

Speak Argumentative Prompt

Is it important to speak up about traumatic events in one's life or is it better to just deal with them internally (within oneself)?

Construct a five paragraph essay in which you make and support a claim about whether it is important to speak up about traumatic events in one's life. Your response must be based on ideas and information found in the passages provided. You may also refer to other passages in the text if you would like, you are not limited to the following 3 passages. But, they

Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- read and review the sources;
- plan your response;
- write a thorough response; and
- revise and edit your response.

Be sure to:

- include a claim/thesis statement;
- address counterclaims;
- use evidence from multiple sources; and
- avoid overly relying on one source.

Passage 1

He stops by my locker. I tell him Mr. Neck gave me a *D* for the suffragette report.

David: "He has a point."

Me: "It was a great report! You read it. I wrote a bibliography and I didn't copy from the encyclopedia. It was the best report ever. It's not my fault Mr. Neck doesn't get performance art."

David pauses to offer me a stick of gum. It's a delaying tactic, the kind the juries love.

David: "But you got it wrong. The suffragettes were all about speaking up, screaming for their rights. You can't speak up for your right to be silent. That's letting the bad guys win. If the suffragettes did that, women wouldn't be able to vote yet."

I blow a bubble in his face. He folds the gum wrappers into tiny triangles.

David: "Don't get me wrong. I think what you did was kind of cool and getting stuck in MISS wasn't fair. But don't expect to make a difference unless you speak up for yourself."

Me: "Do you lecture all your friends like this?"

David: "Only the ones I like."

Passage 2

I didn't call the cops to break up the party, I write. I called-I put the pencil down. I pick it up again--them because some guy raped me. Under the trees. I didn't know what to do. She watches as I carve out the words. She leans closer to me. I write more. I was stupid and drunk and I didn't know what was happening and then he hurt-I scribble that out-raped me. When the police came, everyone was screaming, and I was just too scared, so I cut through some back yards and walked home.

I push the notebook back to her. She stares at the words. She pulls her chair around to my side of the table.

Oh my God, I am so sorry, she writes. Why didn't you tell me?

I couldn't tell anybody.

Does your mom know?

I shake my head. Tears pop up from some hidden spring. Damn. I sniff and wipe my eyes on my sleeve.

Did you get pregnant? Did he have a disease? Oh my God, Are you OK???

No. I don't think so. Yes, I'm OK. Well, kinda.

Rachel writes in a heavy, fast hand. *WHO DID IT??*

I turn the page.

Andy Evans.

"Liar!" She stumbles out of her chair and grabs her books off the table. "I can't believe you. You're jealous. You're a twisted little freak and you're jealous that I'm popular and I'm & going to the prom and so you lie to me like this. And you sent me that note, didn't you? You are so sick.

She spins to take on the librarian. "I'm going to the nurse," she states. "I think I'm going to throw up."

Passage 3

IT happened. There is no avoiding it, no forgetting. No running away or flying or burying, or hiding. Andy Evans raped me in August when I was drunk and too young to know what was happening. It wasn't my fault. He hurt me. It wasn't my fault. And I'm not going to let it kill me. I can grow.

I look at my homely sketch. It doesn't need anything. Even through the river in my eyes I can see that. It isn't perfect and that makes it just right.

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The last bell rings. Mr. Freeman comes to my table.

Mr. Freeman: "Time's up, Melinda. Are you ready?"

I hand over the picture. He takes it in his hands and studies it. I sniff again and wipe my eyes on my arm. The bruises are vivid, but they will fade.

Mr. Freeman: "No crying in my studio. It ruins the supplies. Salt, you know, saline. Etches like acid." He sits on the stool next to me and hands back my tree. "You get an A+. You worked hard at this." He hands me the box of tissues. "You've been through a lot, haven't you?"

The tears dissolve the last block of ice in my throat. I feel the frozen stillness melt down through the inside of me, dripping shards of ice that vanish in a puddle of sunlight on the stained floor. Words float up.

Me: "Let me tell you about it."