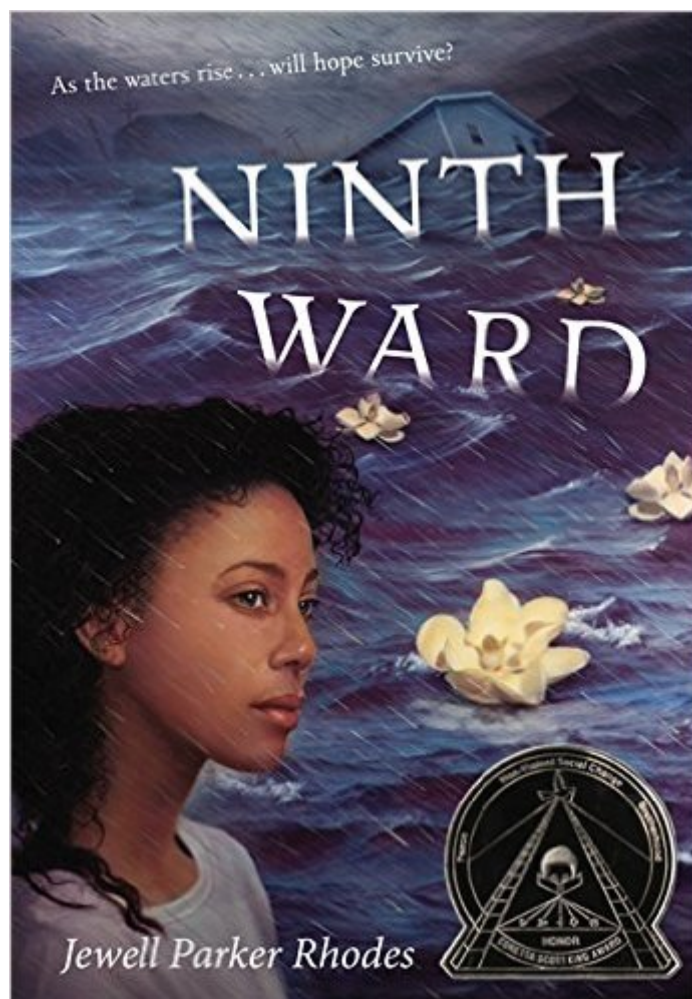


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# Ninth Ward



## Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Lanesha lives in a tight-knit community in New Orleans' Ninth Ward. She doesn't have a fancy house like her uptown family or lots of friends like the other kids on her street. But what she does have is Mama Ya-Ya, her fiercely loving caretaker, wise in the ways of the world and able to predict the future. So when Mama Ya-Ya's visions show a powerful hurricane--Katrina--fast approaching, it's up to Lanesha to call upon the hope and strength Mama Ya-Ya has given her to help them both survive the storm. Ninth Ward is a deeply emotional story about transformation and a celebration of resilience, friendship, and family--as only love can define it.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 470 (What's this?)

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (April 10, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0316043087

ISBN-13: 978-0316043083

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.8 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (84 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #32,505 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) [#36 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Weather](#) [#87 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > African-American](#) [#193 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States](#)

Age Range: 10 - 13 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

I actually like this book. I was NOT expecting to like it, at all. The first pages open with a little girl born with a caul, a magical midwife tells her she has second sight, and she sees ghosts. Groan... Could it get any worse? In fact, it gets better. MUCH better. I have no reservations about my children reading this book. Yes, there is a bit of an altar situation with Catholic saints and voodoo gods, and quite a few ghosts. Our family doesn't do ghosts. But it's good fiction, and the religion stuff is no weirder than the religion in "A Secret Garden" by Frances Hodgson Burnett. GREAT pro-school message. Being smart is what helps Lanesha survive the hurricane and flood. GREAT math

teacher. GREAT neighbors and adults, and a respectful way of treating others. GREAT vocabulary. heritagesynopsisistragedysuspensionexasperatedintervalsunfathomableA very good story about love, loss, survival and rebirth. The book's message about the flood is: It doesn't matter where the flood comes from. Sometimes, the flood just comes. Parent notes: illegitimacy, abandonment by extended family, some abuse of animals, some bullying, one death by gunshot, ghosts, voodoo, no politics

Ninth Ward by Jewell Parker RhodesI just completed Jewell Parker Rhodes' latest book--her first written for youngpeople. Its Title--Ninth Ward. Its Setting--New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina.Its focus--Lanesha, a twelve year old born with a caul covering her head andface, who is connected to the spiritual world and her Mama Ya Ya. Through achild's eyes we watch a neighborhood in the Ninth Ward of New Orleansexperience the arrival of Hurricane Katrina, the surge of the Mississippi River asthe levees give way, the destruction of a rich vibrant community made up ofpeople who have so little, but share what they have with each other. This is astory of love, courage and strength as the ancestors encourage two youngchildren to have faith in themselves if they want to survive. Jewell ParkerRhodes says that she wanted to grow up enough to write her first book for youngpeople--she has more than made up for making us wait so long by penning thismagnificent story for youngsters and oldsters, one that I will share with many. AMUST READ.

In a novel for younger readers, Jewel Parker Rhodes tells the story of thirteen-year-old Lanesha, a girl who lives in New Orleans' Ninth Ward pre-Katrina with a grandmotherly lady she calls Mama Ya-Ya. The relationship between elderly woman and child, while not of blood, is one bound in spirit and love. With her roots in the old voodoo ways, Mama Ya-Ya combines a nurturing presence with the wisdom of her years; in fact, it was Mama Ya-Ya who delivered Lanesha when the girl's mother died in childbirth. As well as Mama Ya-Ya, it isn't uncommon for Lanesha to see ghosts, among them her mother, and others who wander the streets of New Orleans, a city with a particularly rich cultural history. As Katrina approaches, Mama Ya-Ya senses something more than a storm, though her weary soul cannot see clearly what is ahead. As the old lady dreams, Lanesha takes over, preparing for the hurricane, boarding windows, preparing food. There is an almost allegorical sense of the old giving way to the new in this poignant tale, albeit with an uncertain future. An avid student who dreams of building bridges, Lanesha's curiosity is insatiable, but it is her compassion and bravery that will inspire young readers, the spiritual ties between generations and the capacity to entertain the extraordinary. The author clearly loves this city and its wealth of history and stories,

however it may have been damaged by Katrina and its shameful aftermath. And she writes with the same fluid grace and turn of phrase that has distinguished her adult novels. Lanesha's world may have changed with Katrina's devastation, but she is truly a child of Mama Ya-Ya's heart, buoyed by her appetite to taste the world and her appreciation of others, real or imagined. Luan Gaines/2010.

This book, Rhodes' first book for young people, is a masterpiece. Period. She understands New Orleans and the Ninth Ward culture, and writes about them with love and empathy for their lives while they wait for and experience Katrina. Any reader will finish the book with an honest perception of the threat and terror of hurricanes and floods, as well as a wish that the book would not end... Personally, I would like to have a follow-up book to "see" what happens to the two main characters.

Ninth Ward was just okay to me. Yes, it was dramatic and a scary retelling of Hurricane Katrina told by a young girl, but that's all it was to me. I couldn't find myself really getting into the story or relating to the characters. The writing isn't horrible, but it is very young so prepare yourself for that. Or use it for an appropriate age. I had to read this for school and that's all it was to me unfortunately.

Ninth Ward is a wonderful story of surviving Hurricane Katrina. Lanesha has spent every day of her twelve years in her very nurturing close knit neighborhood of New Orleans' ninth ward. Her wise elderly foster mother has taught her the traditions, beliefs and superstitions of her African and French ancestors. These teachings are what give Lanesha the strength to save herself, her best friend and their dog after the flood wipes out the neighborhood. This is a story of faith, love and determination. It will be on all of the best books lists for sure.

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