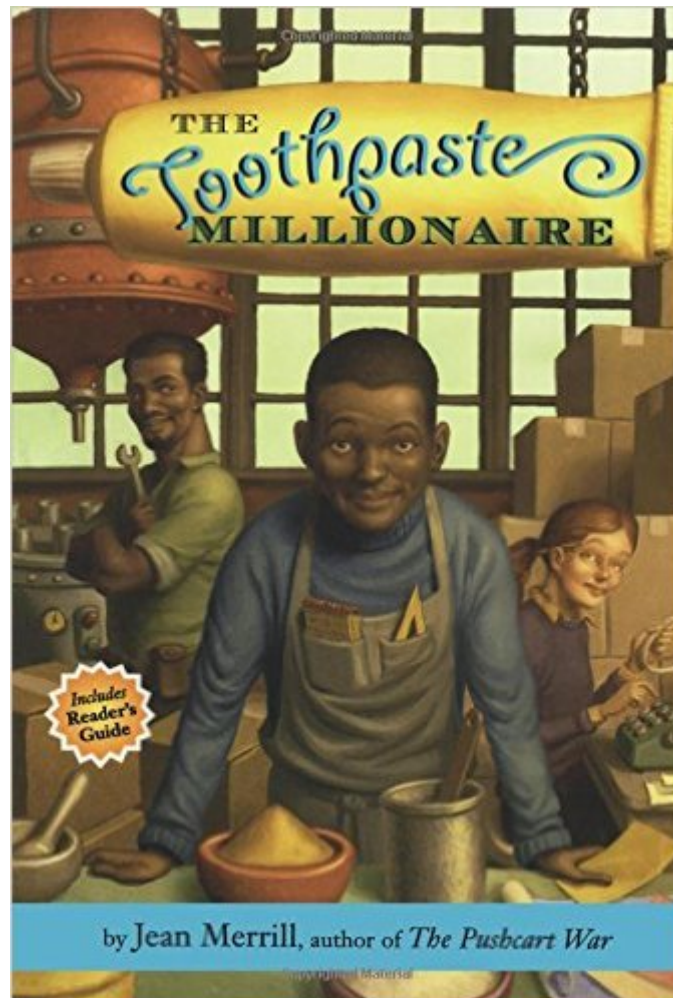


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# The Toothpaste Millionaire



## Synopsis

Sixth-grader Rufus Mayflower doesn't set out to become a millionaire. He just wants to save on toothpaste. Betting he can make a gallon of his own for the same price as one tube from the store, Rufus develops a step-by-step production plan with help from his good friend Kate MacKinstrey. By the time he reaches the eighth grade, Rufus makes more than a gallon -- he makes a million! This fun, breezy story set in 1960s Cleveland, Ohio contains many real-life mathematical problems which the characters must solve to succeed in their budding business. Includes black-and-white illustrations by Jan Palmer. This 35th anniversary edition includes an exclusive author interview and reader's guide with book summary and discussion questions.

## Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (September 4, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0618759255

ISBN-13: 978-0618759255

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.4 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (52 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #25,164 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Education & Reference > Jobs & Careers](#) #448 in [Books > Children's Books > Classics](#) #1544

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Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

## Customer Reviews

**SYNOPSIS:** Rufus Mayflower is a kid with a great business sense and imagination. When he decides that toothpaste costs too much, he starts his own toothpaste making business with local kids. From his meager beginnings with re-used baby food jars up to a fully professional operation with stockholders and a tube-filling machine, he rakes in the cash and confounds the leaders of the pharmaceutical industry with his methods.**MY TAKE:**This book (purchased at a garage sale) became one of the books I re-read repeatedly throughout my youth. Besides being a great story about how a kid with imagination and ingenuity can outsmart even grownups (which I loved as a kid), it also teaches you to avoid sexism and racism without being "preachy" about it.Growing up in

a very rural area (there was literally only one black family in our high school), the fact that the book's genius is black was a positive idea for me to take in. Not only that, but Rufus Mayflower refuses to treat his best friend differently because she's white...or even a girl. (She's Kate McInstry if I recall the name right..I'm writing from work and don't have my copy immediately handy). The book also subtly teaches you a little about marketing, product costs and even "price wars". I probably learned more business ideas from this book than many classes at school. As final proof of the lasting value of the book, I submit that I am now 34 years old, with my first child just born, and I intend to introduce the book to him when he's old enough. It's an "old" book that doesn't date for modern readers..after all, doesn't toothpaste still cost too much?

This book could be used to teach the whole content area of entrepreneurship! A black boy and a white girl, both sixth graders, make toothpaste from baking soda. From looking at their productive resources to getting a loan to issuing stock to a price war and collusion and exit opportunity, this story holds the attention of most preteen and early teen readers. lots of good vocabulary. math problems become real life problems to the main characters. very readable! i use this book with teachers as well as with my own elementary students.

I first read this book approximately twenty-five years ago when I was in grade school. It kindled a fire of entrepreneurship deep within me. I often thought about the book throughout the years but did not remember the title or the author. Recently, I ran across it on .com. Now, I am thirty-five years old and using it to fan that same flame that has been instilled in my children. My kids love this book as much as I do. I firmly believe this book should be required reading for every child. In addition to entrepreneurship, it also contains lessons of true friendship, anti-racism and business finance. Of all the books I have read throughout my life, this is number one on my list!

My daughter brought home this book, and I picked it up and read it myself. It was a very enjoyable story that integrated lessons about realistic applications of math and economics into a fictional tale. The author also worked very hard to avoid stereotyping the children and adults in the story. I would recommend it to everyone.

As I read The Toothpaste Millionaire to my children, all of were utterly delighted in this book. Humorous and fast-moving, this book is a pleaser for all. My 8 year old thought the book was "really good. My favorite book ever!" and my eldest even listened in on the action! We were all impressed

by this colorfully written story and it was a joy to read. I think everyone should read this impressive story!

The Toothpaste Millionaire by Jean Merrill was one of the best books I ever read. After the first page I knew this was going to be a great book. I liked the character Rufus. He did not care that Kate was white and he was black. He did not like to waste anything. He was very creative, and figured out a really cool way for a kid to make a million dollars. The plot was interesting and exciting, and the ending was unpredictable. I would recommend this book to people who enjoy being creative, or who want to make a lot of money. If this book has a sequel, I am going to read it. I'm also going to check out other books by this author.

I first read this book when I was about 8 years old. I had no idea the impact it would have on my career. What better story about a young entrepreneur who defies the odds, finds and creates a product, figures out how to sell it on a subscription basis and sets the competition reeling to try and grasp their market share back. As a kid, I was the one coming up with all the business ideas, from selling painted faux-gold rocks to starting a daily pickup recycling program (before it was cool.) I am now a successful business owner in my late 20s, and I still come back to this book from time to time to gain inspiration before launching a new product line or diving in to take a new business risk. Give this book to your kids, and read it again as a seasoned adult. Take it with a grain of salt and learn from the basics of business.

I am the father of 7 children, always on the lookout for good kids books. But I strive to read them before the kids do. The less junk in their heads the better. Story? Interesting. Style? Actually nice. Pro entrepreneurship? Excellent. Completely overblown representation of mid-70s race/gender/class differences? Unfortunate. It assumes you (the reader) are SO over-the-top bigoted/racist/patriarchal that it messes with your head. Even days later. It was SO-non-subtle - the characters asking small children questions about if people are racist, or the right age, or if a person is the right gender it was near-hilarious. When was the last time I ever worried about what color a person is? This book. Even "in the day" I suspect this only appealed to a certain kind of overly-worried person. I did like the other parts of the book. Wish I had tracked where the crazy parts were to see if they could be subtracted via sharpie. I won't make this book available to the kids. Kinda sad because the pro-entrepreneurship stuff was nice.

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