

Common Reading: *The Color of Water* by James McBride

The Color of Water is about McBride figuring out his personal and group identity.

(Agree/Disagree)

Why is this such a compelling search for him?

Where do you think his sense of personal identity comes from? (ie. what in his life contributes to who he thinks he is?) Comment on his early and later stages of life.

Where do you think YOUR sense of personal identity comes from?

Is “religion” an important theme in this book? Why?

In *The Color of Water* there were allusions to the way faith/church/religion affected personal identity.

How did religious faith and experience affect McBride’s identity? His mother’s identity?

Do McBride's racial and religious identity have anything to do with each other in your opinion?

Is McBride Jewish? Christian? Both? Neither?

Could you describe McBride using the identifiers that are commonly used in American culture?

What if you had to?

How is your experience similar to AND different from McBride’s?

Did the book provide a positive or negative impression of Judaism/Jewishness, Christianity/The African American Church?

If you had to hyphenate your Christian identity, how would you do it?

Roman Catholic	nondenominational	Evangelical	Lutheran	Methodist	
Protestant	Pentecostal	Anabaptist	Charismatic	White	Black
African American	Latino	Asian	Reformed	Presbyterian	
Wesleyan	noncommittal	EFree			

What does McBride learn about religion/s, God or the Bible?

How does he learn it?

What do McBride’s chapters “The Old Testament” and “The New Testament” have to do with those sections of the Bible as you understand them?

How does McBride describe the Bible?

How is your experience with religion, the Bible and God similar to AND different from McBride’s?