Sam Houston State University

Spring 2020 Common Reader Freshman Essay Contest

*Educated: A Memoir*, by Tara Westover

**Purpose**

This essay invites an opportunity to explore your connection to themes in the 2019-2020 SHSU Common Reader book.

**Common Reader Essay Prompt**   
By Chapter 22, Westover writes that her life was often “narrated for me by others. Their voices were forceful, emphatic, absolute. It had never occurred to me that my voice might be as strong as theirs.”

What is the significance of this realization? Do you identify at all with this? We encourage applicants to draw on specific references noted in Tara’s experiences and cite them appropriately.

**Eligibility**

The contest is open to all first-time freshmen who are currently enrolled full-time (minimum 12 hours) at Sam Houston State University and began in the 2019-2020 academic year.

**Prize**

A scholarship valued at $500 will be awarded to the first-time freshman student submitting the winning essay.

**Application**

Essays must be submitted electronically by 4:00 pm, Friday, March 20, to the Academic Success Center at [asc@shsu.edu](mailto:asc@shsu.edu). **All submissions must be electronic submissions,** and must be sent as email attachments (Microsoft Word documents, RTF files, or PDF files only).

**Rules of the Contest**

1. All applicants must be meet eligibility rules above.
2. All essays must be typed, double-spaced, on white, 8 ½” x 11” paper and free of any remarks or grade.
3. All submissions must include the submission cover form with complete information on the next page. **The essay itself must not contain the student’s name since essays will be evaluated anonymously.** The cover form with identifying student information should be the first page of your submission followed by the essay with no identifying information. (The cover form will not count toward the word count for the essay.)
4. A student may submit only one entry.
5. Winners will be notified by the Sam Houston State University Student Success Initiatives Office.
6. There is no minimum length requirement. The maximum length is 2500 words.

SUBMISSION COVER FORM

Sam Houston State University

Common Reader

Spring 2020 Freshman Essay Contest

Entry due no later than 4 p.m. Friday, March 20, 2020

Electronic email submissions with the cover letter to: [asc@shsu.edu](mailto:asc@shsu.edu)

Student’s Full Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student’s ID Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Email Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I am submitting an original essay for the SHSU Common Reading

Essay Contest. I certify that this essay is my own work.

I understand that my essay will not be returned to me and may be used by

Sam Houston State University for publication in promotional materials.

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Student Signature Date