In the first paragraph of the book, Wes reflects on an experience from his childhood and says, “Like a dog chasing a car, I had no idea what to do.” Conversely, toward the end of the book, Wes writes that, “Life’s impermanence, I realized, is what makes every single day so precious. It’s what shapes our time here. It’s what makes it so important that not a single moment be wasted.” These two examples from the book illustrate an instance when Wes did not have a goal and an instance when he realized the importance of having goals.

As we read about the different individuals in “The Other Wes Moore,” the theme of “Goals” emerges in different contexts. Throughout the book, we learn about setting goals, the joys of accomplishing goals, and the consequences of not having them. This final section will explore the theme of “Goals” by first having students identify examples of goals, or lack of goals, from the book. They will then participate in different learning opportunities to scaffold their understanding of the theme. As a culminating activity, students will set ambitious, yet realistic, goals and sign a commitment agreement to accomplish their goals.
Common Core Standards Addressed in this Section:

- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- Come to discussions prepared having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

- Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, and presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.

- Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

- Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.

- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

These discussion questions are designed to encourage students to think deeply about the scenarios and ideas presented in “The Other Wes Moore.” Specifically, these discussions will build students’ reading comprehension skills, allow them to connect the book to their own lives, provide opportunities for them to learn from their classmates, and increase their critical thinking skills.
Teacher Tip: Remind your students about the theme of “Goals” and encourage them to respond with that theme in mind. Although these discussion questions will guide the conversation, the teacher should ensure that all comments are grounded by the overarching theme so that students’ understanding of “Goals” is reinforced.

Read the following prompts and have a discussion with a partner, small group, or entire class.

1. What comes to mind when you hear the word “goal?”

2. What is the difference between a short term and a long term goal?

3. Name one goal a doctor might have? Name a goal a police officer might have? What goals do you think teachers have?

4. What goals have you set for yourself in the past? Did you accomplish them?

5. What would you like to ask each Wes Moore about their goals?

6. On pages 16–18, Mary Moore receives a letter explaining that her Pell Grant was no longer available. Talk about how her life may have been different if this letter never came? Talk about how it changed her goals and her path in life.

7. On pages 48–49, we learn about the sacrifices Wes and Justin made to attend their school. What did this early experience teach Wes and Justin about the importance of goals?

8. What was the final straw that pushed Joy Moore to send Wes to Military School? Describe the interaction between Wes and his mother on pages 87–89.

9. On page 126, Wes writes that, “The expectations that others place on us form our expectations of ourselves.” What does this quote mean and how does it speak to the importance of personal and public accountability?

10. On page 133, Wes writes that Colonel Murphy left Valley Forge for cancer treatment and said, “When it is time for you to leave this school, leave your job, or even leave this earth, you make sure you have worked hard to make sure it mattered you were ever here.” What goals did Colonel Murphy accomplish in his lifetime? Who do you think supported him in his life?

11. On page 147, Wes and Tony rob a jewelry store. What were their goals in doing this? Do you think they were focusing on short term or long term goals when they made the decision to rob the jewelry store?
SUCCESS STORY ACTIVITY

On page 108, Wes provides an inspirational example in which Woody overcame obstacles and successfully completed high school. Wes writes that for Woody, “All that mattered was that he was here. He had accomplished his mission of completing high school.” Like Woody, all of us have accomplished big and small goals in our lives. In this activity, students will create a list of the long and short term goals they have accomplished and will identify how they accomplished each goal.

Common Core Standards Addressed in this Activity:

- Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

- Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

Teach Prior to Activity:

Sequencing refers to the way in which information is presented in a particular order. Information can be sequenced in the chronological order in which events happen or in a step-by-step order such as a cooking recipe.

Cause and Effect describes the relationship between two occurrences in a passage when one occurrence makes the other occurrence happen. For example, on pages 108–109 we learn that Woody worked very hard, that he stayed out of trouble, and that he graduated from high school. In this example, the facts that Woody worked hard and stayed out of trouble are the causes and the effect is that he accomplished his goal and graduated from high school.

Objectives:

- Students will differentiate between the short and long term goals they have accomplished.

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of “sequence” and “cause and effect” by identifying the steps necessary to accomplish different goals.
Individual Work:
1] In previous activities, you learned about “sequencing.” Write the numbers 1–15 next to each item to put them in the correct chronological sequence. #1 should be the first thing that happened in the book and #15 should be the last.

___ Wes learns about the “other” Wes Moore  
___ Wes makes new friends in New York City  
___ Wes returns from South Africa  
___ Wes and Justin travel a long distance to attend school each day  
___ Wes’s mother decides to move her family to New York City  
___ Wes’s mother sends him to Valley Forge Military Academy  
___ Wes travels to South Africa  
___ Wes’s father goes to the hospital  
___ Wes is sent to his room because he hit his sister  
___ Wes writes “The Other Wes Moore”  
___ Wes tries to run away from Valley Forge Military Academy  
___ Wes and his family load up the car and drive to New York City  
___ Wes graduates from Valley Forge Military Academy  
___ Wes is impressed when he meets Captain Hill  
___ Wes is caught by the police for spray painting public property
Complete the following chart with an appropriate cause or effect for each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>EFFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Wes learns about the “other” Wes Moore</td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b. Wes travels to South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c. Wes’s father goes to the hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Wes writes “The Other Wes Moore”</td>
<td>d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>e. Wes and his family move to The Bronx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Wes is sent to his room because he hit his sister</td>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>g. Wes makes new friends in NYC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Wes tries to run away from Valley Forge Military Academy</td>
<td>h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>i. Wes and Justin travel a long distance to attend school each day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Wes is caught by the police for spray painting public property</td>
<td>j.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3] Complete the following chart with four short term and four long term goals that you have accomplished in your life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHORT TERM GOALS</th>
<th>LONG TERM GOALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(For Example: Saved $15 in two weeks)</td>
<td>(For Example: Got accepted to college)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4] Pick one short term goal and one long term goal from the chart you just completed and list the specific steps you needed to take in order to accomplish each goal. Be sure to write each step in the correct chronological sequence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE SHORT TERM GOAL I ACCOMPLISHED WAS:</th>
<th>THE LONG TERM GOAL I ACCOMPLISHED WAS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 things I did to accomplish this goal:</td>
<td>5 things I did to accomplish this goal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5| Each of the short and long term goals you accomplished likely had positive consequences on your life. Identify four long or short term goals you have accomplished. Think about those goals as “causes” and write the different “effects” that resulted from each of your accomplishments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>EFFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(List four goals you have accomplished)</td>
<td>(Write how these accomplishments impacted your life)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
CAREER AND LIFE MAP ACTIVITY

In previous activities, students focused on Wes’s successes and presented the short and long term goals they have accomplished. As students likely know, it typically takes a lot of hard work, patience, and support to accomplish different goals. In this activity, students will reflect on Wes’s many accomplishments and map out a series of long and short term goals for themselves. In an effort to teach students to be accountable to themselves and others, this activity will also require them to commit to a timeline and to sign an agreement. Students will have the opportunity to identify a peer and an adult to “co-sign” the agreement with them. This Career and Life Map activity stems directly from Wes’s hope that his book will be a “Call to Action” for readers.

Common Core Standards Addressed in this Activity:

- Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

- Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

Teach Prior to Activity:

Sequencing refers to the way in which information is presented in a particular order. Information can be sequenced in the chronological order in which events happen or in a step-by-step order such as a cooking recipe.

Objectives:

- Students will determine their own short and long term goals.

- Students will articulate their process for accomplishing each goal.

- Students will describe the different support systems and resources they will need to assist them.

- Student will commit to a timeline for working toward and accomplishing each goal.

Individual Work:

1. Brainstorm a list of the short and long term goals you would like to accomplish in the future.

2. Based on the list you just generated, identify the three short term goals and two long term goals you would like to prioritize for the remainder of this activity.
3| Complete the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Short Term Goal I Would Like to Accomplish is...</th>
<th>The Steps I Need to Accomplish this Goal are...</th>
<th>The Resources and Support Systems I Will Need are...</th>
<th>I Will Accomplish this Goal by...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Long Term Goal I Would Like to Accomplish is...</th>
<th>The Steps I Need to Accomplish this Goal are...</th>
<th>The Resources and Support Systems I Will Need are...</th>
<th>I Will Accomplish this Goal by...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>d.</td>
<td>d.</td>
<td>d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>e.</td>
<td>e.</td>
<td>e.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4| Now that you have mapped out your plans for three short term and two long term goals, you will hold yourself accountable by signing a contract and obtaining two additional signatures, one from a peer and one from a parent, teacher, or other adult.
STUDENT AGREEMENT AND SIGNATURE:

I agree to commit to these goals, processes, and timelines. I will remain mindful of these goals and consistently do my best to accomplish them by the deadline attached to each goal. I will be proud of my accomplishments and will not make excuses or failure.

_________________________________________________ (Signature)   ______________________ (Date)

PEER AGREEMENT AND SIGNATURE:

I agree to hold ______________________________________ (name of student) accountable to these goals, processes, and timelines. I will do my best to be a positive role model and support him/her as they work toward each goal. I will praise their accomplishments and will not tolerate excuses or failure.

_________________________________________________ (Signature)   ______________________ (Date)

PARENT/TEACHER/ADULT AGREEMENT AND SIGNATURE:

I agree to hold ______________________________________ (name of student) accountable to these goals, processes, and timelines. I will do my best to be a positive role model and support him/her as they work toward each goal. I will praise their accomplishments and will not tolerate excuses or failure.

_________________________________________________ (Signature)   ______________________ (Date)
This section will increase students’ comprehension of “The Other Wes Moore” through the writing process. Specifically, students will be asked to develop written responses to prompts in different formats, for different purposes, and for different audiences.
A descriptive writing piece uses details to describe a person, place, or scenario for readers. Midway through the book, we learn that both Wes Moores are making positive changes in their lives. Wes Moore, the author, is enrolled at Valley Forge Military School and the “other” Wes Moore is enrolled in the Job Corps. Write a four paragraph descriptive essay that describes two goals that each Wes Moore accomplished. In your essay, explain the impact these positive changes might have on their futures.

• Pre-writing: Write a list of the different goals each Wes Moore has accomplished. Try to identify at least two for each person.

• Draft: Write a four paragraph descriptive essay that describes two goals that each Wes Moore accomplished. In your essay, explain the impact these positive changes might have on their futures. Be sure to use descriptive language and details to give your reader a clear understanding of their successes and the impact of those successes.

• Final Version: After you have reviewed your draft and received feedback from a peer, parent, or teacher, write a final version of your four paragraph descriptive writing piece.

A persuasive writing piece encourages others to think or act in a certain way. In the book, Wes retells a conversation he had with his uncle Howard after playing a game of basketball. Uncle Howard says he hopes Wes makes it to the NBA but also says, “It is important that you understand that the chances are not in your favor, and you have to have some backup plans.” Write a four paragraph persuasive essay either supporting or disagreeing with this quote from Uncle Howard.

• Pre-writing: First, decide if you agree or disagree with Uncle Howard. Once you have established your position, list details and examples from the book or your personal experience that supports your position. Before you begin writing your essay pick the three strongest, or most compelling, examples that you plan to include in your essay:

• Draft: Write a four paragraph essay that either supports or disagrees with Uncle Howard’s quote that Wes should have a “backup plan.” In your first paragraph, state your position. Your second and third paragraphs should use specific examples from the book or from your own life to support your position. Your final paragraph should re-state your position and the supporting examples. Be sure to use compelling language to persuade your audience to agree with you.

• Final Version: After you have reviewed your draft and received feedback from a peer, parent, or teacher, write a final version of your three paragraph persuasive writing piece.
### Common Core Standards Addressed in this Section:

- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- Come to discussions prepared having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

- Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, and presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.

- Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.

- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Now that students have read different passages from “The Other Wes Moore” and have completed various discussions, activities, and written assignments, they will now have the opportunity to engage in a debate with their peers.
“Ad Hominem” means “against the man.” Through this strategy, students should “attack” their opponent’s position or credibility. For example, a student might argue that Wes’s mother made a great decision to send Wes to the Valley Forge Military Academy. Since the opposing position might lack substantial evidence, since Wes experienced great success at the school, they might argue that a family member from the opposing position taught at a military school and therefore they have a biased position. Teachers can also teach students strategies for avoiding this “attack” such as restating the facts from the book supporting their position and directly asking their opponent to provide “hard” facts from the book as well.

A “Red herring” occurs when an irrelevant idea or piece of information is entered into the debate as a “distracter.” For example, if someone holds the position that the police officer should have arrested Wes after he was caught spray painting public property, they might add, “but since the city jails are so crowded, they let him go. This is why we should have more jails in the city.” The opposing position should know that the issue of overcrowded jails, in this case, is a “red herring” because it offers up new information that isn’t directly related to the debate question. This is also an opportunity to teach students to avoid speculation and ways to challenge opponents who offer speculative evidence.
The purpose of these debate questions is to increase students' critical thinking and to strengthen their ability to critique, evaluate, and form an opinion based on the passages they have read.

1| When Tony tried to keep Wes out of trouble, he said, “Do as I say, not as I do.” Do you think this is a good way to keep youngsters out of trouble? Why or why not?

2| On page 95 Wes describes the financial sacrifices his mother and grandparents made to pay his military school’s tuition. What were their previous goals and what were their new goals? Was this a good investment?

3| During his time in the Job Corps, Wes decided to build a small house for his daughter. What does this house symbolize? Do you think Wes should have spent his time building something else?

4| As the “other” Wes Moore prepares to spend the rest of his life in prison, Wes, the author, writes, “Maybe it was because he’d never thought long term about his life at all. Early losses condition you to believe that short term plans are always smarter. Now Wes’s mind wandered to the long term for the first time. Finally, he could see his future.” Do you think short term or long term goals are more important? Why? Use examples from the book and your own personal experiences to defend your position.

5| On page 179, Wes writes, “… We make decisions based on what we see in that limited world and follow the only models available.” Do you agree or disagree with this quote?