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Longwood’s seminar class encourages personal responsibility, citizen leadership, and self-sufficiency. Each of these characteristics is displayed in the novel *The Other Wes Moore* by one or both of the Wes Moore’s or one of their family members. Personal responsibility can be seen in multiple characters in the novel. The first character I noticed it in was the other Wes Moore’s brother Tony. When Wes is young, Tony tries desperately to teach him to “do as I say, not as I do” (p.27) in regards to Tony’s drug dealing. Since Wes’s father is not around Tony sees it as his personal responsibility to try and get Wes to have a better life. Tony tries to make sure Wes stays in school, does not do drugs, and does not join any gangs. Ultimately, he is unsuccessful but throughout the chapters on Wes’s childhood he often mentions Tony encouraging him to be different and better than him.

Personal responsibility is also show in Wes’s mother Mary throughout the novel. Mary tries to provide a good life for her sons with whatever she could. She saw it as her responsibility as their mother to try to keep them out of trouble. The author mentions many times how Mary would encourage Wes to stay in school, or not deal drugs, or do the right thing. At the end of the novel, the author mentions that Mary has a steady job and is raising three of Wes’s children, her niece, her nephew, and her youngest son. I think that it shows great personal responsibility that Mary is caring for so many children that aren’t hers in addition to keeping a steady job.

Citizen leadership is another characteristic that is seen in the novel. I mostly saw this trait the author Wes Moore. After Wes became acclimated to Valley Forge and began to try he became a leader. When Wes is doing his internship with the mayor he mention that he was second lieutenant in the Army Reserve. Despite this not being a very high up leadership position, he was still a leader in the group. His internship with the mayor also showed me that he was a citizen leader. This is because he chose to do his internship with someone in a position of power who was a good leader. I think that Wes chose to do his internship with a good leader because he as hoping to learn how to be one. Wes also ends up becoming a Rhodes Scholar which demonstrates that he has leadership qualities.

Self-sufficiency is the final major characteristic displayed in the novel that I am going to talk about. The other Wes Moore displayed self-sufficiency when he put himself through Job Corps. Wes tried to change his life by taking the steps to be able to get a job. This shows self-sufficiency because Wes is working to find a way to be able to provide for himself and his children. I think that Wes also displays self-sufficiency through the drug dealing that he does throughout the novel. What Wes was doing was wrong, but he was doing it as a way to make money and provide for himself and his family, without any external assistance. Tony shows the same self-sufficiency through his drug dealing because he is also working to provide for himself.

This novel connects to college students because personal responsibility, self-sufficiency, and citizen leadership are the qualities that college students need to have. When you go off to college you must learn to be responsible for yourself because for many people it is the first time they are living away from home. College students also have to learn how to be self-sufficient because they do not have their parents to help them anymore. They have to learn how to do things like laundry, talking to professors, and keeping a budget on their own. Being a citizen leader is also important in college because many professors and potential employers will be impressed if they see student stepping up and being a leader.