

Reaching Out to Jewell Rhodes

On Friday, Oct. 14, something that a group of students deemed impossible happened!!! Students in Mrs. Keener's flight time group were asked to write letters to a favorite author in hopes to hear back from them. They were certain this was a pointless project because after all, who would write back to a kid? After receiving a letter from student Rylee O'Banion, author Jewell Rhodes agreed to a Skype call (video chat) with the group.

14 students gathered in front of the Promethean Board anxiously awaiting the call. When we answered, up popped author Jewell Rhodes, author of Sugar and Ninth Ward. The call was originally scheduled for the day before, but an author is busy and so she forgot about us! BUT, we teach students to persevere and that is what we did. We remade contact and scheduled for the following day. Students asked her questions about why she chose to be an author, the writing process, questions specific to her book Sugar, and what advice she had for them as authors. Her bottom line: *always keep trying, never give up, and be consistent.*

We are staying in contact with Jewell and will *try* to set up a date in April for her to visit our school while she's in Kansas! Overall, I'd say the students really enjoyed the experience and we are now anxiously waiting on other authors to respond.



Pictured: Rylee O'Banion with the book Sugar. Students gathered around chatting with author Jewell Rhodes.