

Rising 7th Grade Summer Reading – 2023

All rising 7th graders are required to read two novels over the summer: one whole-class novel and one choice novel. The options for the choice novel are found in the second section of this document.

All rising 7th graders are required to read the following novel over the summer:

***Discovering Wes Moore* by Wes Moore**

As students enter 7th grade, they tend to be less interested in reading for pleasure. In order to combat this, all parents of rising 7th graders are *invited and encouraged* to read the original, unadapted version of *Discovering Wes Moore*:

***The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates* by Wes Moore**

My hope is that students and parents will spend time reading together and discussing some of the questions below. Please keep reading for specific instructions.

Before Monday, August 21st, 2023, students should:

1. Read *Discovering Wes Moore* in its entirety
2. Read their choice novel in its entirety
3. Complete the activities found below

On Monday, August 21st, 2023, students should:

1. Bring their physical copy of ***both*** of their summer reading books to school
2. Bring their completed questions to school, stapled together

Discovering Wes Moore Journal Questions

Directions: Discuss these questions with your parents/other adults in your life. Choose FIVE questions to answer. These questions are to be answered on lined notebook paper. Each response must be *at least* THREE complete sentences. Number your responses according to the number of the question you are answering. Your name must be in the top right corner of the top sheet of paper. Please staple the pages together if you use multiple.

1. The author says to the other Wes, “I guess it’s hard sometimes to distinguish between second chances and last chances.” What do you think he means? What is each Wes’s “last chance”? Discuss the differences in how each one uses that chance and why they make the decisions they do.
 2. During their youth, Wes and Wes spend most of their time in crime- ridden Baltimore and the Bronx. How important was that environment in shaping their stories and personalities?
 3. The book begins with Wes and Wes’s discussion of their fathers. What role do you think fatherhood plays in the lives of these men? How do the absence of their fathers and the differences in the reasons for their absences affect them?
 4. Wes dedicates the book to “the women who helped shape [his] journey to manhood.” Discuss the way women are seen in Wes’s community. What impact do they have on their sons?
 5. The author says “the chilling truth is that [Wes’s] story could have been mine. The tragedy is that my story could have been his.” Do you think this is true? What, ultimately, prevented their stories from being the same?
 6. Throughout the book, the author sometimes expresses confusion at his own motivations. Why do you think he is so driven to understand the other Wes’s life?
 7. The author attributes Wes’s eventual incarceration to shortsightedness, an inability to critically think about the future. Do you agree?
 8. Wes states that people often live up to the expectations projected on them. Is that true? If someone you care for expects you to succeed—or fail—will you? Where does personal accountability come into play?
 9. Discuss the relationship between education and poverty. In your discussion, consider the education levels of both Weses’ mothers, how far each man got in his education, the opportunities they gained or lost as a result of their education, and their reasons for continuing or discontinuing their studies.
 10. The book begins with a scene in which the author is reprimanded for hitting his sister. Why is it important for conflicts to be solved through means other than violence? In what way do the Weses differ in their approaches to physical confrontations, and why?
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To encourage continued reading into the beginning of the school year, below is a list of series “firsts.” All rising 7th graders are required to read one of the following novels over the summer:

- ***Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* by JK Rowling**
- ***The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins**
- ***Divergent* by Veronica Roth**
- ***The Selection* by Kiera Cass**
- ***The Red Queen* by Victoria Aveyard**
- ***The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy* by Jeanne Birdsall**
- ***The Mysterious Benedict Society* by Trenton Lee Stewart**
- ***The Bad Beginning* by Lemony Snicket**
- ***The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau**

Students will complete an assignment with their choice book during the first two weeks of school.