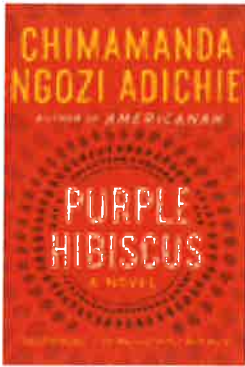


Proposed Core Literature Titles

The following summary is provided by the California Department of Education's "Recommended Literature List", and the top three Google searches of the book title and author name (e.g. Purple Hibiscus by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie) that produced a description of the title.

Purple Hibiscus

Proposed Grade Level: 10



Title: Purple Hibiscus
Author: **Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi**
First Published: **2003**

Proposed Grade Level: 10
Lexile Measurement: 920L

California Department of Education, Recommended Literature List:

Descriptions From Top 3 Google Searches:

[Purple Hibiscus by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie | Goodreads](#)

Fifteen-year-old Kambili and her older brother Jaja lead a privileged life in Enugu, Nigeria. They live in a beautiful house, with a caring family, and attend an exclusive missionary school. They're completely shielded from the troubles of the world. Yet, as Kambili reveals in her tender-voiced account, things are less perfect than they appear. Although her Papa is generous and well respected, he is fanatically religious and tyrannical at home—a home that is silent and suffocating.

As the country begins to fall apart under a military coup, Kambili and Jaja are sent to their aunt, a university professor outside the city, where they discover a life beyond the confines of their father's authority. Books cram the shelves, curry and nutmeg permeate the air, and their cousins' laughter rings throughout the house. When they return home, tensions within the family escalate, and Kambili must find the strength to keep her loved ones together.

Purple Hibiscus is an exquisite novel about the emotional turmoil of adolescence, the powerful bonds of family, and the bright promise of freedom.

[Purple Hibiscus - Wikipedia](#)

Purple Hibiscus is a novel written by the [Nigerian](#) author [Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#). Her [debut novel](#), it was first published by [Algonquin Books](#) in 2003.

Purple Hibiscus is set in [postcolonial](#) Nigeria, a country beset by political instability and economic difficulties. The central character is Kambili Achike, aged fifteen for much of the period covered by the book, a member of a wealthy family in [Enugu State](#), dominated by her devout [Catholic](#) father, Eugene. Eugene is both a religious zealot and a violent figure in the Achike household, subjecting his wife Beatrice, Kambili herself,

and her brother Jaja to beatings and psychological cruelty. Beatrice even has two miscarriages because of the violence.

The story is told through Kambili's eyes and is essentially about the disintegration of her family unit and her struggle to grow to maturity. A key period is the time Kambili and her brother spend at the house of her father's sister, Ifeoma, and her three children. This household offers a marked contrast to what Kambili and Jaja are used to. It practices a completely different form of Catholicism, making for a happy, liberal place that encourages its members to be inquisitive, form their own opinions and speak their minds. In this nurturing environment, both Kambili and Jaja become more open and more able to form and voice their own opinions. While at Aunt Ifeoma's, Kambili also falls in love with a young priest, Father Amadi, which awakens her sense of her own sexuality.

Ultimately, a critical mass is reached in terms of the lives of Kambili, Jaja and the existence of their family as it once was. Unable to cope with Eugene's continual violence any longer, Beatrice poisons him. Jaja takes the blame for the crime and ends up in prison. In the meantime, Aunt Ifeoma and her family move to America after she is unfairly dismissed from her job as lecturer at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The novel ends almost three years after these events, on a cautiously optimistic note. Kambili has become a young woman of eighteen, more confident than before, while her brother Jaja is about to be released from prison, hardened but not broken by his experience there. Their mother, Beatrice, has deteriorated psychologically to a great degree.

[Amazon.com: Purple Hibiscus: A Novel: 9781616202415: Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi: Books](https://www.amazon.com/Purple-Hibiscus-A-Novel-9781616202415/dp/B000APR004)

"Breathtaking . . . Adichie is very much the twenty-first-century daughter of that other great Igbo novelist, Chinua Achebe." —The Washington Post Book World

"The author's straightforward prose captures the tragic riddle of a man who has made an unquestionably positive contribution to the lives of strangers while abandoning the needs of those who are closest to him." —The New York Times Book Review

"Prose as lush as the Nigerian landscape that it powerfully evokes . . . Adichie's understanding of a young girl's heart is so acute that her story ultimately rises above its setting and makes her little part of Nigeria seem as close and vivid as Eudora Welty's Mississippi." —The Boston Globe

"Amazing." —Minneapolis Star Tribune

From the Back Cover

Fifteen-year-old Kambili's world is circumscribed by the high walls and frangipani trees of her family compound. Her wealthy Catholic father, under whose shadow Kambili lives, while generous and politically active in the community, is repressive and fanatically religious at home.

When Nigeria begins to fall apart under a military coup, Kambili's father sends her and her brother away to stay with their aunt, a University professor, whose house is noisy and full of laughter. There, Kambili and her brother discover a life and love beyond the confines of their father's authority. The visit will lift the silence from their world and, in time, give rise to devotion and defiance that reveal themselves in profound and unexpected ways. This is a book about the promise of freedom; about the blurred lines between childhood and adulthood; between love and hatred, between the old gods and the new.