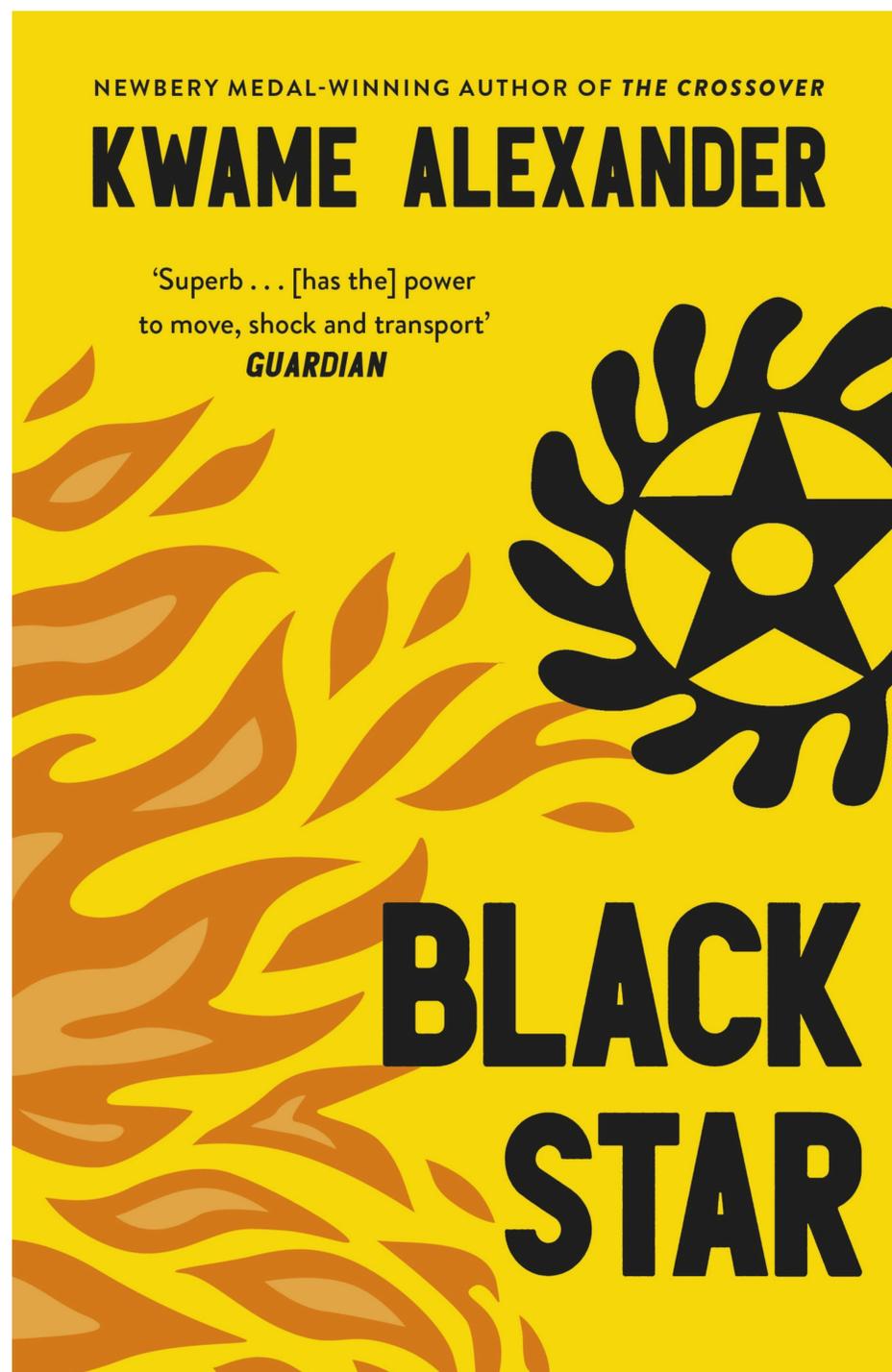


The Carnegies



The Carnegie Longlist 2026 Shadowing Resources

Black Star

Carnegie Medal for Writing

Author: Kwame Alexander

Age range: 12+

Description:

Period detail and segregation form a charged and volatile backdrop for Charley, a spirited, questioning girl who dreams of becoming a professional baseball player. Tension and fear intensify as Charley comes under the threat of forces that she does not wholly understand. A strong picture of culture, family and identity is built with warmth and empathy. Told in verse, there's a spare quality to this character-led novel which belies the cultural richness and the deft exploration of prejudice and barriers which it highlights.

Themes:

- America
- History (1920s)
- Verse
- Segregation
- Racism
- Sexism – gender roles/girls in sport?
- Freedom
- Human Rights

Shadowing Ideas:

1. This book is a verse novel, and these are great fun to read aloud. Read the opening pages quietly to yourself, then listen to the audiobook which can be accessed through apps like Borrowbox, Libby and Audible. How does the reading experience change when you hear the text aloud? Pay attention to rhythm, pacing and cadence.
2. The golden stool is a revered object in Asante culture, but it is not the only one. Do some research and find out about other royal and sacred items that hold significance to the Asante people. Can you think of an equivalent item that exists within your own culture? Discuss this with your shadowing group.
3. Charley's life is restricted due to systemic racism that permeates every aspect of society, including the legal system. Over the course of the story, she experiences both prejudice and discrimination due to her dark skin. Do you know the difference between prejudice and discrimination? Create an anti-racism poster for your local library and incorporate some recommended reads.