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### Argumentative Sample Response

Throughout history, individuals have faced systems of power that create inequality, injustice, and oppression. When these power imbalances become too severe to ignore, people often feel compelled to respond, even when doing so involves great personal risk. In both *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi and *Night* by Elie Wiesel, individuals confront oppressive regimes that strip away freedom and humanity. While the circumstances differ, both texts reveal that people are most strongly influenced to take action to create change in society when their individuality and sense of morality feel threatened.

People uphold their own personal values and integrity in order to push back against rules and behaviors that they think are wrong. In *Persepolis*, as Marji grows up during the Islamic Revolution, she witnesses drastic changes that limit freedom, particularly for women. However, Marji refuses to conform quietly to the new rules, and she openly questions the reasoning behind these laws. She directly challenges **obligatory** rules and **repressive** authority figures, such as when she wears her new jean jacket and sneakers in public and lies to the Guardian of the Revolution to escape being arrested for doing so (133–134). These actions are not random acts of rebellion. They are rooted in her understanding of who she is and what she believes is right. Similarly, in *Night*, Eliezer experiences the horrors of the Holocaust, and he is forced to confront extreme dehumanization. While many prisoners in concentration camps are unable to resist their Nazi captors due to fear and physical exhaustion, moments of individual integrity still shape

Eliezer's actions. For instance, Eliezer struggles internally when he witnesses acts of cruelty, such as a son abandoning his father to increase his own chances of survival. The fact that Eliezer does not want to abandon his own father even though he knows it would help him survive shows that he still upholds his own individual values even in the most desperate and life-threatening of circumstances (91). He even gives his own rations to his father to help keep him alive and to help them both maintain hope (107). These moments show that maintaining a sense of who you are as a person is a way to maintain power even in a **tumultuous** survival situation. In these ways, these texts both demonstrate that when individuals clearly understand their values, they are more likely to take action against injustice.

Another factor that influences people to try to restore the balance of power in society is moral awareness. Developing a moral compass helps individuals respond in empowering ways when they face oppression. For instance, Marji's family plays a significant role in shaping her perspective by consistently standing up for what they believe is right. Through conversations with her parents and exposure to political discussions, Marji develops a strong moral compass that motivates her to speak out, such as when she goes to a protest with her family to make their opposition to the authoritarian government known (76). They do this because they believe they can have an impact on establishing a government that treats its people fairly. *Night* also shows examples of how people use their own sense of morality to resist the inhumanity that they see all around them. For instance, after an incident when Eliezer is badly beaten by one of the *Kapos*, a French woman shows **solidarity** by taking care of him and nursing his wounds after the attack, despite the fact that she is risking her own safety to do so (53). In this context, taking action does not always mean physical resistance. Sometimes, taking action means maintaining one's

humanity in the face of overwhelming oppression. This suggests that moral awareness can influence action in both societal and individual ways.

Ultimately, both *Persepolis* and *Night* illustrate that personal identity and moral awareness are the most significant factors influencing people to take action in the face of power imbalances. While external circumstances can shape decisions, it is an individual's understanding of themselves and their sense of right and wrong that drive meaningful responses to injustice. This idea extends beyond literature into the real world, where individuals and communities continue to challenge injustice and advocate for change, such as the Black Lives Matter protests that happened across the U.S. in 2020 to demand racial justice. Understanding these motivations helps explain why some people choose to speak out while others remain silent. More importantly, it highlights the importance of developing a strong sense of identity and moral clarity, as these qualities empower individuals to take action and work toward a more just society.