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SUMMER READING PORTFOLIO
9th Grade

All students are required to read **two books** and complete corresponding assignments. This year, the required 9th grade title is The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore. For the second selection, students will choose from the list of titles below. Students will then complete an independent reading log and a project for their independent reading selection. Knowledge of these titles will be necessary for lessons during the opening weeks of school. The Summer Reading Portfolio will be collected in English class on the first day of school and will count toward the student's average.

BOOK ONE: *The Other Wes Moore*

***All students are required to read this text.**

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, 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.

Reading Questions:

Complete the following questions as you read. Each question should be answered thoroughly and thoughtfully. Please type and print out your answers. Please put your name on all papers and place all work in a folder.

Answer ALL of the following questions. (Please do not rewrite each question.)

Introduction:

1. The author explains that the other Wes Moore's life is different because he made different decisions when it came to life choices. Describe a decision you have made that you believe could have altered your life path either in a positive or negative way.
2. The author continues to think about the other Wes Moore even when he is at Oxford University. Explain why the author continues to think about the other Wes Moore years after reading the article.
3. The author states "even the worst decisions we make don't necessarily remove us from the circle of humanity." Do you agree? If not, what decisions or actions can one make to be considered removed "from the circle of humanity".
4. Moore, the author, is talking about his "connection" to the Wes Moore in prison. Other than sharing his name, why would the author feel a connection?

Part One

Chapter 1

5. Explain why the author's mother became angry when he hit his sister when he was three years old. In your opinion, is her anger justified? Explain your answer.
6. Mary Moore's life was altered with the cutting of the Basic Education Opportunity Grants. In what ways was Mary's life altered? How do you think this event altered the future for her family?

Chapter 2

7. Tony lectures Wes about taking school seriously and staying off the streets. What advice would you give to a fifth grade student based on your mistakes in life? Who gives you advice based on their life experiences? Do you heed their advice or disregard it? Why?
8. If Mary viewed school and education as important for herself, why did she not make sure that her children felt the same way?

Chapter 3

9. In what ways did the other Wes Moore's old neighborhood manage to follow him?
10. Part One Discussion Question: Do you think having positive role models as a child serves as a deterrent to a life of crime? Is what constitutes a positive role model the same for everyone or does it vary?

Part Two

Chapter 4

11. Explain the fine line between second chances and last chances. Does the person who gives the chances distinguish that line?
12. Explain how Tony knew that his brother Wes was doing more than DJ'ing to get money.
13. What role did music play in the other Wes Moore's life? What role does music play in your life?

Chapter 5

14. Wes gets tricked into believing he could escape military school and go home. What did Wes learn as a result of this prank?
15. Explain the other Wes Moore's thoughts concerning his impending fatherhood.

Chapter 6

16. Wes is mulling over the possibilities that the man he is about to sell drugs to is a police officer. After getting anxious that he might lose a deal, he ends up getting arrested. Why, after being arrested so many times, does Wes continue to sell drugs, especially when his instincts tell him not to?
17. Part Two Discussion Question: What do you believe has a greater impact on your, or anyone else's, development: environment/nurture or biology/nature? Find evidence from this text to support your response. Next, look up information to support your opinions/response.

Part Three

Chapter 7

18. Can drive, discipline, and motivation like Moore's be acquired without the assistance of someone else? Explain.

Epilogue

19. The author gives credit to mentors that forced him to get serious about his life and his behavior. Who are your mentors? How have they helped you this far?
20. The poem on page 183 states, "I am the master of my fate." Do you believe this to be true, or is fate sometimes out of our hands? Use examples from the text and from real-life to support your response.

"A Call to Action"

21. Tavis Smiley stated, "Failing doesn't make us a failure. But not trying to do better, to be better, does make us fools." What can one do to learn from and fix their mistakes?
22. Explain the following quotation: "Try again. Fail again. Fail better."
23. Part Three Discussion Question: The author does not know what made the difference between him and the other Wes Moore. Do you think the reader is better able to see the difference because the reader has an outsider's perspective? Why or why not?

BOOK TWO: INDEPENDENT READING SELECTION

Choose one of the following titles for your project:

(but read as many as you like!!)

Bartels, Peggielene and Eleanor Herman. *King Peggy: An American Secretary, Her Royal Destiny, and the Inspiring Story of How She Changed an African Village.*

The charming real-life story of an American secretary who discovers she has been chosen king of an impoverished fishing village on the west coast of Africa. King Peggy chronicles the astonishing journey of American secretary, Peggielene Bartels, who suddenly finds herself king of a town of 7,000 people on Ghana's central coast, half a world away. Non-fiction.

Card, Orson Scott. *Ender's Game.*

Once again, Earth is under attack. Alien "buggers" are poised for a final assault. The survival of the human species depends on a military genius who can defeat the buggers. But who? Ender Wiggin. Brilliant. Ruthless. Cunning. A tactical and strategic master. And a child. Recruited for military training by the world government, Ender's childhood ends the moment he enters his new home. Battleschool. Among the elite recruits Ender proves himself to be a genius among geniuses. In simulated war games he excels. But is the pressure and loneliness taking its toll on Ender? Simulations are one thing. How will Ender perform in real combat conditions? After all, Battleschool is just a game. Right? Fiction.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Monster.*

"Sometimes I feel like I have walked into the middle of a movie. Maybe I can make my own movie. The film will be the story of my life. No, not my life, but this experience. I'll call it what the lady prosecutor called me...**Monster.**" Fiction.

Asher, Jay and Carolyn Mackler. *The Future of Us.*

What if you could see how your life would unfold – just by clicking a button? It's 1996, and less than half of all American high school students have ever used the internet. Emma just got her first computer and an America Online CD-ROM. Josh is her best friend. They power up and log on – and discover themselves on Facebook, fifteen years in the future. Everybody wonders what their destiny will be. Josh and Emma are about to find out. Fiction.

Independent Reading Book: Assignment #1: INTERACTIVE READING LOG:

After reading each chapter of your independent reading book, respond to the text with a few sentences. Below are some prompts you can use to start yourself off. If your book doesn't have proper chapters, respond every 15 pages.

Sample Interactive Prompts:

- I really don't understand the part where . . .
- I really like/dislike this idea because . . .
- This character reminds me of somebody I know because . . .
- This character reminds me of myself because . . .
- I think this setting is important because . . .
- This scene reminds me of a similar scene in (title of book/movie/T.V. show) because . . .
- I like/dislike this writing because . . .
- This part is very realistic/unrealistic because . . .
- I think the relationship between _____ and _____ is interesting because . . .
- This section makes me think about . . .
- I like/dislike (name of character) because . . .
- This situation reminds me of a similar situation in my own life. What happened was . . .
- If I were (name of character) at this point, I would . . .
- I began to think of . . .
- I love the way . . .
- I can't believe . . .
- I wonder why . . .
- I noticed . . .
- I'm not sure . . .
- My favorite character is _

- I like the way the author
. . .
- I felt sad when . . .
- I wish that . . .
- I was surprised . . .
- It seems like . . .
- I'm not sure . . .

- I want to know more about . . .
- I predict . . .

Independent Reading Book: Assignment #2: CREATIVE PROJECT: (Choose one)

1. Write 3-5 **newspaper articles** portraying moments in the text in journalistic fashion. These articles should reflect the beginning, middle and end of the work. Use the journalistic questions (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?) to guide your writing.
2. Turn the story into a **comic book**. Include all of the characters and the major aspects of the plot. Remember that a comic book should show both dialogue and the thoughts of the characters. (At least *six* significant scenes should be featured in your book).
3. Create a **scrapbook** for one of the characters. These items can be represented through drawings, actual objects, magazine clippings, etc. Length:12 major items. Explain briefly what the items signify.

4. Develop a **soundtrack** for the book. For each major part of the book, choose three songs (12 -15 songs total) that represent the characters and events in that part. For each song, explain why choice matches the section or scene. Quote the lyrics and explain the link between the song and the book. Your choices must not contain any profanity or inappropriate content. You may burn a CD of your soundtrack, but this is not a required part of the project.

5. Keep a **diary** as if you are one of the characters in the book either 5 years before or 5 years after the story. The character's diary should highlight significant events especially those events that enlighten, enrich, or dramatically impact a character's life. Each entry should reflect the character's thoughts for that particular day. Your diary should have *at least* 10 entries.
6. **Project Assessment:** Your project will be graded on visual appeal, content, creativity, spelling, punctuation, grammar, and accuracy.

How to Obtain Inexpensive Books

There are a number of websites where new or used copies of books can be purchased at up to a 90% discount. Hundreds such sites are available on the web. A few sites we have used and can recommend are listed below:

- Free Library of Philadelphia (www.freelibrary.org)
- Ebay (www.ebay.com) - *Type in the title of your book and bid on copies available from individual sellers around the country.*
- Half.com (<http://www.half.ebay.com/>) - *Type in the title of your book and directly purchase new or used copies directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required*
- Amazon.com marketplace (www.amazon.com) - *Select 'books' in the menu and type in the title of your book. You can purchase the book new from amazon.com or click on 'buy used and new' and purchase a copy directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required.*
- Book Closeouts.com (www.bookcloseouts.com) - *This site sells books at bargain prices. They have a limited selection of titles but those they do carry are very inexpensive.*