



CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Jess would rather fear finding Skeleton Woman than feel her other feelings. What are those other feelings, and why do you think she doesn't want to feel them?

2. Jess and the twins have a secret handshake and a saying, "All for one and one for all." What does this saying mean? How is it reflected in important decisions Jess makes about the twins?

3. On page 29, Jess says that she'd been so brainwashed by Missy's story about Skeleton Woman and the curse that she didn't realize she was experiencing an earthquake. What does she mean by this?

4. Before the eruption, why is it hard for Jess to see Mount St. Helens as a "killer that could explode"?

5. What happens to Jess's father's camera the first time she goes to the shack? How does she feel about this, and why?

Name: _____

I Survived The Eruption of Mount Saint Helens, 1980

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

6. Why does Mr. Rowan take Jess and the twins back to the cabin even though there have been warning signs that Mount St. Helens is going to erupt?

7. When Jess and the twins go to the cabin to get her camera, what are the two warning signs that the volcano is about to erupt?

8. Based on the actions that Jess takes during the eruption, what can you conclude about her as a person?

9. What obstacles does Jess have to overcome during the eruption?



10. At the beginning of the book, Jess says that sometimes it feels like she and her mom are as rooted to Cedar as the old trees in the forest. What does she mean? And how are Jess and her mom like the forest in a different way at the end of the book?

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Answer the organizer questions on the next page to help you write a two-paragraph essay about what happens to Jess's dad's camera in the book, and what it represents.

Name: _____

I Survived The Eruption of Mount Saint Helens, 1980

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

TWO-PARAGRAPH ESSAY ORGANIZER FOR *I SURVIVED THE ERUPTION OF MOUNT ST. HELENS, 1980*

Answer the questions below to brainstorm ideas for your first paragraph, which will be your introduction:

Why is the camera important to Jess? What does it represent to her?

For your second paragraph, list what happens to the camera both times Jess and the twins go to the shack:

1. _____

2. _____

Next, answer the questions below to help you write a concluding paragraph.

Where is the camera at the end of the book? How do Jess and her mom feel about this? What does the new camera represent?

Now, write your essay on the back of this page or on a computer using your answers above.

ANSWERS

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. The feelings Jess doesn't want to feel are: missing her dad, who died in a car accident; and worrying about her mom, who's lonely and works too hard. She doesn't want to feel these things because they're sad and painful, and there's nothing she can do to fix or change either situation.
2. The saying "All for one and one for all" means that a group of people are making a commitment to stick together, no matter what. This is reflected in Jess's decision to put herself at risk by going off on her own to get help for the twins after they're injured during the eruption. It's also reflected in Jess telling the helicopter pilot that they have to go find the twins.
3. Jess means that because she was thinking so much about Skeleton Woman and the curse, she could only see the rumbling and trembling as an event connected to Skeleton Woman and the curse, rather than looking at things on their own terms and realizing they were the result of an earthquake.
4. Even though Jess knew that Mount St. Helens was a volcano, it had always been a beautiful, calm part of her world. Because she grew up hiking its trails and swimming in its lakes, she couldn't imagine it being so dangerous before the eruption.
5. The first time Jess and the twins go to the shack, Jess drops the camera during the earthquake and leaves it there. She feels guilty about this because she took the camera without her mom's permission, and not only is the camera an expensive piece of equipment, but it was also important to her father. She thinks of it as a part of him.
6. Mr. Rowan decides it's probably safe to bring the kids back to the cabin because the steam explosions have stopped. People in Cedar have convinced themselves that the danger has passed, including the police, who are allowing people to go back.
7. The two warning signs are: 1) the animals in the forest are completely quiet, and 2) the air smells like sulfur.
8. Based on her actions during and after the eruption, I can conclude that Jess is good in a crisis and can problem-solve in high-pressure situations. Also, she honors her commitment to her friends and looks out for them at all costs.
9. Jess and her two best friends are injured in the eruption, which is scary and painful. Jess must then make the difficult decision to leave them behind and try to get help on her own. The forest that she knows so well is now a completely different place, and she can't figure out where she is. She's thirstier than she's ever been but she can't drink the water because it has turned to sludge, and she's exhausted.
10. At the beginning of the book, Jess is saying that she and her mom are deeply connected to Cedar, between the diner that has been in their family for generations and the fact that everything in Cedar reminds her of her dad. But by the end of the book, they have moved to Seattle to start a new life, just like new life will come to the forest that was destroyed by the eruption.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Answers will vary but should include some version of the idea that at the end of the book, Dad's camera is gone, and Jess and her mom are moving forward into a new life, as represented by the new camera.