

Roslyn High School Summer Reading Program – 2013

for

Language and Literature (9R), World Literature (10R), American Literature
(11R)

and the Roslyn Hilltop Academy Students

Task

Read Wes Moore's *The Other Wes Moore* and annotate it in one of the following three ways.

-If you're borrowing a copy, use **post-its** for Questions, Comments, Observations and Predictions (**QCOP**). You should have at least one post-it for every 2-3 pages

-If you own a copy, feel free to simply **write in the margins** of the book. This goes for both the hard copy and the e-book version if you get it for iPad, Kindle or Nook. Again, there should be at least one annotation per every 2-3 pages

-If you need more structure, **please use the attached chart** that was developed by Ms. Grgas. You should fill out one chart for each chapter.

Whatever method you prefer, your annotations will be checked the first week of school. After you have had a chance to review *The Other Wes Moore* with your class, each grade will be asked to complete an assignment based on the book sometime near the end of September.

About the Book and the Assignment

The Great Divide.

Two young men are born and raised in one of the poorest areas in Baltimore. They grow up only five blocks away from each other, in the exact same social and economic circumstances. By a most unlikely coincidence, both young men are named Wes Moore. They are not related and they do not even know each other. One of these young men manages to "get out." He joins the military, earns a scholarship to college, wins a

prestigious Rhodes Scholarship and eventually becomes a close advisor to President Clinton.

The “other” Wes Moore is currently serving a life sentence in a maximum-security prison for murder.

Why? How does this happen?

The “successful” Wes Moore, after hearing about his incarcerated namesake purely by chance, becomes obsessed with these questions. He visits and befriends the imprisoned Wes Moore, and this book arises from that friendship and those questions. Is it simply a matter of the old “nature vs. nurture” question, which would suggest that the successful Wes Moore is simply internally stronger than his namesake? Or is there something else going on here?

Welcome, then, to our second annual “one school/one book” summer reading assignment in the High School. We have tried to build the success of last year’s Outliers assignment, and also improve upon the model. Here’s why:

- In early October, we will be holding a book seminar fall based on the ideas of the book, which will give us a unique chance to make connections among the grades and among teachers and staff as well
- The new Common Core standards, on which you will be tested at all levels in High School, place a great emphasis on non-fiction reading. Here, then, is an entertaining, practical, thought-provoking and popular non-fiction text for the whole school to share.
- In the past, the summer reading had almost nothing at all to do with what went on in your actual English classes. Since all of what we read in English classes is, in one way or another, designed to make us ask questions about who we are, The Other Wes Moore will help to generate ideas and focus discussion throughout the school year and beyond
- As the Middle School has done with Three Cups of Tea, A Long Walk to Water and The Circuit , we hope to take some of Moore’s ideas about helping everyone attain their maximum potential and put them to some use in the real world
- And speaking of the Middle School, guess what they will be reading this summer? Yes indeed; the 8th grade will be reading The Other Wes Moore, while grades 6 and 7 will read a YA version of the text, Discovering Wes Moore. This should lead to even more interesting discussions and connections, both inside the classroom and out.

Have a safe and happy summer, enjoy the reading, and we’ll see you in September!

The Roslyn High School English Department

