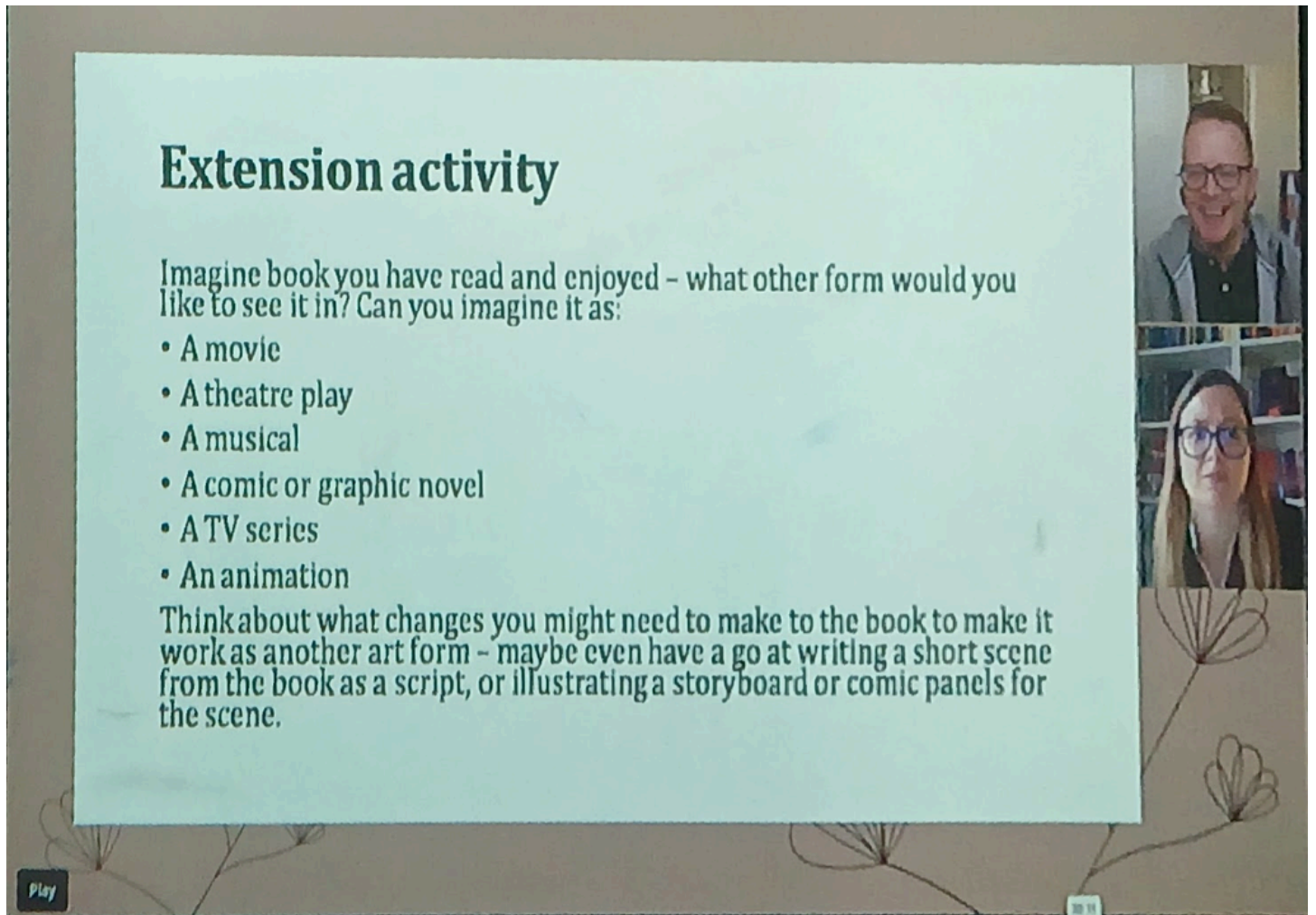


# Onyeka and The Academy of the Sun

## AS A TV SERIES



**Extension activity**

Imagine book you have read and enjoyed - what other form would you like to see it in? Can you imagine it as:

- A movie
- A theatre play
- A musical
- A comic or graphic novel
- A TV series
- An animation

Think about what changes you might need to make to the book to make it work as another art form - maybe even have a go at writing a short scene from the book as a script, or illustrating a storyboard or comic panels for the scene.

### **My opinion:**

Netflix has made collaborations to put this book on TV, based on the fantasy fiction book, written by Tola Okogwu, of the same name.

<https://about.netflix.com/en/news/onyeka-and-the-academy-of-the-sun-film-adaptation-powers-up-at-netflix>

[Nigerian Novel Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun Heads to Netflix, with Will Smith and David Oyelowo Producing. \(brittlepaper.com\)](#)



I enjoyed this book because it connects greatly to my Nigerian roots. Having never been to Nigeria, it gave me some insight onto what life is like there. Of course, it is set in the near future, mainly in a special school for children with superpowers, so it doesn't have a generalised viewpoint, but the book embraces the several aspects of Nigerian culture, all from the viewpoint of a girl who has lived in London her whole life and never got to experience it. It is one of my favourite books of all time, and I loved the trilogy & the world book day special.

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**The whole plot (in the form of Quizlet flashcards, contains spoilers):**

<https://quizlet.com/817957346/flashcards?funnelUUID=429c91bf-3dbe-4ba9-8ca6-169ee6a20d32>

**My review - contains spoilers**

Onyeka lives a life with an overprotective Nigerian mum, barely any connection to her origin and a lot of hair. 'It makes it hard for us to fit in' her mother tells her all the time. Onyeka hates standing out and feeling different - she wants desperately to belong somewhere. However, her plethora of hair and ethnicity make her stick out like a sore thumb.

After a near-drowning experience at a pool 'party' with her bestie Cheyenne, Onyeka learns that she is Solari - a person with a genetic mutation which gave her superpowers. You could guess that her power had something to do with her hair - she was able to psychokinetically control it. She also finds out that her father had been kidnapped

when she was little, which is why her mum was so overprotective and tense, and also why they were in England - her mum had come to protect her.

Mum whisks her off to Nigeria - the country she has always longed to know - and stays at the Academy of the Sun (AOS) while her mum goes and looks for clues surrounding her father's location. Onyeka stays under the hand of Dr Dóyínbó, the headmaster, who teaches her to master her power (Ike) by controlling her emotions with an anchor (in Onyeka's case, this is Cheyenne). Onyeka learns a lot more about Nigeria, and about Solari, which were caused by exposure to a substance called Trarium. However, as she later discovers, there are deeper, darker things going on.

Onyeka befriends Nijí, a boy with ice powers who came to pick Onyeka up from England, Hassan, a boy who can generate energy fields, and eventually Adanna, an initially hostile person who was stressed because she had 2 Ike: technopathic ability and synesthetic empathy, and these made her feel like an outsider. It turns out that the three of them form Nchebe, a group tasked with protecting the school, and they eventually take Onyeka on board.

As time goes on, Onyeka and her friends realised that AOS was not all that it seems. It turned out that Solari were dying from using their powers. Onyeka's dad was working on a serum to combat this before he was kidnapped. Dr Dóyínbó was well aware of all of this, and was using Solari to try and take over Nigeria, despite the illness their Ike caused.

Onyeka meets her Dad's twin sister, Naomi, who helps the gang find traces of anything Onyeka's dad left behind as clues to fight the evil that was Dr Dóyínbó. In a battle at the end of the book, Nijí loses his powers and the gang retreat to one of Dr Naomi's farmhouses.

This is such an interesting story with so many plot twists. You don't want to put the book down because the story just keeps getting more and more deep and interesting. And the annoying, but necessary, cliff-hanger makes you desperate for the second book.

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### **Reviews from Other Sources**

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGUaVFpzF8/P27y99WYmMlIFNIqMKmcrQ/edit?utm\\_content=DAGUaVFpzF8&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGUaVFpzF8/P27y99WYmMlIFNIqMKmcrQ/edit?utm_content=DAGUaVFpzF8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

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### **Format for TV interpretation:**

I believe that this would make a great live-action short series - the kind with longer episodes, covering several parts of the story in each. I am not certain of what Netflix has planned, but I will imagine a series in this way.

I want the series to coincide with the books as much as possible, because many people, including me, find it annoying that the books end up so different to the TV versions. However, I understand that most TV series twist the story completely so that only the key elements remain, in order to make the series more interesting.

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### **Script**

## Series 1, Episode 1, Scenes 1-3 + Notes

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGUazqKWQI/GSC\\_OET03fvLMhSgdSen2g/edit?utm\\_content=DAGUazqKWQI&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGUazqKWQI/GSC_OET03fvLMhSgdSen2g/edit?utm_content=DAGUazqKWQI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

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What the remainder of the episode would look like:

### Scene 4

Onyeka arrives at home and faces her mum - this is where she discovers that she is Solari.

### Scene 5

Onyeka has a bout of sickness, where she wakes up screaming and throwing up each time. Her mum tells her that they are moving back to Nigeria.

### Scene 6

Onyeka says her last goodbyes to Chey, and reveals her powers to her friend. Then she and her mum head to the airfield, where a private supersonic jet lands, and out comes Niyí - the first Solari Onyeka meets.

**Credits** (the same or a similar sort of dramatic music to the intro could be played, and as the names and roles cut to the next every few seconds, the background could be the sun symbol of the Academy of Sun surrounded by the swirly patterns of the Solari uniform, all of which can be seen on the front cover of the book)

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### Summary:

That is my idea for the first episode. I believe about 5-6 episodes would cover whole story well.

For a second series, *Onyeka and the Rise of the Rebels* would be perfect inspiration, as the first book is left on a cliff-hanger and really needs the next book/series to make sense.

This logic would work for the third series as well, which would be based on *Onyeka and the Heroes of the Dawn*. This isn't completely necessary, as the story does make sense with just the first 2 books, but the third book reveals even more depth in the story, so it should be considered.

The World Book Day special, *Onyeka and the Secret Superhero*, would make a good special episode, as it is not as long as the other 3 books, and, in my opinion, all good series have a special episode - it makes them more interesting.

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<https://c-istudios.com/a-step-by-step-guide-to-developing-a-tv-show/>

**Above is a link to a website I read, which explains the show-making process simply and effectively.**

Here are a few points in response to it:

- The target audience for the book was 'middle grade', which is around 8-12 years old, therefore it makes sense that the TV series should also be targeted at the same age group (of course, anyone can enjoy it - I still love the book and I'm 13!)
- According to C&I studios: "Many scripted shows... can have episode budgets averaging around \$9 million (approx. £7 million)." Making TV is very expensive, so minimalising the number of episodes to only contain the key information which makes the story what is would be preferable. If 5-6 episodes covers the first series, it means that the whole series would cost around £35 - £42 million to make - like I said, expensive. Plus an emergency budget of around £500k - who knows, the hair extensions could fall out. You have to be prepared!
- In terms of platform, well-known streaming services like Netflix and Prime Video would be good. YouTube would be too informal as it is a series based on a book.
- The majority of the other topics on this website page have already been covered.

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### **Conclusion**

*In conclusion, I am thoroughly looking forward to the release of a film version of Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun, and I also enjoyed coming up with a rough script for if I was to put the book on TV myself.*

**- Signed,**

Damilola Ajagunna