**Book:** Chinese Cinderella

**Reviewed By:** Lynn Running

**Level of Difficulty:** Medium

**My thoughts about the book and its suitability for my group:**

True to the title, this is definitely a Cinderella story. The suffering of the heroine, a young girl being raised in post-WW II China by an unloving father and proverbial “wicked stepmother” is almost unbearable; very little good or happy comes her way. The themes of overcoming hardships and surviving and succeeding despite the odds are good discussion points for the class. The story takes place before and during World War II, so the language is fairly modern.

**Students’ Reaction to the book:**

My Chinese students especially enjoyed this book. It includes a lot of Chinese terms, names and history that we could discuss, and they could be the experts for a change. When the book mentioned “dragon eye fruit” one of the students brought in the fruit so we could all sample. The overall opinion was that it was a very sad story, but, just like the fairy tale Cinderella, it appeared to be headed for a happy ending.

**Tips for tutors who may want to use this book:**

We did some background study on China before World War II and the geography of the country. This helped with the travels that are described in the book. The students enjoyed pointing out where they are from and what they knew about other areas of China. I brought in a map of China and we highlighted the cities we would be discussing.

I read a few chapters ahead before each class and made a list of vocabulary words to review before we read aloud. I’m happy to share those with any other tutors.