

TYRONE'S 2.6 LITERARY EXPLORATION ESSAY

Love the title! Well done!

Rising Above Adversity

Great and engaging 'hook'... and it fits the theme of your essay well!

Titles of longer texts like novels should be italicized or underlined.

"I was on fire" (p. 9). This is how Jeannette Walls introduces the story of her childhood experiences in the novel *The Glass Castle*. Her first memory is of cooking hot dogs, unsupervised, and accidentally setting herself on fire. This is just one example of inappropriate parenting that we see throughout the novel. The story is based on the true-life experiences that Jeannette recalls of her childhood. She describes various challenges including irresponsible parenting, run-down housing, and lack of the basics including proper nutrition. She is especially close to her father, Rex Walls, who has far-fetched dreams of building a house made all out of glass, the glass castle. Jeannette and her siblings, Lori, Maureen, and Brian are left to provide for themselves from a young age. Despite the poor parenting of Rose and Rex Walls, Jeannette learns how to properly care for herself and others. This story follows Jeannette from her earliest memory and through her childhood years and early adult life as she learns to thrive despite her rough upbringing. With time and experience, she is able to improve her own living situation. In the novel *The Glass Castle*, Jeannette Walls demonstrates that the ability to face hardship and learn from one's experiences can help one grow and thrive despite adversity.

Jeannette faces numerous challenges throughout her childhood, being raised in an unstable environment. We quickly learn that she is quite smart and self-sufficient, and able to navigate these challenges well despite her young age. We see this in the opening passage about Jeannette cooking hot dogs on her own at the age of 3. She was accidentally set on fire and was rushed to the hospital for treatment of her burns. She ended up spending several weeks in the hospital, before her dad took her home without the doctor's permission. Despite her experiences she shows resilience and "A few days after Mom and Dad brought me home, I cooked myself some hot dogs" (p. 15).

Although her childhood was filled with adversity, she viewed their lifestyle with a sense of adventure. She describes her family as being constantly on the move, and "we were always doing the skedaddle, usually in the middle of the night" (p. 19). In every new town they would find creative living arrangements within



Nice connection to the title. Offers an explanation for the reader.

If it is the end of a body paragraph, conclude with a final, summative sentence.

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their budgets, like when they moved into the old railroad depot in Battle Mountain and used found items for furniture, and cardboard boxes for beds for the children. Jeannette enjoyed living like this: "We liked our boxes. They made going to bed seem like an adventure" (p. 52).

In another passage we see that Jeannette shows a great sense of trust and loyalty to her parents, even with their shortcomings. Once, when they were driving, she was thrown from the back of their vehicle and hit the ground so hard she sustained several cuts and bruises. As she faces this trauma, she somehow manages to maintain trust in her parents, explaining "Once I got my breath back, I crawled along the railroad embankment to the road and sat down to wait for Mom and Dad to come back" (p. 30). Eventually her parents return for her, and her dad cleans her up and makes her laugh. Her anger with her parents is easily forgotten. She is quick to forgive. From her early years, we see that Jeannette demonstrates resilience, self-sufficiency, a sense of adventure, and loyalty to her family, even when faced with difficult circumstances.

Nice job using your topic sentence to make clear that this paragraph will show what causes Jeannette to begin to transform.

Nicely done...and a strong connection to your thesis.

As Jeannette continues to encounter difficult circumstances throughout her childhood, she starts to doubt her parents and their lifestyle. Once, when she was 7 years old, she and Lori couldn't find any food to eat. Instead, they ate the last of a stick of margarine, mixed with sugar. Their mom is upset that they ate the margarine, and Jeannette explains that she was hungry. Her mom was shocked that she had said that as Jeannette had "broken one of our unspoken rules. We were always supposed to pretend our life was one long and incredibly fun adventure" (p. 69). This is one of the first examples that Jeannette was becoming skeptical of their "adventure" and way of living. She also started to feel doubts about her dad's alcoholism, and as a birthday present to herself, she asked him to stop drinking. This causes a distance between her and her dad, who seems hurt by this suggestion and replies with "You must be awfully ashamed of your old man" (p. 116). She trusts he will stop drinking for the good of the family, although he eventually breaks that trust again. She has started to learn that her father may not be reliable to make appropriate, healthy choices for himself and his family. After the frequent

Spell out numbers ten and under.

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transitions of moving from town to town, Jeannette starts to realize that she is not having as much fun an adventure as she had thought. *She wants a more stable and functional family home.* For a time, she is happy and comfortable at her mom's house in Phoenix, but then they are uprooted again and move to Welch. Eventually they move into a run-down house on Little Hobart Street. Obviously not enjoying this new venture, Jeannette asks, "Are we ever going home?" (p. 154), indicating Phoenix as "home". Unfortunately, her dad answers with "This is home now" (p. 154). We can see Jeannette beginning to value stability and comfort over adventure. Jeannette continues to show resilience despite adversity, but even she begins to doubt her parents, and their "adventurous" lifestyle.

Note, Tyrone has an additional body paragraph, one focusing on the character DURING transformation. Your essay does not need to include this paragraph.

By her teenage years, Jeannette has become very self-aware, and she takes it upon herself to make changes that would help improve her life and her family's life. She started researching ways to improve their situation and help her parents rise out of poverty. Jeannette presents her research to her mother and at one point tells her, "Mom, you have to leave Dad" (p. 188). She explains that she doesn't blame her Dad, but she knows that he will continue to sabotage their efforts to improve their lives. It is clear that she has lost her faith in her parents' ability to provide and has started taking responsibility in her own hands. She has always been self-sufficient and now we see this in her efforts to influence her parents in a positive direction. When Jeannette joins her school newspaper, she starts to learn about the wider world. Prior to this, everything she learns is filtered through her parents' views. Although she learns a lot from her obviously brilliant parents, she realizes that their world views are somewhat biased: "I began to feel like I was getting the whole story for the first time" (p. 205). This shows personal growth and curiosity to explore the world beyond her own experiences. She seems more open and attentive to new information than her parents are. When her mom leaves for the summer, Jeannette is given the responsibility of taking care of herself and her two younger siblings, Maureen and Brian. She has the set idea of budgeting and planning for meals for them all: "I've got kids to feed" (p. 210). When she loses some of her budget to her dad, she takes the initiative to get a job at a jewelry store in town. Even though her parents had never set a good.

You do a great job throughout your essay of explaining how your examples support the topic sentence of the body paragraph in which they appear. Nice!

Careful that you stay in the same verb tense throughout your essay. You usually write in present tense, but here you suddenly switched to past.

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example, she learns that with planning and honest work, she is able to provide for the family. By this point she has lost faith in her parents' abilities to take care of the family, and so she takes the responsibility to care for herself, as well as her siblings. Throughout their sufferings, the children have all shown loyalty and a sense of responsibility towards each other. Through her lifetime of facing obstacles, Jeannette shows that she is able to learn from her parents' mistakes and improve her own situation. She does this while also caring for her siblings.

Once Jeannette lets go of the adventurous lifestyle she lives with her parents, she works towards living a healthy stable life for herself, even realizing that she needs distance from her parents in order to live well. Jeannette moves to New York City at the age of 17, meeting up with her sister Lori. She had a clear goal of finding a stable home and a job that would support her in her new life. She moved to New York and "The very next day, I landed a job at a hamburger joint on Fourteenth Street" (p. 247). She settled into an apartment with Lori until she found her own apartment, continuing to be responsible and self-sufficient. Later, the parents follow the children in moving to New York City, which introduces more problems for Jeannette and her siblings. The parents continue to live irresponsibly and the children are now trying to support them. Jeannette decides that they are not welcome to stay at her place, though she still tries to support them in some ways. Her parents end up moving in with Lori, and eventually Lori was unable to cope with their constant presence. Jeannette eventually advises her, "Maybe you're just going to have to kick mom out" (p. 254), explaining that "she's driving you crazy" (p. 254). Jeannette realizes that some boundaries are necessary to protect one's own health.

Even though Jeannette realizes the importance of boundaries, her loyalty to her family still exists. She feels an obligation to take care of her parents, and guilty that she cannot persuade them to live well: "I wanted to buy them something that would improve their lives" (p. 269), like a small car. Her mom repeatedly rejects her generous offers, which make Jeannette feel even more guilty. When Jeannette offers to buy them something practical, her mom requests

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something frivolous, like a perfume atomizer, which Jeannette refuses. She realizes that she cannot help her parents if they do not make any effort to better themselves. After a lifetime of challenging experiences and a traumatic childhood, Jeannette learns how to balance being stable and self-sufficient, yet still generous in trying to help others. She continues to show kindness and generosity towards those less fortunate but realizes that she has to set limits on that generosity.


Be sure it's clear how this paragraph connects back to your thesis.

Excellent word choices!

Having the ability to adapt to and learn from hardship is a good personal quality, because it can help one to rise above any obstacle. Jeannette Walls had the unfortunate experiences of growing up in an unstable, at times dangerous, environment. She faces bullying, food insecurity, and terrible living conditions. Through this all we see multiple examples of her kindness and generosity towards others, especially in her own family. She meets her challenges with resilience and a sense of adventure. As she becomes more aware of her living situation, she starts to realize her sense of adventure is misguided, and leans towards more stable, secure living arrangements. She loses faith in her parents' abilities to make responsible decisions for themselves and their children. These realizations could have discouraged her, but instead she chooses to learn from her parents' mistakes and improve her life. She continues to try to improve the lives of her siblings and parents as well, although she recognizes that in order to live well for herself, she does need to set appropriate boundaries with her family. While adversity is not enjoyable, I think it is essential to experience some sort of hardship throughout one's life. Like Jeannette, we can view these experiences as opportunities for growth and learning, which will help us rise above our hardships. Do you have what it takes to face hardship and rise above it all?

Nice, if basic clincher, but it works!

TYRONE'S 2.6 LITERARY EXPLORATION RUBRIC

	THOUGHT AND SUPPORT	FORM AND STRUCTURE	MATTERS OF CHOICE	MATTERS OF CORRECTNESS
FOCUS	When marking Thought and Support , the teacher should consider how effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the student's ideas reflect an understanding of the topic the literary example relates to the student's ideas the support explains and/or clarifies the response Consider ideas presented in the <i>Personal Reflection on Choice of Character(s) from Literary Text(s)</i>.	When marking Form and Structure , the teacher should consider how effectively the student's organizational choices result in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development and maintenance of a controlling idea or unifying effect the creation of a coherent, shaped, and concluded discussion in response to the assignment 	When marking Matters of Choice , the teacher should consider how effectively the student's choices enhance communication. The teacher should consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> diction, including connotative language, imagery, idiomatic expressions, and dialect syntax, including such choices as parallelism, balance, inversion, sentence length, and variety the contribution of stylistic choices to the creation of voice 	When marking Matters of Correctness , the teacher should consider the correctness of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sentence construction (completeness, consistency, subordination, coordination, predication) usage (accurate use of words according to convention and meaning) grammar (subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent agreement, pronoun reference, consistency of tense) mechanics (punctuation, spelling, capitalization) Consider the proportion of error in terms of the complexity and length of the response.
Excellent E	An insightful understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are perceptively explored. The literary example is related effectively to the student's ideas. Support is precise and effective.	A focused controlling idea or unifying effect is skillfully sustained throughout the response. Development of ideas and explanations is smooth and coherent.	Diction is precise and effective. Many sentences have been successfully structured for effect and are sometimes polished. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a convincing voice.	This writing demonstrates confident control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The relative insignificance of errors present is impressive considering the complexity of the response and the circumstances.
Proficient PF	A well-considered understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are thoughtfully explored. The literary example is related competently to the student's ideas. Support is specific and relevant.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is sustained throughout the response. Development of ideas and explanations is coherent.	Diction is specific and generally effective. Many sentences appear to have been purposefully structured for effect. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a competent voice.	This writing demonstrates competent control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. Minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and/or complex language structures are understandable considering the circumstances.
Satisfactory S	A defensible understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are appropriately and straightforwardly explored. The literary example is related adequately to the student's ideas. Support is relevant but tends to be general.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is evident, but unity may falter on occasion. Development of ideas and explanations is generally clear and coherent.	Diction is appropriate but may be general rather than specific. Sentence structures are generally straightforward and clear. Stylistic choices contribute to the creation of a clear voice.	This writing demonstrates control of the basics of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. There may be occasional lapses in control of sentence construction and usage, and/or minor errors in grammar and mechanics. The communication, however, is clear.
Limited L	An understanding of the topic is evident but is only partially demonstrated or is not always sustained. The student's ideas are incompletely or unclearly explored. The literary example is lacking or does not relate adequately to the student's ideas and/or to the topic. Support is overgeneralized, inconsistent, and/or marginally relevant.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is evident, but unity falters frequently. Development of ideas and explanations is uncertain and/or unclear.	Diction is imprecise and/or inappropriate. Sentence structures are frequently ineffective and/or awkward. Inadequate stylistic choices contribute to the creation of an uncertain or unclear voice.	This writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The range of sentence construction problems and errors in usage, grammar, and/or mechanics blur the clarity of communication.
Poor P	A minimal understanding of the topic is demonstrated. The student's ideas are underdeveloped, unexplored, and/or incomprehensible. The literary example is absent or unrelated to the student's ideas and/or to the topic. Support is deficient and/or irrelevant.	A controlling idea or unifying effect is absent or is not sustained. Development of ideas and explanations is deficient, ineffective, and/or incoherent.	Diction is inaccurate and/or overgeneralized. Sentence structures are misused to such an extent that clarity suffers. A lack of stylistic choices contributes to the creation of an ineffective voice.	This writing demonstrates lack of control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. The unclear and incorrect sentence constructions and jarring errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics impede communication.
Insufficient INS	Insufficient is a special category. It is not an indicator of quality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment OR The writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess Ideas and Impressions 			
Total: 67/70 = 96%	28.5/30	19/20	10/10	9.5/10
Areas of strength: Thank you for this submission, Kareem! This is another strong response! Here are a few comments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Your thesis guides your essay well! You offered many appropriate direct quotes. Excellent. And, they were cited well! While your paragraphs were lengthy, they were well developed and offered a good mix of plot summary and analysis. Might I suggest: Be sure to spell out numbers ten and under, and stay in a consistent verb tense. Also be sure to use a concluding sentence on your body paragraphs that ties the paragraph back to the essay's thesis.				
 Assessment				