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# Who Is Sonia Sotomayor? (Who Was?)



## Synopsis

The truly inspiring story of the first Latina Supreme Court Justice. Outspoken, energetic, and fun, Sonia Sotomayor has managed to turn every struggle in life into a triumph. Born in the Bronx to immigrant parents from Puerto Rico, Sonia found out at age nine that she had diabetes, a serious illness now but an even more dangerous one fifty years ago. How did young Sonia handle the devastating news? She learned to give herself her daily insulin shots and became determined to make the most out of her life. It was the popular sixties TV show Perry Mason that made Sonia want to become a lawyer. Not only a lawyer, but a judge! Her remarkable career was capped in 2009 when President Barack Obama nominated her to the Supreme Court, only the third woman and first Hispanic justice in the court's history. Stories of Sotomayor's career are hardly dry legal stuff—she once hopped on a motorcycle to chase down counterfeiters and was the judge whose ruling ended the Major League baseball strike in 1995.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

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## Customer Reviews

Megan Stine has written several books for young readers, including Where Is the White House?, Who Was Marie Curie?, Who Was Ulysses S. Grant?, Who Is Michelle Obama?, and Who Was

Sally Ride? She lives in Clinton, Connecticut. With strong skills in art and years of experiences in many genres, Dede Putra has developed a career creating illustrations for books, video game development, filmmaking and fashion.

Who Is Sonia Sotomayor? ã ã ã ã New York City: May 25, 2009 ã ã ã ã It was a warm spring day ã ã ã the kind of day to be outside. But Sonia Sotomayor was in her office, sitting beside her phone. She was waiting for the most important call of her life. A call from the White House! She would learn whether President Barack Obama wanted her to be a judge on the Supreme Court. ã ã Sonia was already a judge. Her courtroom was in downtown New York City. But being one of the nine judges on the Supreme Court would be very different. ã ã The Supreme Court is the most important court in the country ã ã ã it decides whether laws in the United States are fair or not. Its decisions are final. ã ã All day the phone in her office rang again and again. Each time Sonia picked it up, it was her family calling. They wanted to know what was happening. If she got the job, she would be only the third woman to sit on the Supreme Court ã ã ã and the very first Hispanic person. Her family would be invited to go to the White House with her the next day. Some family members were coming from Puerto Rico! ã ã Finally, at seven o ã ã ã clock that evening, Sonia couldn ã ã ã stand waiting any longer. She picked up the phone and called the White House herself. She spoke to an aide to the president. What should she do? If she was picked, she had to get to Washington by the next morning. ã ã The aide told Sonia to go home and pack ã ã ã and wait for a call. ã ã Then, a little after 8:00 p.m., the call came, the one she so hoped for. It was the president. He told her he would name her to be the next associate justice on the Supreme Court! ã ã Sonia choked up and started to cry. ã ã ã “Thank you, Mr. President, ã ã ã she said. ã ã Then he asked her to promise two things. He wanted her to stay the same person that she was ã ã ã and to always stay connected to the world she had come from. ã ã For Sonia Sotomayor ã ã ã a girl who had grown up poor and proud of her Puerto Rican heritage ã ã ã that was a promise she was very happy to make. ã ã ã ã Chapter 1: Born in the Bronx ã ã ã ã Sonia Maria Sotomayor was born on June 25, 1954. Her parents, Juan and Celina, brought her home. They lived in a poor area of the Bronx, which is part of New York City. Like many of their neighbors, Juan and Celina had come to the United States from Puerto Rico. They had each left Puerto Rico in 1944, hoping for a better life. In the Bronx, they met and married. They moved into the building where Juan ã ã ã s mother lived. ã ã ã ã The Sotomayors worked hard to make a life in their new country. Celina worked at a hospital while she studied to become a nurse. Juan worked in a factory. Celina learned some English, but the family spoke only

Spanish at home. ã Å When Sonia was three years old, her brother, Juan, was born. The family called him Junior. With the family growing, her parents decided to move to a bigger, nicer apartment in the Bronx. ã Å Sonia liked her new home but missed living near her grandmother Mercedes. Years later, Sonia wrote a book about her life. She called it *My Beloved World*, and it was published in 2013. In the book, she wrote about her grandmother ã Å how full of life she was. She gave parties for the family almost every Saturday night. Everyone danced, played dominoes, and sang. Mercedes read poetry about Puerto Rico and cooked large meals. The apartment would fill with the smell of Puerto Rican food like chicken cooked with onions and garlic. Even as a child, Sonia liked pig ã Å's feet and pig ã Å's ears! ã Å When Sonia was very young, Mercedes began taking her to Puerto Rico for vacations. Sonia loved those trips. She never forgot the clear blue water of the ocean and the white sandy beaches of Puerto Rico. ã Å Sonia ã Å's father was a sweet man. He took Sonia on picnics, to the beach, and to Yankees games. But he drank too much. Her parents fought a lot because of this. ã Å When Sonia ã Å's father lost his job, Celina worked nights and weekends to support the family. She also worked to pay for Sonia and Junior to go to a Catholic school. Celina thought education was the most important thing in the world. ã Å But Sonia didn't ã Å like her school. It was called Blessed Sacrament. The nuns were very strict. They slapped kids who didn't ã Å behave. ã Å Sonia had other troubles as well. When she was almost eight years old, she fainted in church. And this was not the first sign of a problem. Sonia often had no energy. She was thirsty all the time. She was losing weight. Celina took Sonia to the doctor right away. ã Å The doctor sent Sonia to Prospect Hospital in the Bronx for some tests. Celina worked at Prospect Hospital, so Sonia wasn't ã Å afraid at first. But when the tests were done, the doctor had bad news. Sonia had type I diabetes. Sonia had never seen her mother cry until that moment. ã Å Sonia was scared. She had to stay in the hospital for a week. When she got home from the hospital, Sonia felt better. But there was another problem. As Sonia explained in her book, her parents were nervous about giving her insulin shots. Celina was a nurse, but she hated the idea of hurting Sonia. Her parents started fighting about it. ã Å Sonia was always a girl who wanted to solve problems herself. So she climbed up on a chair near the stove to boil water for sterilizing the needle. (Sterilizing means getting rid of germs.) ã Å At first her mother was worried. Should she really let a young girl use the stove and handle a needle? Nearly all parents would say absolutely not. But Celina decided to trust her child. From that day on, Sonia gave herself shots of insulin every day. ã Å Now that her disease was under control, she had more energy. ã Å But the very next year, her world changed again. Her father died suddenly of a heart attack. He was only forty-two years old. ã Å Sonia and Junior were very sad, but their mother seemed overcome by

grief. Years later, Sonia wrote that her mother wouldn't come out of her room at night. How was a nine-year-old girl supposed to have a happy childhood with so much misery around her?

All of the books in this series are fabulous! I am a 5th grade reading teacher and I have about 100 of the books in this series. Kids at this age don't typically like reading biographies. These are perfect! They have all the important information about the person, landmark, event. And, we always love looking at the adorable, sometimes funny cover photos!

Who doesn't love the Who Is series.

this is great motivator and teaching tool for a young lady it was given as an easter gift to my granddaughter

Beautifully written. I love all the "Who Is" books. Perfect for both adults & kids.

Perfect way to introduce girls to the strong women around us

Great historic read for young people

Great quality

I really enjoyed this book. I like how the author showed the readers that no matter what religion you are you can do anything you want in life. I really like how this book has a lot of details and is explained very well. I would definitely recommend this book. Written by a 10 year old

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