

Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher:	Gannon	School:	Hyatts
Book Title:	Copper Sun	Genre:	historical fiction
Author:	Sharon Draper	Pages:	302
Publisher:	Simon & Shuster	Copyright:	2006

In a brief rationale, please provide the following information relative to the book you would like added to the school's book collection for classroom use. You may attach additional pages as needed.

Book Summary and summary citation: (suggested resources include book flap summaries, review summaries from publisher, book vendors, etc.)

Amari's life was once perfect. When slave traders invade her village and brutally murder her entire family, Amari finds herself dragged away to a slave ship headed to the Carolinas where she is bought by a plantation owner and given to his son as a birthday present.

Survival seems all that Amari can hope for. But then an act of unimaginable cruelty provides her with an opportunity to escape, and with an indentured servant named Polly she flees to Fort Mose, Florida, in search of sanctuary. It is a story of hope. - Book flap

Provide an instructional rationale for the use of this title, including specific reference to the OLSD curriculum map(s): (Curriculum maps may be referenced by grade/course and indicator number or curriculum maps with indicators highlighted may be attached to this form)
CCS-Fiction- Standards #1, #2, #3, #4, #6

Include two professional reviews of this title: (a suggested list of resources for identifying professional reviews is shown below. Reviews may be "cut and pasted" (with citation) into the form or printed reviews may be attached to the form)

Review #1

From School Library Journal

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

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Review #2

Grade 8 and up From Booklist

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

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What alternate text(s) could also fulfill the instructional requirements?

Title: **The Slave Dancer**

Author: **Paula Fox**

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Title:

Author:

Document any potentially controversial content:

The use of the word nigger is used in historical context to show the terrible treatment of slaves. The treatment of the slaves is cruel and humiliating and Amari is raped upon the slave ship and a slave child is used as alligator bait by white teenagers. It portrays the inhumanity of slavery in the historical context of the time period.

Keeping in mind the age, academic level, and maturity of the intended reader, what is the suggested classroom use: (check all that apply)

Gifted/Accelerated Regular At Risk

GRADE LEVEL(S): 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Reading level of this title (if applicable):

Date Submitted to Department Chair: 4/12/12

Suggested Professional Literary Review Sources:

School Library Journal

Horn Book

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

Library Journal

Book Links

Publisher's Weekly

Booklist

Kirkus Review

Wilson Library Catalog

English Journal (and other resources of the National Council of Teachers of English)

The Reading Teacher (International Reading Association)

Literature for Today's Young Adults