



## A Discussion Guide to **BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME**

By Ta-Nehisi Coates

*Winner of the National Book Award*

### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

Ta-Nehisi Coates' letter to his teenage son is a moving personal account of what it's like to be black in America.

It's also about:

- Race as the child of racism, not the father
- Resilience in the face of racism
- The "American Dream," including its myths, privileges, and prejudices
- The power of education for growth and awareness
- The irreplaceable value of the body, individual lives, our collective resources

This is not an easy book, but it is a powerful and important one. As Coates says: "I hope to haunt [my readers], to trouble their sense of how things actually are."

One thing Coates teaches is that it's okay *not* to have answers. He encourages us to face our discomfort—to sit with our questions. It's the asking and the seeking that matter most.

Let's start the conversation!

### **CONVERSATION STARTERS:**

- Is there anything in Coates' writing that resonates with your own experience?
- What was a passage that stood out to you? What thoughts did it provoke in you?
- Coates writes that journalism, fatherhood, living in New York, and traveling to Paris opened doors for him to other worlds. What was an experience that opened your eyes to other ways of being in the world or made you question a belief or something you had been taught? What was the experience like?

### **TOOLS TO HELP YOU:**

- UO Common Reading: [ow.ly/ruTl300F2TP](http://ow.ly/ruTl300F2TP)
- Reading the Book (Prof. Howard Rambsy's blog): [ow.ly/e2TQ300F34y](http://ow.ly/e2TQ300F34y)
- Coates on Questioning: [ow.ly/TuGX300OfzI](http://ow.ly/TuGX300OfzI)
- "The Conversation": [ow.ly/bEIm300F3IS](http://ow.ly/bEIm300F3IS)
- "Explaining White Privilege": [ow.ly/yNfe300F3if](http://ow.ly/yNfe300F3if)  
(Note: profanity used in this article)

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

Ta-Nehisi Coates at UO  
School of Journalism and Communication's Ruhl Lecture  
February 3, 2017

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