

Readers Corner

Discussion questions for May 26, 2026

Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver

- **Consider the epigraph that begins the novel: “It’s in vain to recall the past, unless it works some influence upon the present.” What do you understand this to mean? How is this idea relevant to the novel?**
- **In what ways is Demon’s mother troubled? What might explain what Demon calls her “bad choices,” and how does he navigate his love and anger with her? Does your sympathy for her shift as we learn about her history in the foster care system?**
- **What arguments does Mr. Armstrong make about stereotypes of various kinds, based on class, race and culture?**
- **Discussing the painkiller epidemic, June says, “They did this to us.” Who is she saying is responsible? What mechanisms and powers created such widespread pharmaceutical harm and abuse?**

Questions adapted from: <https://papl.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Demon-Copperhead-Book-Club-Guide.pdf>