*Educated* Essay Prompts

Dual Credit English IV

Mr. Pace

Select one of the following prompts about Tara Westover’s memoir, *Educated,* and compose a well-reasoned literary analysis of the text in response to it. Remember to clearly state your thesis and support it with direct quotes from the text.

1. In an interview with *The New York Times,* Westover says about her upbringing, “It was a quality of my childhood that everyone had these two sides. Even though things could be really beautiful and peaceful one moment, they could also be a bit chaotic or maybe terrifying in another.” Demonstrate instances where she presents both a chaotic moment and also finds beauty in it? What commentary does this provide about her viewpoint or the human condition?
2. One of the benefits of memory is that, as time goes on, we are able to process our pain and trauma and look back on it with perspective. However, in the intense moments of that pain and trauma, most people don’t have the ability to see the bigger picture. How do you see this phenomenon playing out in Westover’s book? How in tune with her trauma was she while she was living it?
3. In the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, myriad conspiracy theories have emerged questioning the veracity and legitimacy of the threat posed by the novel coronavirus and suggesting a variety of ulterior motives behind the global response to the pandemic. In the book, Tara’s father is extremely skeptical about the role of government, teachers, doctors – anything that threatened his belief system. While his suspicion was manic and paranoid, is there a degree of truth in the idea that we should question the authority of institutional establishments? What good could come out of that? Conversely, what is the danger in this questioning or abstaining from the help and influence of government, modern medicine, and public education. Relate to our current situation.