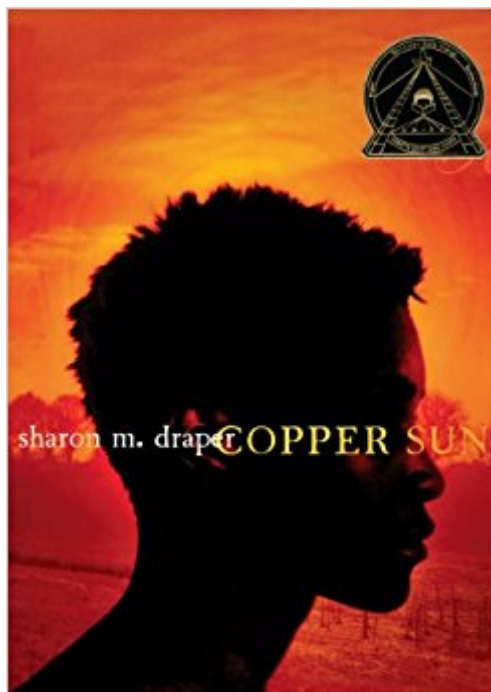


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# Copper Sun



## Synopsis

>is the epic story of a young girl torn from her African village, sold into slavery, and stripped of everything she has ever known—except hope.

## Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (January 1, 2008)

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 179 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #13,597 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 in [Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > United States > Colonial & Revolutionary Periods](#) #19 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Prejudice & Racism](#) #321 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure](#)

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 8 Up—This action-packed, multifaceted, character-rich story describes the shocking realities of the slave trade and plantation life while portraying the perseverance, resourcefulness, and triumph of the human spirit. Amari is a 15-year-old Ashanti girl who is happily anticipating her marriage to Besa. Then, slavers arrive in her village, slaughter her family, and shatter her world. Shackled, frightened, and despondent, she is led to the Cape Coast where she is branded and forced onto a boat of death for the infamous Middle Passage to the Carolinas. There, Percival Derby buys her as a gift for his son's 16th birthday. Trust and friendship develop between Amari and Polly, a white indentured servant, and when their mistress gives birth to a black baby, the teens try to cover up Mrs. Derby's transgression. However, Mr. Derby's brutal fury spurs them to escape toward the rumored freedom of Fort Mose, a Spanish colony in Florida. Although the narrative focuses alternately on Amari and Polly, the story is primarily Amari's, and her pain, hope, and determination are acute. Cruel white stereotypes abound except for the plantation's mistress, whose love is colorblind; the doctor who provides the ruse for the girls' escape; and the Irish woman who gives the fugitives a horse and wagon. As readers embrace Amari and Polly, they will better understand the impact of human exploitation and suffering throughout history. In addition,

they will gain a deeper knowledge of slavery, indentured servitude, and 18th-century sanctuaries for runaway slaves. --Gerry Larson, Durham School of the Arts, NC Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

**\*Starred Review\*** Gr. 9-12. Best known for her contemporary African American characters, Draper's latest novel is a searing work of historical fiction that imagines a 15-year-old African girl's journey through American slavery. The story begins in Amari's Ashanti village, but the idyllic scene explodes in bloodshed when slavers arrive and murder her family. Amari and her beloved, Besa, are shackled, and so begins the account of impossible horrors from the slave fort, the Middle Passage, and auction on American shores, where a rice plantation owner buys Amari for his 16-year-old son's sexual enjoyment. In brutal specifics, Draper shows the inhumanity: Amari is systematically raped on the slave ship and on the plantation and a slave child is used as alligator bait by white teenagers. And she adds to the complex history in alternating chapters that flip between Amari and Polly, an indentured white servant on Amari's plantation. A few plot elements, such as Amari's chance meeting with Besa, are contrived. But Draper builds the explosive tension to the last chapter, and the sheer power of the story, balanced between the overwhelmingly brutal facts of slavery and Amari's ferocious survivor's spirit, will leave readers breathless, even as they consider the story's larger questions about the infinite costs of slavery and how to reconcile history. A moving author's note discusses the real places and events on which the story is based. Give this to teens who have read Julius Lester's *Day of Tears* (2005). Gillian Engberg Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

So very well written with searing details that bring the horrors of slavery in America into stark relief. It also shows that American slaves were Humans that created and lived in a loving family and community with it's distinct culture, knowledge, and traditions. And it shows how a caring and respectful people with a tradition of warmly greeting strangers, even those that look very different from them, similar to Native Americans in North America, get savagely treated and killed by Europeans. This is one of those special instances when a "loser" gets to write history...the whole history.

Copper Sun is a fantastic and interesting read. It brings the reader into the main character, Amari's life and the obstacles she had to overcome. This book is hard to put down with the rich language

and the exciting plot! Reading this book makes the reader feel alive and excited to cheer Amari on! The quest for freedom pulls at the readers heart strings. Young adult readers will relate well to this novel due to the adventure and the Amari's passion for hope and faith. Teen readers can relate to the themes of friendship, love, and death and how a young girl deals with it all. Both boy and girl readers will see this book as a new and different way to read about the historical events before the Civil War and the harshness of slavery. Young adults will love the change in main character from traditional boy protagonists, to Amari, a young girl who has to start a whole new life without family and anyone she has ever known. Draper constantly provides Amari with obstacles to overcome. The rich language and excellent character development provide readers with an exciting and thrilling read. As a reader, you will be on the edge of your seat waiting for what's next in the life of Amari in Copper Sun!

I read this as an adult and recommend this for middle/ high school age. An age appropriate look at slavery, which introduces the historical horror of this institution without being too graphic for young readers.

This book talks about the hardships of slavery and what men and women had to go through as slaves. And, talks about how even white people had to be servants or slaves. I feel this book goes deeper into slavery than what schools are teaching us. So, I think everybody should be reading this book. By: Re Hema 11 years old

Great book!

I just love this book!! It's one of my favorites! The author kept me into the book and never knowing what was going to happen next.

Coppersun takes you on a journey about a girl in a village in Ghana. It talks about her whole life and how her life has changed. In this inspiring story you learn about Amari and her challenges as a slave in an inspiring way. Throughout the story Amari finds peace and strength through the Sun that she looks at. She learns what true courage and bravery is and she overcomes her challenges. Readers get to see first hand how she survives her voyage to America and how she finds strength and courage as a slave. Readers will experience her steady quest for freedom and redemption.

Copper Sun was the second of three Sharon Draper novels that I read for a Young Adult Literature class that I am taking. I liked the story. If I hadn't read so many books that were just like it, then I would probably love the story. From the very beginning of Copper Sun, I felt that it was formulaic and very similar to books that I have read before it, such as Obi, or the History of Three-Fingered Jack, Roots, or Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. As a result of that observation, I continued to read the novel cautiously. I was surprised to see that Sharon Draper went her own way with this story and focused on themes of feminism, motherhood, and faith against seemingly insurmountable odds. I would definitely use this novel as a fictional accompaniment to lessons on slavery and the Middle Passage with an older group of students.

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