

## GRADE 11 ENGLISH SUMMER READING

**Read** *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore.

As you read, you will **create** a dialectic journal. You must **hand write** all responses. The goal of this assignment is to activate your reading. The term “dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Basically, your journal will display understanding, raise important questions for discussion, and make connections between the text and you as well as the world around you. Although there is no “correct” or “right” number of journal entries for any given work, **ten (10) entries should be provided** for this assignment to be considered complete. The dialectic journaling method is explained below.

Upon returning to Lenape Valley, you will **answer** a writing prompt that will require understanding of the novel. You should **bring** your novel and your journal with you on the first full day of school.

You will need to **obtain** your own copy of the book. There are copies available through the local library and LVR has one copy, if you don't want to purchase the novel. This is a true story – enjoy and appreciate it.

Your journal should be **written by you alone**. Any assistance from the Internet, movies, or secondary sources such as Sparknotes or Cliff Notes will be viewed as cheating.

### PROCEDURE:

- As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of a T-chart (*ALWAYS include page numbers*).
- In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage)
- If you choose, you can label your responses using the following codes:
  - (Q) Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear
  - (C) Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
  - (P) Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what's in the passage
  - (CL) Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction
  - (R) Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
  - (E) Evaluate - make a judgment about the character(s), their actions, or what the author is trying to say

### Sample Dialectical Journal entry: THE THINGS THEY CARRIED by Tim O'Brien

Passages from the text	Pg#s	Comments & Questions
"-they carried like freight trains; they carried it on their backs and shoulders-and for all the ambiguities of Vietnam, all the mysteries and unknowns, there was at least the single abiding certainty that they would never be at a loss for things to carry".	Pg 2	(R) O'brien chooses to end the first section of the novel with this sentence. He provides excellent visual details of what each soldier in Vietnam would carry for day-to-day fighting. He makes you feel the physical weight of what soldiers have to carry for simple survival. When you combine the emotional weight of loved ones at home, the fear of death, and the responsibility for the men you fight with, with this physical weight, you start to understand what soldiers in Vietnam dealt with every day. This quote sums up the confusion that the men felt about the reasons they were fighting the war, and how they clung to the only certainty - things they had to carry - in a confusing world where normal rules were suspended.

### CHOOSING PASSAGES FROM THE TEXT:

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling. For example, you might record:

- Effective &/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
- Passages that remind you of your own life or something you've seen before
- Structural shifts or turns in the plot
- A passage that makes you realize something you hadn't seen before
- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols or motifs.
- Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary
- Events you find surprising or confusing
- Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting

### RESPONDING TO THE TEXT:

You can *respond* to the text in a variety of ways. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be **specific and detailed**. You can write as much as you want for each entry. You can use looseleaf paper for your journals.

#### Basic Responses

- Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text
- Give your personal reactions to the passage
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences
- Write about what it makes you think or feel
- Agree or disagree with a character or the author

#### Sample Sentence Starters:

I really don't understand this because...  
I really dislike/like this idea because...  
I think the author is trying to say that...  
This passage reminds me of a time in my life when...  
If I were (name of character) at this point I would...  
This part doesn't make sense because...  
This character reminds me of (name of person) because...

#### Higher Level Responses

- Analyze the text for use of literary devices (tone, structure, style, imagery)
- Make connections between different characters or events in the text
- Make connections to a different text (or film, song, etc...)
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Consider an event or description from the perspective of a different character
- Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole

#### Variations on the Dialectical Journal Format

- **Metacognitive Journal** – what I learned/how I figured it out (incl. pg. #s)
- **Synthesis Journal** – at the end of a weekly cycle, consider your Dialectical Journal entries, group work & participation in class discussion. Analyze your overall progress as a reader & writer.

Special thanks to <https://esaliterature.files.wordpress.com/.../dialectical-journal-handout.doc> for Procedures, Samples, and Explanations on this document.

Consider each of the following prompts and select one (1) to answer. You will have forty-five (45) minutes to complete this task. You will be given five (5) minutes to prewrite below.

1. In the book's introduction, the author states his "book is meant to show us how... our destinies can be determined by a single stumble down the wrong path, or a tentative step down the right one." Do we all have a single turning point in our lives that sets us towards ultimate success or failure? Write a response in which you **state** your point of view on this issue.

**Support** your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

2. The author comes to realize the power that one's environment—from Baltimore and the Bronx to the Pennsylvania military school and South Africa—can have on an individual. What effects has your environment—home, school, neighborhood, state, or other—had on you so far in your young life? **Identify** the specific environment, **explain** to what extent you have been affected by that environment, and **provide evidence/details** to support your claim.\

Prewrite: