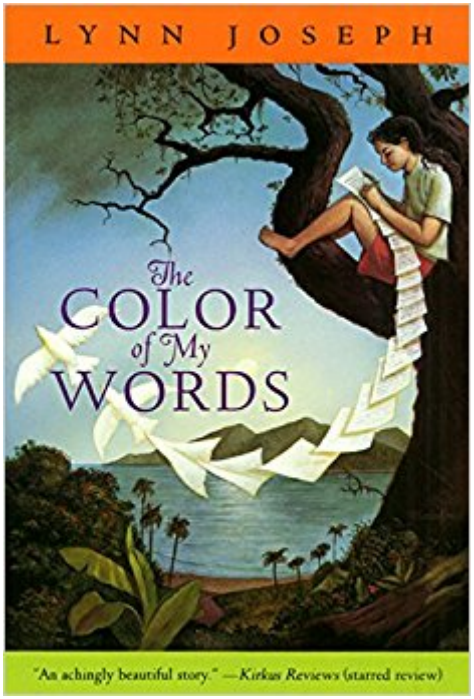
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# The Color Of My Words




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## Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Ana Rosa is a blossoming writer growing up in the Dominican Republic, a country where words are feared. Yet there is so much inspiration all around her -- watching her brother search for a future, learning to dance and to love, and finding out what it means to be part of a community -- that Ana Rosa must write it all down. As she struggles to find her own voice and a way to make it heard, Ana Rosa realizes the power of her words to transform the world around her -- and to transcend the most unthinkable of tragedies.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 840 (What's this?)

Paperback: 144 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 28 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #94,404 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #113 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Hispanic & Latino #205 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > United States #3036 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

What 12-year-old Ana Rosa HÃƒÂ¨rnandez wants more than anything is a notepad of her very own. Writing is her passion, and words flow out of her pencil onto the paper bags that Papi brings his rum home in, onto napkins, onto gray shop paper. In the RepÃƒÂºblica Dominicana, however, only the President can write books. But as Mami sighs and says, "Ana Rosa, there always has to be a first person to do something." These supportive words are difficult for her mother to muster, as everyone on the island knows too well that writers do not have freedom of expression--and in their political climate "silence was self-defense." When the chilling news arrives that the government wants to buy all the land in the village to build hotels and generate more tourism, people learn what it means to

break their silence. Ana Rosa's handsome 19-year-old brother Guario HÃƒÂ¨rnandez is appointed as official spokesperson for the villagers' cause, but when an out-and-out rebellion against the government erupts, he--and everyone else--is endangered. As the bulldozers roll in, Ana Rosa and her family discover how utterly worthless words really are in the face of brute force. Lynn Joseph paints a vibrant, colorful landscape of this Caribbean island where love, warmth of community, and abundant natural beauty soften the kind of poverty that makes paper--and sometimes doing what you think is right--a luxury. Ana Rosa's engaging, heartfelt poems--"Merengue Dream," "My Brother's Friend"--begin every chapter, setting the tone of the events to follow, and reinforcing how words shape her life and how her life shapes her words. Young readers will be inspired by Ana Rosa's drive and talent, warmed by vivid stories of her close-knit family, and moved by those who fight for what's right at the greatest possible cost. This lovely, lyrical book dances the merengue, glimmers with sunshine, and sways with island breezes. (Ages 10 and older) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In finely wrought chapters that at times read more like a collection of related short stories than a novel, Joseph (Jump Up Time) presents slices from the life of Ana Rosa just as she is about to turn 13. Through the heroine's poetry and recollections, readers gain a rare intimate view of life in the Dominican Republic. Ana Rosa dreams of becoming a writer even though no one but the president writes books; she learns to dance the merengue by listening to the rhythms of her beloved ocean; and the love of her older brother, Guario, comforts her through many difficulties. The author's portraits of Ana Rosa and her family are studies in spare language; the chapters often grow out of one central imageAsuch as the gri gri tree where Ana Rosa keeps watch over her village and gets ideas for her writingAgiving the novel the feel of an extended prose poem. The brevity of the chapters showcases Joseph's gift for metaphoric language (e.g., her description of Ana Rosa's first crush: "My dark eyes trailed him like a line of hot soot wherever he went"). When the easy rhythms of the girl's island life abruptly change due to two major events, the author develops these cataclysms so subtly that readers may not feel the impact as fully as other events, such as the heroine's unrequited love. Still, it's a testimony to the power of Joseph's writing that the developments readers will empathize with most are those of greatest importance to her winning heroine. Ages 8-12. (Aug.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

_The Color of My Words_ is the story of a young girl growing up in the Dominican Republic where

"silence was self defense." The first chapter is called "Wash Day," and is where the main character (Ana Rosa) says "At the river's edge, I'd tell Mami all the special things I had thought about during the week." This is where Ana Rosa learns that her mother is worried for her. "Writers have died here. At least those brave enough to hurl words at our government." We are introduced to the rest of the girl's family, her Papi, brother Guario and siblings Angela and Roberto and also to the gri gri tree where she watches the world go by and daydreams. The ability of the girl to write effectively comes into the story as she describes some of what is going on around them (a humpback whale that comes into the Sosua Bay). It is inspiring to read of how her brother Guario encourages her and understands what she is trying to express. "He was smiling. My big strong brother who worried about our future, my serious Guario who almost never smiled, suddenly let out a loud whoop and grabbed me up. He spun me around and around." You come to know her and her family as well as the community of people in their village. I don't want to reveal the whole story so I will just say that through her writing we are introduced to the conflict of the time as well as to her own personal struggles. At the very end, she gets a special gift from her Mami and Papi, but you will have to read the story to find out what it is!

Timely shipping. This book was a required summer reading. My daughter easily read this. Not a book she would pick by choice but do to the readability of the text she had no hang ups getting through it.

Excellent book, beautifully written. Encourage mothers to read it with their children.

I used this book with my English Language Learners at the middle school level. I was perfect to teach elements of fiction and descriptive writing. Students loved the characters too

Great story and fast shipping from . Awesome service. Many fifth graders are happy!

I used it for guided reading with both 4th and 5th graders. We reviewed figurative language, using context clues, and social studies topics as we read.

Great

The Colors of My WordsBy Marlyse Ngouabe, sixth grade student at Alice Deal Junior High,

Washington, D.C.Have you ever had to leave your town and immigrate to an unknown land, just because the government wants to make financial gain by selling off your land to large companies? This is the struggle of the whole town of Sosua in the Dominican Republic, the tumultuous setting of the novel, The Colors of My Word by Lynn Joseph.Narrated through the perspective of a young girl, Ana Rosa, the novel opens with a private conversation between Ana and her mother, in which Ana talks about what she wants to become when she grows up -- a writer. In this conversation, AnaÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s mother warns her that being a writer is dangerous in the Dominican Republic because only the president is allowed to write. But Ana is determined to use her talent to help her family and to fight for what is right.Ana writes poignant poems about how the Sosua community has never felt hopeless or powerless in the face of the governmentÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s belittlement as it was removing citizens from their homes. The citizens decide to fight back. They throw bottles and set tires on fire. In the midst of these anti-government demonstrations, innocent lives are lost, including a family member very close to Ana. Using the power of her words, she shames the citizens of Sosua for their violent protests that resulted in untimely deaths.After the violent outbreaks, Ana continuously blames herself for her family memberÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s death. She decides to punish herself by not writing a single word again. But in an emotional twist, on her birthday she receives a typewriter and is determined to tell her deceased family memberÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s story.It becomes clear that the people living in Sousa have a choice to make: to stay or to immigrate and escape an oppressive government.While this novel develops a readerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s understanding for why people migrant, it also offers insightful lessons any teen can relate to. In her struggle to find out who she is, Ana expresses how life does not always listen to the song you sing to it and it does not always sound the way you want it to sound, but when you have a goal and a passion, then no matter what happens in life, you will not lose it.

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