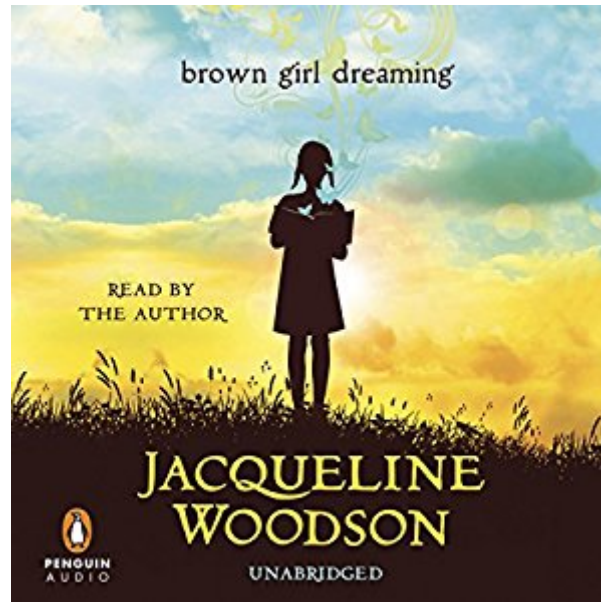




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Brown Girl Dreaming



Synopsis

Jacqueline Woodson, one of today's finest writers, 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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What does a memoir owe its readers? For that matter, what does a fictionalized memoir written with a child audience in mind owe its readers? Kids come into public libraries every day asking for biographies and autobiographies. They're assigned them with the teacher's intent, one assumes, of placing them in the shoes of those people who found their way, or their voice, or their purpose in life. Maybe there's a hope that by reading about such people the kids will see that life has purpose. That even the most high and lofty historical celebrity started out small. Yet to my mind, a memoir is of little use to child readers if it doesn't spend a significant fraction of its time talking about the subject when they themselves were young. To pick up *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson is to pick up the world's best example of precisely how to write a fictionalized memoir.

Sharp when it needs to be sharp, funny when it needs to be funny, and a book that can relate to so many other works of children's literature, Woodson takes her own life and lays it out in such a way that child readers will both relate to it and interpret it through the lens of history itself. It may be history, but this is one character that will give kids the understanding that nothing in life is a given. Sometimes, as hokey as it sounds, it really does come down to your dreams. Her father wanted to name her "Jack" after himself. Never mind that today, let alone 1963 Columbus, Ohio, you wouldn't dream of naming a baby girl that way. Maybe her mother writing "Jacqueline" on her birth certificate was one of the hundreds of reasons her parents would eventually split apart. Or maybe it was her mother's yearning for her childhood home in South Carolina that did it.

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