Directions: On Thursday, you will participate in a Socratic Seminar, where you will be asked to address the prompts listed below. To prepare, please type a detailed response for each prompt.

Things to consider:

* Use the argumentative writing format we’ve discussed (claim, evidence, commentary). Review these terms with a partner if needed.
* Be as specific as possible when referencing textual evidence.
* The more time you spend preparing today, the easier it will be for you to participate tomorrow.
* This Socratic Seminar is the last assignment that will go into the grade book. You will get two scores, one for your responses and one for your participation in the seminar.
* Addressing the extra credit prompts could be exactly the boost your grade needs before it becomes final.
* Please email me your completed responses for grading (mrswebersct@gmail.com).

Prompts: Each response is worth a total of 3 points.

1. In the memoir, Jeannette must find ways to feed and care for herself. At times, her siblings help her through this task; however, there were also times that she struggled through situations alone. Considering this, do you believe that she needed the help of others to gain her current success and status? Explain using textual evidence.
2. Many individuals born into situations like Jeannette’s might not have ended up as successful as she is in her adult life. Why do you think Jeannette was able to find success despite her difficult childhood?
3. After moving to New York, it seems that Jeannette and her siblings’ troubles are over. However, things get chaotic when their parents come to New York to be with them. Using textual evidence, evaluate the Walls children’s decision to take their parents in rather than turn them away. Was it the right call? Why or why not?
4. Although Jeannette, Lori, and Brian are able to live stable lives by the end of the memoir, Maureen was not as lucky. Why do you think she struggled more than the others towards the end of the memoir? Be sure to use textual evidence to support your ideas/assumptions.
5. Although Billy Deel also grew up with an alcoholic father, his experiences weren’t exactly identical to Jeannette’s (81). Compare and contrast Billy’s life to Jeannette’s. Who had it better? Why? Be sure to support your claims with textual evidence.
6. In the memoir, we learned a little bit about Rose Mary and Rex’s parents/upbringings. How do you think their parents/childhood impacted them and their parenting style?
7. Evaluate both Rex and Rose Mary’s parenting skills. In your opinion, who is the better parent? Use textual evidence to justify your selection.
8. Now knowing Jeannette’s “truth” and struggles growing up, how would you have reacted if you were the one in the limo who saw your mom picking through the trash? Use textual evidence to justify your proposed reaction.
9. Although Rose Mary’s alive when Jeannette publishes this memoir, Rex passes away and never gets to read it. How do you think he would have reacted? Use what you know about Rex to support your response.
10. Develop a high-level question (not yes/no) that can be addressed during the Socratic Seminar.

Extra Credit: Each response is worth 2 extra credit points.

1. Jeannette Walls has said, “Some people think my parents are absolute monsters and should’ve had their children taken away from them. Some think they were these great free-spirited creatures who had a lot of wisdom that a lot of parents today don’t [have].”

What do you think? Should the kids have been taken away? Would they have been better off?

1. In interviews, Jeannette has discussed scenes in the book in which she did something that could have gotten her in serious trouble (shooting at Billy Deal, for example). She said, “I was very lucky, I was lucky that I didn’t kill them and I didn’t actually shoot Billy Deal and I didn’t shoplift...All kids get into trouble, but for kids from my socio-economic group, if you get into trouble it is so hard to get back on track.”

Do you think this is true in our society? What do you think kept the Walls children from getting into serious trouble?

1. It’s easy to identify the negative characteristics of Rose Mary and Rex, as they function as major conflicts in the memoir. Looking back, what were some of their positive characteristics? Be specific.
2. The last Christmas celebration that Jeannette shares with us ends with Rex accusing Jeannette of thinking he’s a charity case after giving him his gifts. She assumes Rose Mary will react the same way, but instead responds by saying “Oh no. I love getting presents,” (263). What does this example say about each parent?
3. Why do you think Jeannette never once tells Rex that he’s let her down, despite the fact that he asks numerous times? Use textual evidence to justify your thinking.