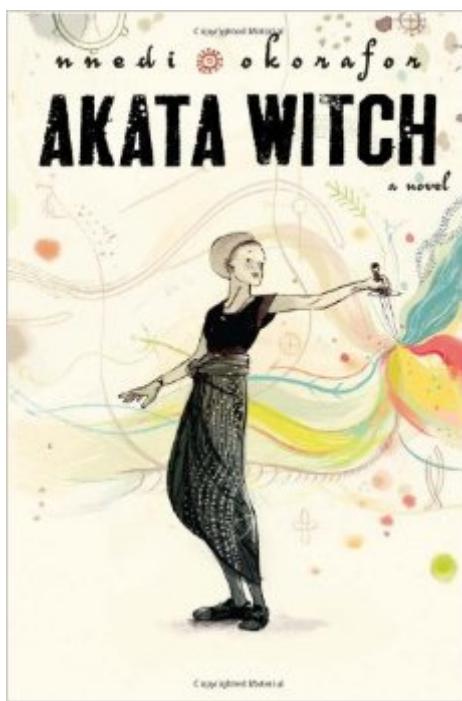


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# Akata Witch



## Synopsis

Read Nnedi Okorafor's blogs and other content on the Penguin Community. Twelve-year-old Sunny lives in Nigeria, but she was born American. Her features are African, but she's albino. She's a terrific athlete, but can't go out into the sun to play soccer. There seems to be no place where she fits. And then she discovers something amazing—she is a "free agent," with latent magical power. Soon she's part of a quartet of magic students, studying the visible and invisible, learning to change reality. But will it be enough to help them when they are asked to catch a career criminal who knows magic too?

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: HL590L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 368 pages

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ISBN-13: 978-0670011964

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Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews Â (73 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #55,058 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa #125 in Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Fantasy & Supernatural #304 in Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Mystery & Detective

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

In *Akata Witch* by Nnedi Okorafor, 12 year-old Sunny is trying to find her fit in the world based on who she is as a person, but is challenged by how others see her. After being born in America, and living her first years there, Sunny is currently living in Nigeria with her parents and brothers, as her parents decided to return to their homeland. She is constantly bullied at school because she is an "akata," a derogatory term for an American of African descent, and an albino. If that was not enough, Sunny is now also haunted by what she saw while staring at the flame of a candle - the end of the world. Not wanting to add to her troubles, she keeps this to herself until befriended by Orlu

and Chichi, and is drawn into a magical world she never knew existed, the Leopold People. It turns out that Sunny is a "free agent," a person born with magical powers despite no magical parents. Now she is one of the Leopold people and revels in this community of like-kind people, and amazing things begin to happen to her. All is going well until Sunny and her friends have been assigned to stop a serial killer, Black Hat, who has been murdering children. I was intrigued by the mystery, the magical ambience, and the vivid setting in Akata Witch. The fantasy setting takes place in Nigeria providing a fresh feel to a coming-of-age story in the overcrowded fantasy genre. The charm is the author makes the reader comfortable and familiar with both the real and magical worlds outlined in the story. One technique used to make us feel familiar is at the beginning of each chapter, there is an excerpt from the "Fast Facts for Free Agents" book Sunny is using for her training, allowing the reader to learn about the Leopold People and their basic philosophy.

Akata is a very mean word used to describe someone who is African, but was born in America. Sunny is called that, and that's not the only aspect of her life in which she finds herself in between two different worlds. She is African, but albino. She likes playing sports, but she can't be in the sun for too long. And the biggest one of all: Sunny discovers that she is a free-agent, a type of witch that doesn't have magical parents, and she now has to live a double life between the Lamb (non- "magical people) and the Leopard (people who possess magic) world. Here's what I thought, positives and negatives: Good Things: It's a very different magical universe and it challenges the Euro-based fantasy rules that we usually have on our minds. I feel it is a very important story because of that. I also liked how everyone's flaws and disabilities were actually keys to their magical talents. I like Sunny's character; she is strong, she suffers a lot because of the people in her school and even her dad but in the end, it doesn't bring down her confidence. She knows she has a place in life and she fights for it. It was interesting to learn a little bit about African culture and everyday life, which is not something I see a lot in fiction. It was fast and fun to read. It reads quickly and there's not a lot of dwelling on unimportant things, it gets to the point. This is both a positive and a negative (see below). Not So Good Things: I wished she had taken more time with the world development and had let it come through the plot more.

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