

Contemporary Voices: Grade 12 Summer Reading 2026-2027, Ms. Johnson

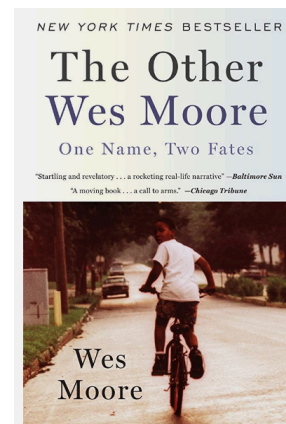
Students have **TWO** assignments to complete for summer reading.

Assignment 1

Please read and annotate in order to be prepared for a writing assignment when we return:

The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore

- Paperback: 250 pages
- Publisher: Spiegel & Grau; Reprint edition (January 11, 2011)
- Language: English
- ISBN-10: 0385528205
- ISBN-13: 978-0385528207



This book is a *memoir*, a nonfiction account (often autobiographical) of personal knowledge of an experience or series of related events. It differs from biography and autobiography in that it generally focuses on a single aspect, problem, time period, etc. of a life or event rather than the entire thing. Rather than providing an historical account of an entire life, memoir often uses certain parts of a person's experience to make a larger point about life in general.

Amazon synopsis: "Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, [and now governor of Maryland!] while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? Wes Moore, the author of this fascinating book, sets out to answer this profound question. In alternating narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world."

Think about the following as you read this non-fiction work:

- How helpful are the individual experiences of this memoir in explaining larger social phenomena? Is it fair to generalize them? Why or why not?
 - In order to draw conclusions from these experiences, we must use **inductive reasoning** which takes individual experiences as evidence to understand and make generalizations about life, values, systems, etc. It is less definite than **deductive reasoning** which takes valid evidence which leads to an inevitable conclusion.

- What insights or understandings can you gain about current events and protests around the issue of race, police brutality, and inequity from the experiences of the two Wes Moores?
- *The Other Wes Moore* was written 13 years ago. How do current events involving race in this country inform, contradict, reinforce, or otherwise shed light on the experiences of the two Wes Moores? How have things changed or failed to change since the Wes Moores of the book were teenagers? You are encouraged to draw on current media sources.
- The book examines the factors that affect an individual's fate. What conclusions can you draw about these factors? Which factors are most important to each boy? Can you make any generalizations from their stories and your own experiences about these factors?
- What do you notice about the structure of the book? How does it help the author make his points or elaborate on his ideas? Would you structure the stories differently? Why? What other literary devices does the author use? What do you notice about the author's voice and style that you like or dislike?

Assignment 2

Write a draft of your college essay (keep it to 650 words). This will be turned in on Classroom the first week of class. Use the Common App guidelines and prompts available at:

<https://www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts>