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Class: CS-1000 English

Research Topic (Support System): Integrated Support Systems (school + therapy + vocational training)

Guiding Question (Write your answer in complete sentences)	Quotations from Book + Research (Include links/page numbers)
<p>1. Street Culture & Early Environment</p> <p>What aspects of street culture shaped the other Wes's identity, beliefs, and daily reality? How did his neighborhood conditions influence his outlook on the future?</p>	<p>Book Quote(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">“The drug game was everywhere, with a gun handle protruding from the top of every tenth teenager’s waistline” p. 27“To Wes, Tony was a ‘certified gangsta’ p. 27“In the end, Wes didn’t want to be like Tony, but he couldn’t imagine being anything else.” p. 28“The walls of Murphy Homes were the only world Wes really knew.” p. 26 <p>Research Quote(s):</p> <p>“Students with complex support needs often experience... family dysfunction... [and] early disengagement from education” (Cumming et al., 2022).</p> <p>Link: Cumming, T. M., et al. (2022). Education-Centred Formal Wraparound Services in Support of School-Aged Students With Complex Support Needs: A Systematic Review.</p>
<p>2. Systemic Barriers</p> <p>What systemic barriers (poverty, school tracking, policing, family stress, trauma) limited the other Wes's options or pushed him toward survival behaviors?</p>	<p>Book Quote(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">“Her Pell Grant had been terminated... she had to drop out of Johns Hopkins.” p. 18-19“The riots were fueled by illegal but strictly enforced racial segregation, economic contraction, and an unresponsive political system.” p. 23“At eight years old, Wes was becoming the man of the house.” p. 29“It was years before Wes’s mom found out her son had been arrested that day.” p. 34

	<p>Research Quote(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Parental death... has been associated with negative educational, economic, and health outcomes” (Schlüter et al., 2024). “Two-thirds of juveniles in detention facilities meet the criteria for one or more mental health disorders” (McCarter, 2016). <p>Link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schlüter, B.-S., et al. (2024). Youth Experiencing Parental Death Due to Drug Poisoning and Firearm Violence in the US, 1999–2020. McCarter, S. A. (2016). Holistic Representation: A Randomized Pilot Study of Wraparound Services for First-Time Juvenile Offenders.
<p>3. Author Wes's Support Systems</p> <p>What structures, mentors, or environments helped the author Wes develop purpose, discipline, and emotional regulation? How did these supports protect him from negative street influences?</p>	<p>Book Quote(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Even when the Bronx around us seemed to be crumbling, my mother was determined to see us through it.” p. 29 “My grandparents had worked their whole lives to create opportunities for their children and grandchildren.” p. 16 “My mother went to battle for me every day. She was relentless.” p. 30 <p>Research Quote(s):</p> <p>“School-based wraparound initiatives are focused on improving educational achievement by addressing the support needs of the whole student” (Cumming et al., 2022).</p> <p>Link:</p> <p>Cumming, T. M., et al. (2022). <i>Education-Centred Formal Wraparound Services in Support of School-Aged Students With Complex Support Needs: A Systematic Review</i>.</p>

<p>4. Key Divergence / Turning Point Identify one moment where the two Weses faced similar pressures but made different choices. Why did their paths diverge at this moment? How did support (or lack of support) influence the outcome?</p>	<p>Book Quote(s): Author Wes: “I had added my indelible mark to Laconia Avenue... as a police cruiser rolled up around the corner” p. 29</p> <p>Other Wes: “It was years before Wes’s mom found out her son had been arrested that day” p. 34</p> <p>Research Quote(s): “Findings indicate statistically significant improvement for youth receiving wraparound services on six out of eight measures” (McCarter, 2016).</p> <p>Link: McCarter, S. A. (2016). Holistic Representation: A Randomized Pilot Study of Wraparound Services for First-Time Juvenile Offenders</p>
<p>5. Evidence-Based Intervention for the Other Wes Based on research, what realistic support system could have changed the other Wes’s path? Why would this intervention have worked (evidence-based explanation)?</p>	<p>Book Quote(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Wes was the man of the house” p. 29 • “Tony, a veteran of the drug game at eighteen” p. 27 • “Wes was missing classes regularly by the time he was eight.” p. 31 <p>Research Quote(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Integrated services provided on site have been found to be desirable, as this circumstance assists in the creation of a community and culture of collaboration... intended to promote student mental and physical health and academic success” (Cumming et al., 2022). • “Customized employment... is designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual... and carried out through flexible strategies” (Smith et al., 2015). <p>Link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumming, T. M., et al. (2022). <i>Education-Centred Formal Wraparound Services...</i> • Smith, T. J., et al. (2015). <i>Integrating Customized Employment Practices Within the Vocational Rehabilitation System.</i>

6. Flourishing & Big Picture Reflection

What must communities, schools, and families provide so young people can thrive? What does choice look like under systemic constraint? What lesson does this story teach about flourishing?

Your concluding idea (no quotes required unless desired):

Part 1 suggests that for young people to truly flourish, communities, schools, and families must work together so no kid like Wes is left alone with adult problems. That means stable housing, safe schools, mental health care, chances to grieve losses, and real job or training pathways that actually feel reachable. In this world, “choice” is never completely free- street culture and systemic barriers narrow the menu of options long before a teenager decides anything. The story warns us not to blame individual choices without asking what supports were- or weren’t- there, and it argues that flourishing depends on building integrated support systems that make better choices realistically possible, not just theoretically available.