoir of childhood -- family; civil rights in 1960s Ohio, South Carolina and New York; the dream to be a writer -- written in free-verse vignettes. Presented through a child's observant eye, it's sweet and poignant and I loved it, for example: "When Daddy's garden is ready it is filled with words that make me laugh when I say them--pole beans and tomatoes, okra and cornsweet peas and sugar snaps, lettuce and squash. Who could have imagined so much color that the ground disappears and we are left walking through an autumn's worth of crazy words that beneath the magic of my grandmother's hands become side dishes."

My daughter and I read this together. She is AA and I am Caucasian. It was wonderful to share some special time with her where we both learned more about the history of the South, but in such a poetic and personal way. The writing is amazing, descriptive, heartfelt, and beautiful. My husband loved it too. I highly recommend.

Listening to this middle grade novel on audio read by the author was a gift. Poetic. Genuine. A young girl dreams of being a writer. Stories of her family, growing up between Ohio, South Carolina, and New York, her loving grandparents; this is Jacqueline Woodson's story, but it's a story for everyone.

This is a book that garnered awards and much praise. The author writes simply, in nice poetic prose and easily brings the reader into the experience of a child. Of course, as the title proclaims, the focus is on skin color. The author can write well.

This is a powerful book of prose depicting Woodson's life growing up in both the North and the South. Woodson talks about the fact that she can't ride in the front of the bus in the South (even though it is legal) because she doesn't want to make waves, but in the North they don't think twice about it. She uses verse to discuss how conflicted she is because even though things are easier for her family in the North, she still feels her home is the South. She describes so beautifully and eloquently the plight of a black girl growing up in the South during the 1960's. I know I haven't done this book justice, but I needed to write a review to convey just how much you should read this book.

It's powerful, moving, and one of the best memoirs I have ever read.

When a book inspires me to want to write then I know it's a winner that has moved my soul.

Woodson tells her story about growing up, sharing their journey from place to place, life with her single mother, tragedy with family disappearing, going to jail, having accidents. There are a lot of ups and downs and you grow to love this little girl through the stories, and root for her successes and her aspirations at writing. There are so many things that come together and Woodson is a master at sprinkling in just the right amount of all the different experiences faced here. It's also so accessible and is a story told through poems, so for people who think they might not like poetry it's still a perfect book!

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