

# **LIBRARY OF WRITING PROMPTS AND IDEAS**

- 1) Journal Writing Ideas
- 2) Writing Ideas
- 3) Now Write Topics
- 4) Simple Writing Prompts
- 5) Adolescent Journal Prompts
- 6) Writing Bugs
- 7) Writing Prompts/ Journal Topics
- 8) General Expository Essays
- 9) General Persuasive Essays
- 10) Persuasive Writing
- 11) Creative Writing Prompts
- 12) List of Mode-Specific Writing Prompts
- 13) Specific Prompts
- 14) More Writing Prompts
- 15) Expository Essay Prompts
- 16) Persuasive Essay Prompts

## **Journal Writing (and Ideas/Prompts)**

Remember to start your journal writing with a title, date, a topic sentence, write about your topic using details, and close with an ending.

Your writing should have a beginning (topic sentence), middle (supporting details), and ending (closing).

When finished, check your work for boo boos things that you could fix and make better. Also, look for details you could add to make your writing more interesting.

Use these journal writing prompts / ideas anytime you need an idea of something to write about. I hope you like them! Have fun!!

## Journal Prompts (ideas)

Write about a time when you were brave, or finish this sentence: I am brave because . . .

Write about a time when you were helpful.

Write about something or things that you do well.

Write about three things that make you interesting.

Write about a time when you were honest.

Write about a time when you were dishonest.

Write about favorite things to do at recess

Write about your best friends. Who are they? Why do you like them? What do you do together for fun?

If you could have any animal in the world for a pet, what animal would it be? Shark? Piranha? Alligator? Leech? Why?

What country would you like to visit? Why?

Write about the most exciting thing that ever happened to you.

Write about a time when you were nice to someone in your family.

Write about books that you like

Write about your home

Write about things you play with

Write about games you like

Write about your favorite foods

Write about your school

Write about your family

Write about the world

Write about yourself (describe yourself or write about your interests)

Write about animals

Write about your friends

Write about a vacation

Write about your favorite activity

Write about your favorite candy

Write about your favorite toy

Write about your favorite computer or video game

Write about what you are doing during summer vacation

Write about what you do after the school day is over

Write about how you are feeling

Write about your favorite drink

Write about a favorite friend

Write about one way you can be kind to animals.

Write about a time when you were mean to someone in your family.

If you could have anything in the world, what would it be?

## **WRITING IDEAS**

Print the following list out for each student. Introduce it as a resource they can use if they can't come up with a writing topic during journal time or at the writing center. Discuss some of the topics, and demonstrate to the class how to write a story using one of the ideas below as a springboard.

### **WRITING IDEAS**

About Yourself

Have you wondered about \_\_\_\_\_...?

Let me tell you about \_\_\_\_\_...

Have you ever wondered why...?

I like to \_\_\_\_\_ for many reasons.

I know how to \_\_\_\_\_. First...

I think \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_ for many reasons.

I just learned facts about...

Let me tell you about...

It's fun to \_\_\_\_\_. First you...

Many changes happen to \_\_\_\_\_ as they grow.

My dream school  
My dream teacher  
What I would like to change about myself.  
My idea of hard work ...  
What I REALLY enjoy doing.  
My worst fear is...  
A miserable feeling is when...  
What happened on my way home from school  
What happened on my way to school  
What I did last night (or last weekend)  
What I am doing tonight (or next weekend)  
What really bothers me  
What really excites me  
What really scares me  
What really surprises me  
The funniest thing I ever saw was...  
The scariest thing I ever saw was...  
My favorite movie is \_\_\_\_\_ ...explain  
My favorite TV program is \_\_\_\_\_ ...explain  
My favorite subject is \_\_\_\_\_ ...explain  
My least favorite subject is \_\_\_\_\_ ...explain  
My recipe for a new kind of food  
When my friend moved away  
I really hate it when...  
I really wonder about...  
I remember when I was \_\_\_\_\_ years old and...  
I remember when I first ate \_\_\_\_\_ and...  
I remember when I first met \_\_\_\_\_ and...  
If I could fly I would...  
If I could choose a time to live it would be \_\_\_\_\_ ...explain.  
When I'm old...  
Ten things I want to do in my lifetime  
Love is...  
Friendship is...  
Being happy is...  
When I get out of school...  
My best birthday  
My most embarrassing moment  
My favorite trip  
When I grow up  
In 20 years, I will be...  
I was most angry when...  
My worst mistake was...  
My safe place  
Three items I would place in a book bag. Why?  
I don't leave home without \_\_\_\_\_ because...

## **FANTASY**

I woke up this morning the size of a strawberry (feeling like a strawberry, looking like a strawberry, etc.)

I woke up one morning and everything was blue (missing, tiny, different, etc.)

My pet, the shark (snake, flamingo, bear, etc.) ...

My dog thinks he is president

My pet dinosaur (iguana, kangaroo)

My friend the robot

My talking pen

My magic carpet

Suddenly everyone forgot who I was

The day the food on my plate began to move

The day I became (a weird person, a famous person, etc)

The day I went skateboarding

The day I babysat a monkey

The day I became a cartoon character

The day I caught a rabbit (a frog, etc)

The day I became a dentist, (rock climber, astronaut, singer, artist)

The day I won power

The day I met the President

The day the teacher was gone and they asked me to be the substitute!

The day my pet fish began to sing (talk, do tricks, etc.)

The day it rained cats and dogs

The day the sun disappeared

The day the sandwich turned into a \_\_\_\_\_?

The night the Martians landed

The night before Halloween

The night I got lost

The night I saw a monster

The night the lights went out

The year it wouldn't stop raining (snowing)

The crazy day started when I was on my way to school...(downtown, to Grandma's)

A day in the White House

The great flood (earthquake, tornado, etc.)

Suddenly my ship started sinking

While I was taking a shower

While I was walking home from school..

I would use a magic wand to...

In the year 2020

I heard a noise under my bed

There was a loud knock at the door

As I was walking on the beach...

## **If I . . .**

If I could have a farm...

If I could move anywhere in the U.S. (world, state, etc)...

If I could apologize to one person...  
If I could make all the rules...  
If I could speak to animals...  
If I could climb a rainbow...  
If I could change shape...  
If I could meet anyone in the world...  
If I could ride on the Magic School Bus...  
If I had 3 wishes, I would wish for...  
If I had \$1,000,000..  
If I had a twin brother or sister  
If I had an airplane  
If I were stranded alone on an island (in an elevator, etc)...  
If I were trapped in an elevator...  
If I were in a storm...  
If I were stranded in the woods...  
If I were one inch tall...  
If I were invisible...  
If I were the teacher...  
If I were principal...  
If I were a table...  
If I were a plant ...  
If I were an animal, I would be...  
If I were a rock...  
If I were a bird...  
If I were a pencil...  
If I were a movie star...  
If I lived in a castle...  
If I lived in a cave...  
If I lived in a tree...  
If I lived in a spaceship..  
If I lived underwater...  
If I lived on a mountain...  
If I won the lottery  
If I got to be captain of a boat

### **Things**

Eggs and ham  
Worms  
Shoes  
Aliens  
Pets  
Good luck / Bad luck  
Haunted houses  
Clowns  
Chores  
Homework  
Sports  
Dancing

Flying  
Fishing  
Cooking  
Playing  
How to make\_\_\_\_\_ .

## Using Your Imagination

Pretend you are a raindrop. Where would you land and what would happen along the way?

Write about why we wear shoes and socks

If you and your best friend could have a free limo for 24 hours, where would you go and what would you do?

What is a best friend?

You could travel to any city or country in the world. Where would you go there and why?

Where would you go and why?

Describe a dream that you had. Give as many details as possible.

You have an extra \$ 500 to give away, and you cannot spend it on yourself. What would you do with the money?

If you were an insect, what kind would you be and why?

Your mother has just returned from a distant planet and brought you back an alien pet- describe it in detail.

Design your dream house (school, room, classroom, playground etc)

Write a letter to me and tell me what you'd like to learn this year.

Write the direction from your house to school.

Write a description of your favorite toy, room in your house, favorite relative, etc.

If the items in your lunch box could talk, what would they say?

Write 3 questions you would like to ask your teacher.

Write a story called "Meet My \_\_\_\_\_"

What is your favorite food and how do you make it?

List all the reasons why people need to know how to read.

What do you think would happen if an elephant walked into the schoolyard?

What color do you think love is? Explain your answer.

What color do you think hate is? Explain your answer.

Why is the rain important?

How does happiness feel?

## Write Now Topics

- 1 - What is your greatest fear?
- 2 - What sorts of dreams do you usually remember?
- 3 - What is your favorite room in your house?
- 4 - What is the farthest away from your home that you have ever been?

- 5 - What is a "good attitude?"
- 6 - What is "imagination?"
- 7 - What do you usually think about?
- 8 - What do you want to be doing in 10 or 15 years from now?
- 9 - Why do people use drugs?
- 10 - What is most important in your life?
- 11 - What person do you feel closest to?
- 12 - What is the definition of "love?"
- 13 - Why do people hate?
- 14 - What is the last good dream you had?
- 15 - What is the most important thing you have learned?
- 16 - Are you a "follower" or a "leader?"
- 17 - Does anyone else control you? In what way?
- 18 - Which is easier: to love or to hate? Why?
- 19 - What do you value most?
- 20 - What are the three most important rules in your life?
- 21 - What is your favorite type of music? Why?
- 22 - Name one teacher you have liked? Why did you like this person?
- 23 - What is one place you would like to go?
- 24 - What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
- 25 - What is your favorite TV show? Why?
- 26 - What is the most important thing you can do to be a "good citizen"?
- 27 - What is your favorite sport to watch? Why?
- 28 - What is your favorite sport to play? Why?
- 29 - Who is the best person you know?
- 30 - What kind of career do you want?
- 31 - What makes a good teacher?
- 32 - Pick a picture in the room. Describe it. Then say what is going to happen next?
- 33 - What is the world's greatest invention?
- 34 - If you could give the police one piece of advice, what would it be?
- 35 - What is your favorite animal?
- 36 - If you had a million dollars, what would you do with it?
- 37 - What do you want to be?
- 38 - Which is more powerful: love or hate?
- 39 - If you could tell the President one thing, what would it be?
- 40 - How much freedom should people have?
- 41 - What games should be legal?
- 42 - Should smoking be banned from public places?
- 43 - Are you a better talker or listener?
- 44 - If you wrote a book about yesterday, what would you call it?
- 45 - Who is the most evil person you know?
- 46 - What is the greatest accomplishment in your life?
- 47 - Do you think parents should have one or more children?
- 48 - Should parents spank their children?
- 49 - Do you believe in ghosts?
- 50 - Do you believe in UFO's?
- 51 - Do you believe in ghosts?

- 52 - What is the stupidest thing you have ever done?
- 53 - How do you plan to spend your life?
- 54 - How much money is "enough?"
- 55 - What are the 3 most important things in your life?
- 56 - What is your favorite food?
- 57 - What is your dream car?
- 58 - What is your identity?
- 59 - What are you good at? Explain
- 60 - What gives your life meaning?
- 61 - Are there conditions under which suicide makes sense?
- 62 - Do you think that carrying a gun makes you safer?
- 63 - What are your goals in life?
- 64 - What are you going to tell your child about drugs and drug abuse?
- 65 - Are fear and respect the same thing?
- 66 - Would you rather have people fear you or respect you?
- 67 - What is something that you cannot do right now, but want to learn how to do?
- 68 - What do you believe is true that you might be wrong about?
- 69 - What is the difference between a fact and an opinion?
- 70 - What is the hardest thing you have ever had to do?
- 71 - Do you respect yourself? Do you respect your parents?
- 72 - Are you ever afraid of anyone or anything?

## **SIMPLE WRITING PROMPTS**

How do you define the following terms?

- Freedom
- Responsibility
- Obligation
- Joy
- Friendship
- Work
- Play
- Love
- Trust
- Any other concept word

How can you describe the following:

- Your best friend
- Your last nightmare
- Your favorite meal
- Your most embarrassing moment
- Your first romance
- Your best/worst day at school
- Your best/worst vacation/trip
- Your favorite song/book/movie
- Your dream house
- A fear

- A hope
  - A dream
  - A challenge
- How can you answer the following questions?
- Would you accept twenty years of extraordinary happiness and fulfillment if it meant you would die at the end of that period?
  - If you found out that your best friend committed a serious crime, would you turn him/her in?
  - If you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would you be?
  - How do you feel right now?
  - If you were to be banished to a desert island, what five single items would you bring?
  - Does the world owe you anything?
  - What conditions must exist before you trust someone or something?
- How can you finish the following sentences?
- The most important lesson I ever learned is. . . .
  - I believe every person has the right to. . . .
  - I used to believe X but then Y happened so now I believe Z
  - I believe the most important skill a person can have is. . . .
- Respond to the topic of writing, and how you feel about writing, in the following ways, using highly descriptive language: colors, weather, texture, smell, taste, clothing, season, country, vegetable, music, sport, and shape.

## Adolescent Journal Prompts

- 1 Write about someone who influenced your day today
- 2 Write about things you can do to show appreciation for someone
- 3 What are those things you love or hate about your mom?
- 4 Write about things you can do to show rejection towards someone.
- 5 What are those things you love or hate about your dad?
- 6 Write about what your dream life would be.
- 7 Write about what you see life being about.
- 8 Write about your best friend
- 9 Write about your worst enemy
- 10 What was your most embarrassing moment, describe in detail.
- 11 What is a secret that no one knows, share with your journal?
- 12 As you grow up how have you changed physically?
- 13 As you grow up how have you changed emotionally
- 14 How has your thinking changes in the last two years
- 15 Make a list of the top 10 cool things for your age group
- 16 What is something you disagree with most adults on
- 17 Why do you REALLY have to go to school?
- 18 If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?.
- 19 Make a list of the top 10 values or beliefs you have.
- 20 Explore how you came to believe your top three values or beliefs
- 21 What is something you would NEVER do, no matter what
- 22 What could your best friend talk you into doing?

- 23 You win the lottery, what then? What would you do with your life?
- 24 In a storm, you lose all your belongings, and possessions, write how that might feel.
- 25 Imagine you are dying, who would you deeply talk to, and what would you say?
- 26 List those people you LOVE, List those you LIKE, what is different about those two lists?
- 27 Who needs to hear your voice today?
- 28 Write about what you understand as beauty
- 29 What makes you handsome or beautiful?
- 30 Write about your first date, or what you imagine it to be like.
- 31 Write about a time you felt rejected
- 32 Write about a time when you felt different
- 33 Write about any good or bad experiences you have had
- 34 Who would you call at 3am if you needed to talk?
- 35 What was the last nice thing you have done for yourself?
- 36 Describe how teenagers should be treated in your opinion
- 37 Write about your favorite actor, write a scene with the two of you interacting
- 38 What kind of music suits you best, write about that music
- 39 Write about a day dream you had in class
- 40 What teacher has inspired you and why

## WRITING BUGS

- **Time for a Change**  
If I could change one thing about myself, I would...
- **Somewhere In Time**  
You have invented a time machine.  
Which time in the past will you visit first?
- **A Moving Experience**  
You're going away for a month. What three special things will you take?
- **Moving On Up!**  
What advice would you give kids who soon will be starting the grade you are now completing?

- **My Best Teacher Ever**  
Before this year, which teacher was your favorite teacher? Write a short letter to that teacher.
- **Be a Sport**  
What is your favorite sport to watch?
  
- **Future World**  
Describe your vision of the world 25 years from now
- **Too Much Violence?**  
Is there too much violence on television? Is there too much violence in video games? What's your opinion?
- **It's My Business**  
If you could open a business of your own, what kind of business would it be?
- **Not Music to My Ears**  
I like this kind of music because... (three reasons)
- **Success and Failure**  
Is failure a better teacher than success?
- **Solving the World's Problems**  
If you could solve any problem in the world, which problem would it be?
- **I'm Really Good at...**  
I'm really good at these three things:
- **A Most Embarrassing Moment**  
The most embarrassing moment I remember was the time...

- **Writing Is Hard Work**  
A famous author once said, "The wastebasket is a writer's best friend."  
Was he right?
- **What Do You Look for in a Friend?**  
What three qualities do you look for in a friend? Which of those three qualities is most important?
- **My Famous Parents**  
If you could choose two famous people to be your parents, who would you choose? Why?
- **Act Your Age**  
Tell about the last time you acted like a little kid.
- **What Would You Do?**  
A friend took a video game from a store without paying for it. What do you do?
- **Children in Charge**  
What would happen if kids ruled the world?
- **Reporting Live from...**  
You are a newspaper reporter at an historic event. Write about your experience that day.
- **Name That Tune**  
Write about the lyrics of a familiar tune.
- **Helpful Holidays**  
This holiday season I plan to do something helpful to others. My plan is...

- **The New Twelve Days of Christmas**  
What if you could rewrite "The Twelve Days of Christmas" to include things you would actually like to receive?
- **Giving Thanks**  
Three things I am most thankful for are...
- **A Turkey's Last Plea**  
Imagine you are a turkey. What would you say to convince someone not to cook you for Thanksgiving dinner?
- **A Noise in the Night**  
I heard a noise. It might have been the wind knocking a tree branch against the house or...
- **Parent for a Day**  
What if you could change places with your parents for a day? What changes would you make at home?
- **A Halloween to Remember**  
I ran down the street, my Halloween candy flying in every direction. You will never believe what had just happened to me...
- **A Fitting Introduction**  
A person you admire is coming to speak at your school -- and it is your job to introduce that person to the audience.
- What can you say?
- **A Crying Time**  
Tell about the last time you cried.  
Explain why

- **A Strange Thing**  
What if you woke up to discover that you had been turned into a *thing* for one day?
- **Talk With Mother Nature**  
If you could talk with Mother Nature, what questions would you ask her?
- **\$100 to Spend**  
You have just been given \$100 to spend. The only catch is that you cannot spend it on yourself. How will you spend the money?
- **The Best Day of the Week**  
The best day of the week is \_\_\_\_ because...
- **Your Favorite TV Show Just Got the Axe**  
Your favorite TV show has just been cancelled. You decide to write a letter to the station manager
- **If Animals Could Talk**  
What if animals could talk? Which animal would you talk with, and what would you talk about?
- **Having a Great Time! Wish You Were Here!**  
Imagine you are on your dream vacation!
- **If I Could be Any Person in History**  
If I could be any famous person in history, I would be...

- **Rich or Smart?**  
If you had a chance to be the richest person in the world *or* the smartest person in the world, which would you choose?
- **Postcard from Another Planet**  
You are the first human to land on another planet. Describe what you see and how you feel.
- **The Best Lesson**  
The best lesson I ever learned was
- **Bad Manners**  
Imagine you live in a world where everybody has bad manners. Write a conversation between two people. At least one of those people should have *awful* manners!
- **Inquiring Minds Want to Know**  
Be a tabloid newspaper news reporter!
- **A Book Is Like a Garden**  
Read the following proverb: "Tell me your company and I will tell you who are" What does the proverb mean to you? Explain the meaning in your own words.
- **Tune In or Turn Off?**  
Is watching TV a good thing for kids? What do you think? Should kids tune in or turn off?

- **April Fool!**  
Think tall tale. Think big lie. Think up a tale so tall that it is impossible to believe. Then share the tale with a friend as if it is the honest truth. Just when you have your friend believing the tale *could* be true, end it with the words *April Fool!*
- **Who, When, Where**  
Choose one item from each category below. Then write a story based on your choices.
- **The Best Movie Ever**  
My favorite movie of all time is ...
- **Open at Your Own Risk!**  
When I arrived at school today, there was a big orange sign on my desk. The black lettering on the sign said "Open at Your Own Risk!" I ...
- **Cross-Country Trip**  
You are about to drive across the country. You can take one person with you. Whom would you choose? Why?
- **Summer Holiday Thoughts**  
My favorite thing about the summer holidays is ...
- **Alphabetical Story**  
Have some fun with this one! Try to write a story in which the first word of the story begins with the letter *A*, the second word begins with *B*, the third word begins with *C*, and so on.

- **Building a Snowperson**  
How do you make a snowman or a snowwoman? A child who lives in Hawaii might have no idea, so your job is to write detailed directions for building a snowperson.
- **Inquiring Minds Want to Know**  
Following are the headlines of four news stories that were published in tabloid newspapers. Write the news story that might have gone with one of these headlines.  
"Girl With 14 Fingers Wins Typing Contest"  
"Man Eats Books!"  
"Dog Lands Plane After Pilot Has Heart Attack"  
"Man Wins \$25,000 Bet by Swallowing Watermelon Whole" **Super Hero**  
You are starring as the super hero in a new movie. What special powers do you have? How do you use those powers to do heroic things?
- **It's Great to Be My Age**  
How old are you? Write your age on the lines in the headline below.  
(Your age) Reasons Being (Your age) Years Old Is Great
- **I Need Your Advice**  
Think of a famous person you admire. You would like to write to that person to ask his or her advice -- and now is your chance. Write your letter below.

- **A Letter to Santa Claus**  
Dear Santa,  
Today I am not writing about myself. I am writing about somebody else. I would like to ask you to
- **The Worst Invention Ever**  
I think the worst invention ever is the ...
- **The Greatest Invention Ever**  
I think the greatest invention ever is the ...
- **Turkey Terror**  
It was the week before Thanksgiving. You could tell the turkeys were nervous because ...
- **My Personal Tongue Twister**  
Now is your chance to make up your own tongue twister, using your name as the subject!
- **Yesterday Was a Special Day**  
Every day is a special day. Why was yesterday so special? Write five good reasons yesterday was a special day.
- **A Noise in the Kitchen**  
When I walked into the kitchen, I heard something move in the cupboard. I ...
- **Best Friends**  
(Fill in the blank with the name of your best friend.) is my best friend. (She/He) is my best friend because...
- **Lost in the Middle of Nowhere**  
Our old car broke down in the middle of nowhere. We sat for a moment to think about what we should do next. Then ...

- **No More Smiling!**  
The city council in your town just passed a new law. From now on, smiling is against the law. .. How can you change that law?
- **A Different Kind of Day**  
Students imagine a day that is out of the ordinary.
- **If I Were the Teacher ...**  
I'd do what? Students think about what teachers do.
- **I Wish I Had a Million ...**  
A million what? Students support their choices with reasons. **The Best Pet**  
Which animal *does* make the best pet? Students explain their choices in writing.
- **Happy 100th Birthday!**  
This writing prompt asks students whether they would want to live to be 100.
- **First Day of School**  
This writing bug asks students on the second day of school to write a summary of the things they did on the first day of school.

# Writing Prompts/Journal Topics

## What is...

- What is something you dislike about yourself?
- What is something you do well?
- What is your favorite room in your home and why?
- What is a good neighbor?
- What is the worst thing parents can do to their children?
- What is your favorite time of day?
- What is your idea of a boring day?
- What is the best way to treat meddlesome people?
- What is something you are optimistic about?
- What is something you are pessimistic about?
- What is your most indispensable possession and why?
- What is the meaning of "He laughs best who laughs last"?
- What is your favorite song and why?
- What is the best birthday present you ever received?
- What is the best birthday present you could receive?
- What is something that makes you feel sad?
- What is your favorite book and why?
- What is something that really bugs you?
- What is something that really makes you angry?
- What is the best advice you ever received?
- What is your favorite holiday? What makes this holiday special?
- What is your favorite day of the week?
- What is your favorite month? Why?

## What if...

- What would happen if you could fly whenever you wanted? When would you use this ability?
- What would happen if there were no television? Why would this be good? Bad?
- What would happen if everyone lived in space? What type of houses would they live in? What type of clothing would they wear? What type of food would they eat? How would they travel?
- What if cows gave root beer instead of milk?
- What if all the streets were rivers? What would be different?
- What would happen if people never co-operated?

- Why do you think it is important to co-operate?
- What would happen if it really did rain cats and dogs?
  - What would happen if animals could talk? What are some of the questions you would like to ask animals?
  - What would happen if you could become invisible whenever you wanted to? What are some of the things you could do that you cannot do now?
  - What would happen if everyone wore the same clothes?
  - What would happen if you threw a piece of trash on the ground? What if everyone did?
  - What if you could walk up walls and across ceilings?
  - What would happen if you loved your neighbor as yourself? What if everyone did?
  - What would happen if you grew taller than trees? How would this change your life?
  - What would happen if children ruled the world?
  - What would happen if there were no cars, buses, trains, boats, or planes? How would this change your life?
  - What if everyone lived under water? Where would people live? What games would children play? What would school be like?
  - What would happen if you found gold in your backyard?
  - What would you do if a bully bothered you on your way home?
  - What would you do if you did very poorly on a test?
  - What would you do if a friend borrows things from you but never returns them?
  - What would you do if you were the teacher and everyone forgot his homework?
  - What would you do if you were in the middle of the lake and your boat began to leak?
  - What would you do if your friend had a broken leg? How would you cheer him up?
  - What would you do if you saw little bugs in your salad?
  - What would you do if you woke up in another country and no one could understand you?
  - What would you do if you ordered an ice cream cone and you forgot to bring money?
  - What would you do if someone got in front of you when you were in line at the movies?
  - What would you do if your jelly sandwich fell upside down on the floor?

- What would you do if only one hot dog is left and neither you nor your friend has had one?
- What would you do if two of your best friends went to the movies without inviting you?
- What would you do if the surprise party was for you but you weren't surprised?
- What would you do if you got a present you didn't like?
- What would you do if you were at home and your homework was at school?
- What would you do if you dropped the cookie jar and it broke?
- What would you do if you were invited to two parties on the same day?
- What would you do if you promised to feed your pet and you didn't?
- What would you do if someone said you did something wrong and you didn't?
- What would you do if your new shoes felt fine in the store but now they are hurting?
- What would you do if someone told you a joke that you don't think is funny?
- What would you do if an hour before the party you remember you don't have a gift?
- What would you do if a friend comes to your house and his/her mom doesn't know he's/she's there?
- What would you do if you had four math problems marked wrong that were right?
- What would you do if you found in the street?
- What would you do if you found a magic wand?
- What would you do if you wanted to be friends with someone who spoke no English?
- What would you say if someone told you it was all right to steal from a large department store?
- What would you do if you saw a friend cheating--report it, confront the friend, nothing--and why?
- If you could have been someone in history, who would you have been?
- If you could only take 3 people with you on a trip around the world, who would you take and why?
- If you could give any gift in the world, what would you give and to whom?
- If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be?
- If you received as a gift, what would you do with it?
- If you could do whatever you wanted to right now, what would you do?

- If you were principal of this school, what would you do?
- If you were a mouse in your house in the evening, what would you see your family doing?
- If you were five years older you would...
- If you were lost in the woods and it got dark, what would you do?
- If it were your job to decide what shows can be on TV., how would you choose?
- If there were no rules, what do you think would happen?
- If you owned a store, what would you do to discourage people from stealing from you?
- If you could participate in an Olympic event, which one would you choose and why?
- If you could break the Guinness Book of Records, what would it be for?
- If you had to describe yourself as a color, which would you choose?
- If your friend told you of a secret plan to run away from home, what would you do and why?

### **What do you think...**

- What do you think of 3D movies?
- What do you think someone your age can do to help reduce the amount of pollution in our environment?
- What do you think the world needs now?
- What do you think your friends say to each other when you're not around?
- What do you think about the amount of violence on T.V.?
- What do you think about people polluting the environment?
- What do you think about having set rules for people to follow?
- What do you think about people who are inconsiderate of others?
- What do you think should be done to keep people who are under the influence of alcohol off the road?
- What do you think the world will be like when you are a grown up?
- What do you think about ghosts?

- What do you think of someone who has bad manners?
- What do you think about people who take advantage of others?
- What do you think about when you can't fall asleep?
- What do you think courage means?
- What do you think makes a good friend?
- What do you think makes a happy family?
- What pollutants do you think do the most damage and why?
- What things do you think are beautiful?

### **What...misc.**

- What do you like most about yourself?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- What kind of animal would you like to be and why?
- What kind of trophy would you like to win?
- What TV or movie star would you like to invite to your birthday party?
- What does "Clothes make the person" mean to you?
- What does "Have your cake and eat it too" mean to you?
- What does "The early bird gets the worm" mean to you?
- What do we mean when we say, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence"?
- What does "You can't take it with you" mean?
- What do we mean when we say, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar"?
- What do we mean when we say, "Hitch your wagon to a star"?
- What does "still waters run deep" mean to you?
- What does "There are two sides to every coin" mean to you?
- What does Canada mean to you?
- What are you afraid of? Why?
- What are junk foods?
- What are some nutritious foods that you like?
- What are some rules you have to follow at home?
- What are some examples of prejudice?
- What is more important to you, appearance or personality?

- What is most important to you in a friend--loyalty, generosity, honesty--why?
- What is something that makes you melancholy?
- What makes your best friend your best friend?
- What makes you feel safe?
- What makes you laugh?
- What would you invent to make life better?
- What would you do to entertain your family without spending any money?
- What effects does watching violence have on people?
- What effects do cigarette and alcohol advertising have on young people?
- What kind of TV commercial would you like to make? Describe it.
- What kind of pet would you most like to have--monkey, snake, and goat--why?
- What kind of program do you enjoy most on TV--detective shows, comedies, game shows--and why?
- What advice would you give a new student?
- What advice would you give to someone who stole something but now feels guilty?
- What things are better than going to school? Why?
- What talents do you have?
- What three words would describe you right now?
- What four things are most important in your life?
- What color makes you think of happiness?
- What has been the most fun activity at school so far?
- What quality do you like about yourself--creativity, personality, appearance--why?
- What eccentric behavior in a friend disturbs you the most?
- What parts of nature do you like best?
- What do you do for exercise?

### How...

- How do you feel when it's your birthday? Why?
- How do you feel on the first day of winter? Why?
- How would you feel if you were going to be on a show? Why?
- How do you feel when you do something wrong?
- How do you feel when you do something that is very good?

- How do you feel when you play a trick on someone?
- How would you feel if a new child moved into your neighborhood?
- How do you think the new child would feel?
- How do you feel when you have had a fight with your best friend?
- How do you think your friend felt?
- How do you feel when you are in bed with the lights out?
- How do you feel when you want something very badly and you cannot have it? Why is this so important to have?
- How do you feel on a warm sunny day?
- How do you feel when you stay with a babysitter?
- How do you feel when you're leaving home on vacation?
- How do you feel when you sleep at someone's house?
- How do you feel during a thunderstorm?
- How do you feel on the first day of school?
- How do you feel when your parents are upset with you? Why do they become upset with you?
- How do you feel on Thanksgiving? What are you thankful for?
- How do you feel on (any holiday)?
- How do you feel when something scares you? What do you do when this happens?
- How would you feel if someone told you that you were his or her best friend?
- How do you feel about your appearance?
- How would you change the world to make it better?
- How do you think eating junk food affects you?
- How do you have the most fun--alone, with a large group, with a few friends--and why?
- Explain how to play your favorite game.

### **I wish...**

- I wish I had a million... Then I would...
- I wish I had one... because
- I wish I could be like.... This person is special because....
- I wish to be a \_\_\_\_\_ when I grow up. Then I will....

- I wish there were a law that said..... This would be a good law because....
- I wish I could forget the time I ..... because....
- I wish trees could..... because....
- I wish I could see..... because.....
- I wish I could learn..... because.....
- I wish I didn't have to eat..... I don't like this food because.....
- I wish everyone would learn to ..... Then everyone would.....
- I wish I never.....
- I wish I had one more chance to..... Then I would.....
- I wish there was an electric.....
- I wish I had enough money to.....
- I wish everyone loved.....
- I wish all children would.....
- I wish everyone had.....
- I wish I could touch.....
- I wish animals could..... If they could, then.....
- I wish I looked like.... because.....
- I wish there were no more.....
- I wish I didn't have to.....
- I wish I could go to.....
- I wish there really was..... If there really was, then.....
- I wish I could hear.....
- I wish I could give.....
- If all my wishes came true, I would.....

### **Describe...**

- Describe a time when you felt vengeful.
- Describe your favorite toy. Why do you like it best?
- Describe the most ludicrous outfit you can think of.
- Describe the best teacher you ever had.

### **When...**

- When you are angry, how do you look?
- When are you happiest?
- When have you felt lonely?
- When do you feel proud?
- When was the last time you cried and why?
- When a friend was in an embarrassing situation, what did you do?
- When it might hurt their feelings, how do you feel about telling your friends the truth?

- When might it be bad to be honest?
- When someone picks on someone else, how do you feel? What do you do?
- Once, when you were very frightened, what happened?
- Once, when you were embarrassed, what happened?
- Once, when your feelings were hurt, what happened?

### **Which...**

- Which quality best describes your life--exciting, organized, dull--and why?
- Which quality do you dislike most about yourself--laziness, selfishness, childishness--and why?
- Which place would you most like to visit--Africa, China, Alaska--why?
- Which holiday has the most meaning for you--Canada Day, Thanksgiving, Valentines Day--and why?
- Which is least important to you--money, power, fame--and why?
- Which is most important to you--being popular, accomplishing things, being organized--and why?

### **Who...**

- Who do you talk to when you have a problem?
- Who is your favorite Star Wars character (or other movie/book/TV show, etc.)?
- Who or what has had a strong influence in your life?

### **Where...**

- Where would you prefer to be right now--mountains, desert, beach--and why?

### **Why...**

- Why is it important to be honest?
- Why is important to have good manners?
- Why do you think adults smoke/drink?
- Why is exercise important to someone your age?
- Why do you think some people encourage others to smoke/drink?
- Why do you think the rules you must follow are good or bad?

- Why would it be good to be honest?
- Why have men and women usually only done certain types of work?
- Why should or shouldn't a man stay home to care for the house and children while his wife goes to work?
- Why do you think some people take advantage of others?
- Why do you think prejudice exists in the world?
- Why would we say that someone is "passing the buck"?
- Why would a Prime Minister have a sign on his desk which read, "The buck stops here"?
- Why do you think tact is an important quality?
- Why is it not wise to squander your money?
- Explain why we say, "Dead as a door nail".

### **MISCELLANEOUS.**

- Do you think there is too much fighting on TV? Why or why not?
- Do you think it is necessary to have alcohol at a party in order to have a good time?
- Does it bother you to be around someone who has bad manners?
- Should there be a dress code in places such as school, restaurants, and places of business? Why or why not?
- Should animals be used for medical research?
- Should the Canadian Government financially support Olympic teams?
- Should people be prohibited from smoking in certain places?
- Families are important because...
- Would you like to be famous? Why or why not? What would you like to be famous for?

# General Expository Essay Topics

These topics can be used in a variety of courses.

1. Explain why you admire a particular person.
2. Explain why someone you know should be regarded a leader.
3. Explain why parents are sometimes strict.
4. If you had to be an animal, which would you be and why?
5. Explain why you especially enjoyed a particular teacher.
6. Explain why some cities have curfews for teens.
7. Explain why some students forced to leave school once they are sixteen.
8. Explain how moving from place to place affects teens.
9. Explain why getting a driver's license is an important event in the lives of many teenagers.
10. Describe the major stressors in teens' lives.
11. Explain why you like (or do not like) to work in a team.
12. Describe some nonmaterial things that make you happy.
13. Explain why some teens commit suicide.
14. Explain the how music affects your life.
15. Explain the impact of different music genres on society.
16. Explain why students listen to a particular type of music.
17. Explain why some teens skip school.
18. Explain the likely consequences of skipping school
19. Describe the likely consequences of doing poorly in school.
20. Explain why teens do drugs.
21. Describe the likely consequences of selling drugs.
22. Describe the likely consequences of taking drugs.

23. Explain why teens smoke cigarettes.
24. Explain the likely consequences of being kicked out of school.
25. Explain the likely consequences of skipping classes.
26. Explain the likely consequences of brothers and sisters constantly fighting.
27. Explain why teens wear makeup.
28. Explain the consequences of having alcohol on the school campus.
29. Explain the likely consequences of being sexually active without using protection.
30. Explain why some teens parents do not like to be alone with their child's boyfriend or girlfriend.
31. Explain the likely consequences of increasing the passing time between classes from five to fifteen minutes.
32. Explain why some teens join gangs.
33. Explain the difficulties some teens have once they are in gangs.
34. Explain how life for a teenager changes once she has a baby.
35. Describe what you feel a boy should do if he finds out his girlfriend is pregnant.
36. Explain why you should laughing at an embarrassing moments.
37. Describe the effects of marijuana.
38. Explain the likely consequences of teens becoming sexually active.
39. Explain why it is helpful to organize your materials and activities.
40. Explain why your school work is important.
41. Describe the ways you help out at home.
42. Explain the likely consequences of abolishing capital punishment.
43. Explain the consequences of adopting a pass/fail grading system.
44. Explain the likely consequences of enforcing an 11:00 p.m. curfew.

45. Explain the likely consequences of ending forced bussing.
46. Explain why some teenagers dislike saying the pledge to the flag.
47. Explain why some schools don't have open lunch policies.
48. Explain why most teenagers are materialistic.
49. Explain why some teens get jobs.
50. Explain the consequences of having a job while in high school.
51. Explain the likely consequences of dropping out of school.
52. Describe some productive ways students can spend their leisure time.
53. Explain why dealing with their parents' divorce can be difficult for many teens.
54. Explain why teens love their parents even when family situations are difficult.
55. Describe the things that bring you greatest happiness.
56. Describe three things you would like to change about the world and explain why you would change them.
57. Explain why you prefer living in an apartment (or house).
58. Describe the likely consequences of requiring a childbearing license.
59. Select three objects that symbolize our culture and explain why you selected them.
60. Explain why you are interested in a particular career.
61. Explain the likely consequences of requiring students to wear uniforms.

## **General Persuasive Essay Topics**

1. Persuade your teachers to stop giving you so much work.
2. Persuade the school board to pay for your class to go to Disney World or Bush Gardens every year.
3. Persuade your parents to let you stay up later on week nights.

4. Persuade your parents to extend your curfew.
5. Persuade your brother to let you borrow his favorite shirt.
6. Persuade the teacher to extend the deadline for a major project.
7. Persuade your friend to go to a club with you.
8. Persuade your mother to give you a bigger allowance.
9. Convince your teacher to stop assigning persuasive essays.
10. Persuade a student to stay in school.
11. Persuade your principal to let you leave class early if your work is done.
12. Persuade your mother to let you borrow the car.
13. Persuade your little brother or sister to do your chores.
14. Persuade your dean not to give you internal suspension.
15. Convince your parent to let you borrow the car.
16. Persuade your parents to buy an 80" screen TV.
17. Persuade the school board to return to last year's grading scale.
18. Convince your friend to stop acting like a jerk.
19. Persuade your parent to let you go out more often.
20. Persuade your parent to give you a birthday party.
21. Persuade your mother to let you wear a hair style she doesn't like.
22. Persuade your parent to allow you to get a drivers license.
23. Persuade your parents to take over your chores.
24. Persuade your teacher not to give homework on Fridays.
25. Convince your mother that you are a safe driver.
26. Persuade your parent to buy you expensive sneakers.
27. Persuade your parent to let you get a particular pet.
28. Persuade your parent to let you visit a friend in another town.

29. Persuade your English teacher never to give homework again.
30. Persuade the School board to extend lunch time.
31. Persuade your dean to give you a break even though you broke the rules.
32. Persuade your principal to give you every Friday off.
33. Persuade your teacher to give you a free day.
34. Persuade your teacher to let you watch a movie every Friday.
35. Persuade your parent to get you your own phone line.
36. Persuade your brother to let you borrow his new radio.
37. Persuade a bank loan officer to give you a loan.
38. Persuade your principle to give a dance for students who earned 3.0 GPA last quarter.
39. Persuade your boss to give you a day off.
40. Convince the school board to use school busses for city transportation during the school day.
41. Convince the cafeteria to provide a different menu.
42. Persuade our parents to reduce the number of chores you have to do.
43. Persuade Florida's senators to increase the speed limit by ten miles.
44. Persuade your parents to let you pierce your tongue.
45. Convince Pat Riley that you should be the coach of the Miami Heat.
46. Convince a homey to hang out with a nerd for one day.
47. Convince your girlfriend or boyfriend to wear different clothes.
48. Persuade your friend to break up with her boyfriend.
49. Convince the dean to change our Geometry class.
50. Persuade your parents to let you go to a party.

## Persuasive Writing:

### Explanation:

Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader that a point of view is valid or to persuade the reader to take a specific action. Persuasive essays should be developed around a limited topic that is debatable and meaningful or important. The issue should be one to which students can bring specific evidence and warranted generalization, not just personal opinion or broad generalization.

### Prompts:

1. The Board of Education has decided to extend the school day for one hour because the State of Illinois has increased the number of subjects students must know about. Do you agree or disagree with making the school day longer? Write an essay to the principal, and explain your answer.
  2. Your teacher has decided to give exams in three subjects on one day. Persuade your teacher to spread out the tests over several days.
  3. A leading doctor has published a research paper which claims that all students should be in bed by 8:00 p.m. in order for them to learn well in school. She suggests that all televisions should be off and all lights turned out by 8:00 p.m. so that students get a full night's rest. Your parents are considering doing what the doctor suggests. Write an essay for your parents and explain your position.
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## Expository Writing:

### Explanation:

Expository writing asks students to give information, explain something, or define the meaning of something. Expository essays may be developed with facts and statistics, examples, cause and effect, and/or definitions. Usually, the expository essay is unemotional and written in the third person.

### Prompts:

1. Think about how new computers can benefit your school. Your principal has decided that students in your school can have several new computers in your classroom. Write an essay for the school newspaper about how the new computers will be used to benefit your learning.

2. Transportation is a necessary part of modern life. Write an essay that explains how the car is used by American families. Explain how it is used for business, pleasure, and emergencies. Your essay will be in a new social studies book.

## Narrative Writing:

### Explanation:

Narrative writing asks students to tell a story or describe a series of events. Narrative essays are almost always arranged in chronological order. Narrative essays may be written as a personal narrative in which the author tells about something experienced.

### Prompts:

1. Think about your best holiday celebration ever. Write an essay to tell about this celebration and why it was your favorite.
2. Think about how you spend Saturdays during the school year. Pick out a particularly memorable Saturday, and explain exactly what you did that day and why it was especially memorable.
3. Remember the best school assembly ever. Write an essay telling what happened, how the audience responded, and why the assembly was important.

## Creative Writing

### Journal Prompts

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#### Words prompts

What do the following words mean to you? Write about them freely.

Fear	Anger	Happiness	Mess	Scared	Tired
Food	Suspicion	Tranquility	Magic	Sport	Humor
Family	Future	Age	Death	Animals	Grandparents
Pets	School	Injustice	Environment	Music	Books
Authors	Reading	Singers	Time	Youth	Hero

## Ideas prompt

1. Explain what you like and dislike about yourself. What would you change if you could?
2. What is your worst fear? Why?
3. Write about your family. What do you enjoy, what would you change and why?
4. If you were the boss of the school, house, family, country etc.... what would you do?
5. My pet peeves. Why?
6. List your worries and explain why they worry you.
7. If you could be like one of your heroes, who would it be and why?
8. What makes a hero?
9. Write about the worst thing you have ever done. Why was it so bad? How did it make you feel?
10. What makes you special or unique?
11. What is the best.... book, movie, video? What made it so good?
12. What book, film, video, cartoon character would you like to be and why?
13. Who or what makes you laugh? Explain why you find it funny.
14. What are your favorite things? Color, hobby, songs etc. Explain why.
15. If you could have super powers what would you have and why?
16. If you were an animal what would it be? Why?
17. Make 5 predictions about your life when you are older.  
[Occupation, family, hobbies, sport, car, holidays etc.]
18. What was your best holiday and why?
19. Where would you like to go if you could go anywhere in the world. Why?
20. Write about your memories. Recall how you felt and tell as much detail as possible; explain why the memory is so clear, eg.
  - First day at: school, a mall, McDonalds, the Zoo, adventure park.
  - Birthday parties, weddings, family outings or gatherings.
  - Holidays, presents, games.
  - The hardest thing you had to learn to do when you were younger such as tying shoelaces, riding a bike. Explain how you finally learnt how to do it.
  - Pets, hobbies, games and toys.
  - Earliest memories of your father, mother, grandparents, other family members.
  - Your most ...embarrassing, exciting, proud, frightening.... experience.
21. What makes a great friend? In what ways are you a great friend? How could you be a better friend?
22. What are 10 important qualities that make a wonderful.... friend, parent, brother, sister. Explain why.
23. Describe the job you hate doing the most at ....school, home, anywhere.

24. What do you admire most about your... grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, friend etc. Give reasons for your answer.
25. What makes you mad with your family?

As you think of different ideas add them to your writing ideas book. Jot the ideas down and later on you can come back and choose to write about some of your ideas.

## Themes

You could write on themes, e.g. sports, pets, television, books, family, hobbies, school, the future.

### Photo prompts

- You might have some photos at home of you and your family that would remind you of memories. These can be put in your writing ideas book or photocopied.  
When you are looking in magazines or newspapers there might be something you would like to write about. Cut these out and put in your ideas book.
- Then write about that picture and it means to you.

## Narrative and Descriptive Writing Prompts



### Writing Prompts

\*You are walking home from a late movie, and you have to cut through a cemetery. Describe your experience.

\*You spent the day with your grandfather. Tell about your day.

\*You are visiting the zoo. You come across an animal that no one has ever seen before. Describe the animal.

\*If Superman came in and replaced your principal for a day, what would school be like? Tell about it.

\* You have 7 friends coming to your house to spend the night. What do you do to get ready?

\* Imagine you are walking outside. A strong storm is coming. Describe for your classmates what you see, hear, smell, taste, and touch.

\* Everyone needs help sometimes. Write a story about what happened one time when someone helped you.

\* Most of us have worn something we did not want to wear. Write a story about what happened one time when you had to wear something you did not want to wear.

\* Everyone has lost something. Tell about what happened the time you or someone else lost something.

\* Imagine you are on a magic carpet that takes you anywhere you choose. Think about where you would go and what you might do. Write a story about your adventure.

\* Pretend you are asked to spend the afternoon babysitting a pet monkey. Before you begin to write, think about the fun and adventures you have with the monkey. Now write a story about what happened the afternoon you babysat the monkey.

\* You are home babysitting your little brother. When you go out to get the paper, the door shuts and locks. Your baby brother is alone inside. Tell what you do.

\* You find a baby bear on the school playground. Tell about that day at school.

\* Describe your feelings on waking up and seeing snow on the ground on a school day.

\* Describe your best dress-up outfit of clothing.

\* Describe how your mother looks when she smiles at you.

\* Describe how our pet behaves when it is being playful. Pretend if you don't have one.

\* Describe how your classroom will look the day after the last day of school.

\* Think back to your first day in school (first grade or kindergarten) and relate what happened that day.

\* This weekend you are going to the Mall. Tell all that you will do.

\* Your little brother or sister is sick and can't sleep. Tell him/her a story that will help him/her go to sleep.

\* You have just been rescued after being lost for 24 hours. Relate what happened that made you scared.

\* Tell what happened when you felt proudest of yourself.

\* Your pen pal from Antarctica sends you a penguin. Tell about your first day with your new pet.

\* Your classroom's pet snake got loose inside the school. Tell what happened.

\* You and your mother are home alone when suddenly a tornado is spotted coming toward your house. Tell about your experience.

\*\* Most of these prompts are not original, but have been collected to provide additional prompts for teachers to use with their classes.

# **LIST OF MODE-SPECIFIC WRITING PROMPTS**

## **Narrative**

- (Fictional narrative) Write a story about something that has been recycled, like a can, newspaper, or plastic bag, and its process and adventures along the way.
- 

## **Descriptive**

- Describe your favorite or your least favorite meal.
- Describe a person you respect.
- Describe something you collect or would like to collect.
- Describe the perfect picnic lunch.
- Describe your favorite teacher.

## **Friendly Letter**

- Write a letter to a friend who has moved away to tell how third grade is different from second grade.
- Write a letter to a friend about why you like to read books or magazines about a certain topic.
- Write a letter to a friend telling about something you do well.

## **Business/Formal Letter**

- Write a letter to your favorite television star telling why you like his/her show.
- Write a formal letter to the President asking him for an autographed picture.
- Write a letter to a city recreation department requesting information about park in your area.
- Write a letter to a local animal shelter requesting information about their volunteer program.
- Write a letter to your town's newspaper explaining why someone you know should get a Special Person of the Year Award.

## **Expository**

- (Directions) Write directions for a new student explaining how to get to the town's library from your school.
- (Instructions) Write a paper giving step-by-step instructions on how to make your favorite sandwich.
- (Instructions) Write instructions to your friends on how they can recycle at school.

- Write a paper explaining how to study for a test.
- Write a paper explaining how to find a book in the school library.
- Write a paper explaining how to earn good grades at school
- Write a paper explaining the lunch room rules to a new student.

### **Summary/Retelling**

- Summarize your first day in the third grade.
- Summarize a commercial you have seen several times on television.
- Retell a story someone told you about something funny or cute you did when you were younger.
- Retell a story of an episode of your favorite television show.

### **Poetry**

- Look at a photo and write a poem about the image(s) in the photo.
- Write a list poem of your favorite things.

### **Drama**

- Write a play which creates a new ending to a story you read.
- Write a play where characters from your social studies book live out a historical event.

### **Journal**

- Write a journal entry about what you do and don't understand about multiplication.
- Go into a natural setting and write a log of your observations and questions.

## **MORE WRITING PROMPTS**

Many teachers are more comfortable providing a daily prompt for students than they are letting them write freely. A prompt might be a sentence to complete, a question to respond to, or a quote to explain. Below are some teacher-tested prompts guaranteed to motivate your young journal writers!

- If I were the teacher, I would...
- If I could give one piece of advice to any person in history, that advice would be...
- Describe a dream that you had recently. Provide as many details as possible.

- The best lesson my grandparent (or parent or any relative) ever taught me was...
- Tell five things you'd like to do on your next birthday.
- Imagine a friend of yours is considering whether to take steroids. What would you tell that friend to persuade him or her not to do that?
- In 20 years, I will be...
- Tell about an event in your life that has caused a change in you.
- I was most angry when...
- If you could design one room in a house to suit only your needs, what would it look like? (Challenge kids to be as fanciful as they like. For example, would someone have a desk made of chocolate?)
- Describe your perfect vacation.
- My worst mistake was...
- If you and your best friend could have a free limo for 24 hours, where would you go and what would you do?
- You have the freedom to travel to any city or country in the world. Where would you go and why?
- What would you do if you were president of the United States?
- You have an extra \$100,000 to give away; you cannot spend it on yourself. What would you do with the money?
- The qualities that make a best friend are...
- If you were an insect, what kind would you be and why?
- Describe your room at home in detail. What are you proudest of and why?
- [using a current local controversy] Do you agree with the decision? Why? Would you change if anything? What?
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## Expository Essay Prompts

**Expository (informative) writing communicates information to the reader to share knowledge or to convey messages, instructions, and ideas. It involves communicating information at various levels of understanding, such as describing information, explaining or interpreting information, clarifying a process, or evaluating information. Examples include writing reports or letters.**

1. If you could make changes in your school cafeteria, what would they be?
2. Most people like one particular animal more than others. What is your favorite animal? Why is it your favorite?
3. Everyone has days that they will always remember as being very special. Think about a special day that you have had. Write an essay telling why it was so special.
4. Rules are important. What are the most important rules at your school and why are they important?

5. If you could choose any animal as a pet, what would you choose and why?
6. Explain why it is important to learn to read.
7. If you could change places with another person for a whole day, who would you change places with and why would you choose that person?
8. We are learning all the time. Some of our learning takes place in school and some outside of school. Write about something you learned recently and how it affected you.
9. Think of the ideal job for you when you grow up. Now think of reasons why this would be a good job for you. Write an essay to explain why this is your ideal job.
10. Think of a book that you have read and really enjoyed. Write an essay explaining why you really enjoyed that book.
11. Imagine that it's possible to travel to the past. Think of where and when you would like to go for a visit. Write an essay telling where and when you would go in the past and explain why you choose to go there.
12. Your cousin is moving to your town. Write a letter explaining why your town is such a wonderful place to live.
13. Imagine that you had no TV, computer, or video games for one week. Think of some activities that you can do instead to keep you busy and out of trouble. Write an essay to explain what you can do to keep occupied in a week of no TV, computer, or video games.
14. We all have a place where we can imagine or go where we want to be alone and relax. Think of your favorite place. Now write an essay explaining why this place is your favorite.
15. Think about your favorite year of school. Explain why it was your favorite year.
16. Friends are important, but everyone has a different opinion of what makes a good friend. Explain what, in your opinion makes a good friend.
17. Some teachers are special. Explain why one particular teacher in your life was so special.
18. If your principal asked you to write your opinion about what needed to be changed in your school, what would you write?
19. Due to trouble on the playground, the principal has sent home a letter stating there will no longer be an after-lunch recess. Write a letter to convince your principal to continue after-lunch recess. Before you start writing, think about the problems during recess. Think about why students need recess. Think about the benefits for the teachers. Decide what students and teachers can do to correct the problem. Think about the results of keeping recess during school. Now write a letter to convince the principal to continue after-lunch recess.

20. Your brother or sister is having a birthday. Your grandparents have asked for ideas for a present. Write a letter to your grandparents suggesting a gift your brother or sister might like. Before you start writing, think about what the gift could be. Think about why your younger brother or sister would like the gift. Think about how your grandparents can locate this gift. Now write a letter to your grandparents suggesting a birthday gift for your younger brother or sister.
21. Your class has been studying ways of improving our environment. One of these ways is by recycling items you would normally throw away. Write 3 - 5 paragraphs for your teacher explaining how you can create or recycle something from a discarded item or throwaway.
22. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay answering the question, "Why do you like your favorite subject in school?" Before you begin writing, think about which school subject you like best. Consider exactly what it is you like about that subject. Think about interesting things you have learned or done in that subject. Now write an essay for your teacher telling why you like your favorite school subject.
23. Your teacher has scheduled a unit test for Monday. Write a letter to your teacher requesting this unit test be rescheduled for another day. Before you start writing, think about why this test should be rescheduled. Think about what could be done to better prepare the students for the test. Now write a letter to your teacher requesting a unit test be rescheduled to another day.
24. You lost your watch while visiting a friend in another town. Your friend's mother found your watch and mailed it to you. Write a letter to your friend's mother thanking her for returning the lost watch. Before you start to write, think about why your watch is important to you. Think about why you need your watch. Now write a letter to your friend's mother thanking her for returning the lost watch.
25. Describe a favorite place you have visited. Write 3 - 5 paragraphs or describing the place. Before you begin writing, think about the location of your favorite place. Think about when and why you like to visit this place. Think about the benefits of visiting this place. Now write a description of your favorite place.
26. Your friend wants to come to your house. Write directions telling how to get to your house from school. Before you start writing, think about the details you will need in your directions. Now write a paragraph or more explaining to your teacher how to get to your house from school.

27. You have just received a letter from a friend inviting you to go along on a family trip to Orlando. Write a letter to your friend accepting the invitation. Before you start writing, think about what you need to know about the trip. Think about the activities that you can do there and how you should prepare for the trip. Now write a letter to your friend accepting your friend's invitation to go on that trip.
28. A classmate of yours had an accident on the playground during recess and had to be taken to the doctor's office. Before you start to write, think about exactly where you were and when the accident took place. Think about the others who were involved in the accident. Now write to the principal explaining what you saw when your classmate had an accident on the playground.
29. Most people have a favorite toy. Think about your favorite toy and why it is your favorite. Now write to tell about your favorite toy and explain why you like it.
30. The principal has just announced that the new field day will be at the end of the month. Write to a new student in school to explain what he or she needs to do to be eligible for the field trip.
31. What do you think is the most significant invention ever made and why do you think so.
32. Each child has a special position in their family. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of the position you hold in your family--youngest child, only child, middle child etc.
33. You are alone on a deserted island after a ship wreck; think about the things you could do to survive. Write in your journal what you could do if you were in that situation
34. There was a food fight in the cafeteria and many students were involved. Write a letter to the principal explaining how you can solve this problem and what disciplinary measures to avoid this incident in the future.
35. Select one of the problems you faced when you moved to a new school. Then, explain to a classmate what the problem was and how you solved it.
36. You are (a plant, a seed, a flower, a pet, a seat, a bed, a chair, etc). Introduce yourself to a young child, explaining your typical day and how you deal with any dangers you routinely face.
37. In your science class, you have done different experiments. Select one of them and clearly explain how it is and why you like it the most.
38. You have been asked to help your classmates make decisions about meals they would like added to the cafeteria menu. As a nutrition expert, recommend new choices. Explain the advantages of your selections.
39. Explain how music can affect one's mood. As the person in charge of providing the background music for a (shopping mall, law firm, doctor's office, sports stadium, fast food restaurant, a hotel), explain what type of music you will use and why.

40. Using your knowledge of (science, geography, health), explain to a new inhabitant how to orient to a new place, such as a desert, or the jungle, or a new planet.
41. As a student familiar with this school, explain the procedure for (fire drills, forming a line, moving between classes, going to the cafeteria at lunch time) to a new student.
42. There are many concerns facing the student council in your school. As a member of the student council, write an editorial for the school newspaper about one concern and what you think can be done to solve the situation.
43. Choose something you know about (a place you have visited, something you saw while traveling, and something you have studied in school, a hobby you wish to share). Write a letter to your pen pal in another country telling about your topic.
44. You are the class president and have been asked to write an introduction for a person you admire greatly. Write an essay describing the most admirable qualities of the person.
45. Think of some things you learned outside of school. For example, you learn from pet care, television, or grandparents. Explain what you learned.
46. The United States is full of immigrants from all over the world; you are from \_\_\_\_\_ and have decided to open a typical restaurant. Explain how you plan to attract customers and make your business a success.
47. Your community is seeking volunteers for a special neighborhood clean-up project in your area. As Head of this Volunteer Organization, write a letter to all the neighbors explaining why it is important to join in and how they can contribute. Sign your name, "F.S. Perfect."
48. Your local paper has been running a series of articles on local attractions to inform new comers of places they could visit. Describe such a place in a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. Sign your name, "A. B. See."
49. Write a letter to the editors of Invention magazine. Name three inventions you could not live without and explain why they are so important to you.
50. If you could visit anywhere on Earth, where would it be and why would you want to visit there? What things would you do there? Write a letter to the judges of a travel agency contest for a free vacation trip.
51. If you had the opportunity to meet any person (living or dead) who would it be, why would you choose that person, and what would you want to say when you met?
52. Your parents are planning to move to a new location where only English is spoken but only you can speak English well. Explain how you can help your parents in their new adventure.

53. Think about how new computers can benefit your school. Your principal has decided that students in your school can have several new computers in your classroom. Write an essay for the school newspaper about how the new computers will be used to benefit your learning.
54. Transportation is a necessary part of modern life. Write an essay that explains how American families use the car. Explain how it is used for business, pleasure, and emergencies. Your essay will be in a new social studies book.
55. Write an essay about the differences between two different types of insects. Give examples of how each type is adapted to its environment.
56. Write a letter to your (future) grandchildren. Choose any two major events occurring during your lifetime that you believe would be important enough to pass along to your grandchildren.
57. A home in the community has burned. Tell how you would help the family recover from the loss.
58. Choose one of your favorite authors. Write a letter telling why you like his/her work.
59. Write the directions for "how to" do something.
60. Choose a book or TV show that that you have enjoyed. You are to write an essay telling the reader why you enjoyed it.
61. The telephone has become a most important part of everyone's life. Most of us have difficulty imagining what it could be like to live without it. Write an essay explaining how the American family uses it for business, pleasure, and emergencies. Assume that this will be published as a part of a newspaper article.
62. Each of us had a teacher that we consider to have been really good. It may not have been a person that we really like at the time. But, in looking back, we realize that that person presented and saw to it that we knew some things that would be really important. Sometimes it was how that person presented things and not just what opportunities were supplied. That person does not have to be a classroom teacher. Think about that person and the reasons that they are positively memorable. Write a five-paragraph essay and explain why this person is an excellent teacher.
63. The arts (music, art, drama, dance etc. and sports have important effects on people's lives. When begun at a young age, they can be pursued for a long time and can shape future interests, careers, and life styles. One does not have to become a superstar, but the effect can be there and shown in many ways. Choose one of the arts or a sport. Explain how it could shape a person and influence one's life if begun when one is young.
64. Everyone has jobs or chores. Explain why you do one of your jobs or chores.

65. The fourth grade at your school has decided to elect a class president. The class president will take attendance each morning, help plan parties, and collect money for field trips. Write an article for the class newspaper describing what kind of person would make a good president and why.
66. We hear all the time about endangered species. Write an account of the rediscovery of an animal once considered extinct.
67. Choose an existing animal and write an article about it as if it were an endangered species.
68. Weigh the risks and rewards of space flight by explaining why you would or would not like to be a passenger on the Space Shuttle.
69. Describe an experiment to be conducted on board the Space Shuttle.
70. Think of something that you just learned how to do. Explain how to do it.
71. Your friend was absent from school yesterday. Write a note to tell what he or she missed.
72. Think of something nice that your teacher did for you or something important that your teacher taught you. Write a thank-you note to your teacher.
73. Your class is having a party. You want other students to come to it. Write a sign about the party.
74. Write in your journal about a time that someone helped you.
75. Imagine that you could visit any place in the world. Describe where you would like to go.
76. Imagine that you are going on vacation and need to leave your pet with a friend. Make a list of things your friend needs to do to take care of your pet.
77. What is your favorite book? Write an advertisement that will convince your classmates to read it.
78. A new restaurant that is fun for kids is opening in your town. Write a sign for the Grand Opening.
79. Your class has decided to have a "Get-To-Know-Each-Other" party. Write an invitation asking students throughout your school to come to your party.
80. Where is the most unusual place you have ever been? Write a description of the place.
81. Your class is making a classroom cookbook. Write a recipe for something you like to eat at home to include in the book.
82. A baby-sitter is coming to your house. What does the baby-sitter need to know? Write a letter telling her/him important information.
83. The mayor has to make a big decision--should some land in your community be used for a new shopping mall or for a park? Write a letter to the mayor telling what you think.
84. A musical group that everyone likes is going to perform a special concert, and it's at your school! Write an announcement to read over the school intercom.

85. Your school cafeteria wants to try a new menu--one with foods that kids will really like. Your principal has asked each student to write an opinion about what the cafeteria should serve.
86. It is Science Week at your school. Write a report about your favorite science topic.
87. You are on a committee that is doing a presentation on good health for kids. It is your responsibility to write an announcement for the presentation.
88. You have been hired by the mayor to promote your city as a wonderful place to live. Write an advertisement to convince people to move there.
89. Most people go on vacation to have fun, but sometimes vacations don't turn out as expected! Think about a vacation you went on that had some unexpected surprises. Write a travel diary about your experience.
90. Imagine receiving an invitation to the Boston Tea Party or the first Thanksgiving dinner! Choose an historical event and write an invitation to it.
91. You are on the school safety committee. Write directions for fire-drill procedures for your class.
92. Many schools in the United States require students to participate in service projects in order to graduate. Do you think community service should be mandatory for students? Write an editorial for your school newspaper.
93. Think of a saying, such as "Every cloud has a silver lining" or "Don't count your chickens before they hatch." Write about an experience you had that proves that the saying is true.
94. It's "Career Day" at your school, and your classmates want to know about different occupations. Choose a job that interests you and write a report about it.
95. You saw a help wanted ad for a job that is perfect for you. Write a letter to apply for the job.
96. Imagine that you could "invent" the perfect sibling. What would this dream brother or sister be like? Write a description.
97. You are a reporter for your school newspaper. You write about products kids like and use. Besides giving basic information about the products, you tell what you think of them. Write a news article for the next edition of the newspaper.
98. Next year you'll be in a different class with a new teacher. Write a letter to your next teacher, telling the most important things you learned this year.
99. A friend asked you to come to a party. Write a note telling your friend whether or not you will be able to attend.
100. You are a helper at a party for young children--and the children are bored! Think of a game for the children to play. Write directions for playing the game.
101. Your school did a special project. Write a letter to a newspaper telling what you did.

102. A tract of land is being sold in your community. Fictitious bidders include the National Park Service, a children's hospital, a shopping-mall developer, oil drilling company, and the U.S. Armed Forces. Choose one and become a lobbyist for one that group writing arguments on behalf of their interests.
103. Assist your students in learning how to use laboratory equipment by having them choose a scientific instrument from your lab, and write directions on how to use it.
104. Your students can learn about the history of inventions by writing about the origin of everyday objects, such as roller skates, safety pins, or ice-cream cones.
105. Form "exploration groups" of about five students. Starting with an opening line for a story, pass the story around the group, each student adding a sentence or two to the story.
106. Write down as many questions about a new unit of instruction as you can BEFORE the unit begins.
107. Choose some thing that you could imagine being (an asteroid, a cactus, a volcano), and describe why you would choose to be that thing.
108. Write a word on the board. Have your students make a list of words that they associate with that term. Compare the lists to demonstrate to students that they do not all have the same mental picture of the concept.
109. Picture yourself as part of a scientific phenomenon, and write about the experience. Phenomena include respiration, blood flow, and transmission of nerve signals, chemical reactions, heat transfer, lightning, combustion, and propagation of radio waves.
110. Describe a museum exhibit that might have been, but was not, present at a museum that you visited.
111. Make up a new planet. Describe the important features of the landscape, what the climate is like, and what lives there. Write from the viewpoint of the first visitor to this planet.
112. Gather illustrations of plants with unusual names. Give students one name, and ask them to describe what it might look like. Give the same name to more than one student so that they can compare their descriptions. Show them the illustration of the plant after they have completed their descriptions.
113. You have discovered a new type of plant. Give it a name and describe it for the newspaper.
114. Almost everyone has had at least one teacher who is hard to forget. Think about what makes it so hard to forget. Tell what happened.
115. Describe a person or an animal that you will never forget.
116. Your students can grapple with issues concerning form and function by writing about how the world would be different if cockroaches were the size of poodles (or other such distortions of scale and size).

117. Write directions telling how to do something. Name/describe the items to be used and describe the steps needed to complete the task.
118. Write an invitation to a party.
119. Write a letter to your pen pal recommending your favorite book.
120. Choose a person you admire and write a letter nominating that person for an award.
121. Write a letter thanking an adult (teacher, bus driver, Scout leader, Sunday school teacher, etc.).
122. Write a letter thanking someone for being a good friend.
123. Your teacher has told your class that you may have a class pet. Explain what animal you would like to have as a classroom pet.
124. Write a letter to an inhabitant of another planet explaining basic things on Planet Earth.
125. Imagine that you are a talk-show host getting ready to interview a famous person. Prepare for the interview by writing some questions that will elicit useful, interesting information from your guest.
126. Make up a writing prompt for your class. Use your imagination; they sharpen their language skills in a science class.
127. Most people know of an animal they would like better than any other as a pet. Before you write, think about what animal you would like most as a pet. Think about why you would like that animal as a pet. Write to explain why the animal you like would be a great pet.
128. There has recently been much discussion about violence in the music, film, and television that children enjoy. Some experts argue that the media is one major reason crime rates are on the rise. They believe the violence that youths hear and see through TV, film, and music leads them to behave in violent ways. On the other side of the issue, people say kids can make their own decisions concerning such influences and filmmakers and musicians must be free to create their art. Write an editorial for your local newspaper in which you tell what you think about the issue.
129. Write a letter to a friend who has moved away to tell how third grade is different from second grade.
130. Write a letter to a friend about why you like to read books or magazines about a certain topic.
131. Write a letter to a friend telling about something you do well.
132. Write a letter to your favorite television star telling why you like his/her show.
133. Write a formal letter to the President asking him for an autographed picture.
134. Write a letter to a city recreation department requesting information about park in your area.
135. Write a letter to a local animal shelter requesting information about their volunteer program.
136. Write a letter to your town's newspaper explaining why someone you know should get a Special Person of the Year Award.

137. Write directions for a new student explaining how to get to the town's library from your school.
138. Write a paper giving step-by-step instructions on how to make your favorite sandwich.
139. Write instructions to your friends on how they can recycle at school.
140. Write a paper explaining how to study for a test.
141. Write a paper explaining how to find a book in the school library.
142. Write a paper explaining how to earn good grades at school.
143. Write a paper explaining the lunch room rules to a new student.
144. Write about what you do and don't understand about multiplication.
145. Go into a natural setting and write a log of your observations and questions.
146. Describe your favorite or your least favorite meal.
147. Describe a person you respect.
148. Describe something you collect or would like to collect.
149. Describe the perfect picnic lunch.
150. Describe your favorite teacher.
151. Eating healthy food is important for good health. Think about healthy foods and why it's important to eat them. Now explain why it is important to eat healthy foods.
152. Most people have a television show they like to watch. Sometimes they like it because of one of the stars and sometimes they like it because of what it is about. Think about the TV show you like the best. Think about the things that make the show interesting or the start of the show. Explain why this TV show is a good one.
153. Everyone has at least one thing that he/she does well, something he/she is an expert at. It may be something he/she does at home or at school. Think about something you do well, something you are an expert at doing. How did you become an expert? What do you do that shows you are an expert? Explain why you are an expert at doing something.
154. Everyone has something that is special to them. This may be something special that people like to do or it may be a special place to go. Think about what is special, when do you do it, where do you do it, who you are doing it with, and how often you do it. Explain why you feel this is something special to do or a special place to go.
155. Congratulations! You have just won a million dollars in the lottery. Think about the things that you would do with your money. Tell what you will do with the money that you have just won.
156. You are a gum drop on the grocer's shelf. A young person has just put you in their cart. Think about your adventures in the cart. Write a story about this gumdrop's adventure.

157. One day you woke up and discovered that you had been turned into an animal. Think about what animal you have become. Tell what happened to you on the day you discovered that you had been turned into an animal.
158. Most of us have had an experience that we will never forget. Think about an experience that you remember very clearly. What happened? How did you feel? Tell about an experience that you will never forget.
159. Tonight you have been asked to cook dinner for your family. Think of the foods you will make how you will prepare them and serve them. Explain how you will prepare a dinner for your family.
160. You are a principal. You have to hire some new teachers for your school. Think about the qualifications that this person should have to be hired for this job. Explain what would make a good teacher.
161. DANGER!!! Occasionally, we find ourselves in a dangerous situation. Think about what types of situations you consider dangerous. Explain what types of situations you consider dangerous.
162. Parents would rather have handmade gifts from their children than store-bought gifts. Think about the handmade gifts that you could make for one of your parents. Explain what types of gifts you might make.
163. Most of us have had to do something that was difficult. It might have been catching a softball, making the bed, washing the dog or saying "I'm sorry." Think about something that was difficult for you. Explain to the reader of your paper something difficult that you had to do.
164. We all have something we really want. What do you really want? Why do you want it? Write about something you really want. Explain why you really want it.
165. We all have things we like to do. Think about something you really like to do. How do you do it? Write about something you really like to do. Explain exactly (step by step) how you do it.
166. We all have things we like to do with our friends or family. Think about something you really like to do with your friends or family. Why do you really like to do this thing? Explain what you like to do and why you like to do it.
167. Have you ever made mud pies? Think about what you do to make mud pies. What would you need? What would you have to do? Write step by step, what someone would need to do to make mud pies.
168. We all have someone important in our lives. It might be a teacher, a friend or family. Think about the important people in your life. Pick one person who is especially important to you. Why are they important? What are they like? Why are they important to you?

- Explain who is an important person in your life and why that person is important to you.
169. Think about a pencil. What does it look like? How do you use it? What makes a really good pencil? Explain what a pencil looks like so someone will be able to see it through your words.
170. Think about your desk. What makes a really good desk? What would you do to make a desk? Explain exactly what you would need to do to make a desk.
171. We all have jobs or chores to do to help out at home or at school. Think about a job (or chore) you have at home or in school. Why is this job important? How does it help? Explain why your job is important.
172. Your class has been given money to buy a classroom pet and no one knows how to go about choosing it. Think about how that pet should be chosen. Who should decide which pet is best? Should the class vote? Should the teacher choose? Explain how your class should choose a pet to be the class pet.
173. Imagine that you are to choose an animal to be your classroom's pet. Think about the animal you would choose. Why would you choose that animal? Why would it be good for the classroom? What would your class learn from having this pet? Explain what animal you would choose to be a class pet and why.
174. You are going to decide which animal your class pet will be. Think about that animal. What is it and what would you need to do to keep it healthy? What would it eat? Would it need exercise? How would you get it to exercise? What kind of cage would it have to have? Tell about what pet you would choose for your classroom and what you would do to care for it.
175. Write a composition for your classmates, describing the most interesting place you have ever visited, Describe in detail where the place is, how you got there, what you saw, and how you felt.
176. For a children's magazine, describe your first attempt at playing a particular sport. The sport might be one that looked easy but turned out to be a real challenge, or it might be one that came quite naturally to you. Be sure to describe everything you did and how you felt.
177. What are some of the more important or interesting experiences you have had in your life? Have you moved, lost something that was important to you, or overcome a big fear? As you grow older your memory of the events is bound to fade. So capture one of these experiences now in as much detail as possible by writing a journal entry about it. Be sure to tell why the event was important to you.

178. Enter a magazine contest by writing an essay about somebody you admire. According to the contest rules, your hero should be a person you know well or a historical figure - male or female, living or dead - that you've heard or read about. Tell how you feel about your hero, what qualities you admire, and the ways in which you would like your life to be like your hero's.
179. Have you seen a particularly skillful feat or performance by an athlete, a dancer, or an acrobat recently? Try to visualize the physical movements of the person, and write a description of the performance for the sports and entertainment section of your local newspaper. Use concrete details and imaginative comparisons to help your readers appreciate what you saw.
180. Is there a special object or family tradition that is important to everyone in your family? For example, do you have an heirloom that has been handed down through generations, a quilt your grandmother made, or a special way of celebrating birthdays? For a younger relative - perhaps even for someone who hasn't been born yet - describe this family treasure or tradition in as much detail as you can.
181. For an audience of your classmates, write a description of a particular time and place that you know well, such as your room on a rainy afternoon, the video arcade after school, or the waiting area at your doctor's office on a busy day. Use as many specific sensory details as you can. Try to capture the moment - and share how you felt about it.
182. For a class anthology, describe a bird, an insect, or animal that you have strong feelings about. Choose one that scares amuses, or puzzles you. Be sure you know enough about the animal to describe it fully. Use sensory details that will make your classmates feel the same.
183. Imagine you've been asked to explain to a group of students from a foreign country how to prepare a hot dog for lunch. They have never eaten a hot dog before and do not know anything about them. Tell them each step you take in preparing a hot dog.
184. You have been chosen to represent your school at an international convention for students. This convention will take place during your family's scheduled summer vacation, and it is being held in Paris, France. You will be traveling alone. Write a composition as if you were explaining this situation to a friend. Write about the good and bad aspects of attending this convention. Explain each of your points completely.
185. Many young people your age read very little. They get their news and information from television and the movies. They would rather read a magazine than a novel. No one is quite sure why this is true, but many people are concerned about the situation. Your teacher has asked you and your classmates to write essays which explain your thoughts about the causes of this situation. Your essays will be shared with other students in your school. Your teacher hopes that

- these essays will help the school develop a program to increase the popularity of reading for pleasure.
186. Are there any problems in your school? Do you get too little time to eat lunch? Between classes is it hard to find a water fountain that works? In a letter, make your school principal aware of the problem and suggest a solution. Be sure to explain what the causes of the problem are, who is affected by it, and how something could be done to solve it.
187. Your school is having a health awareness day. For the occasion, write a short composition about a health problem you think is avoidable. Begin with a brief explanation of the problem - how it comes about, who is affected by it, and how. Then tell how you think people could prevent this problem. In conclusion, either urge your readers to follow your advice or warn them what may happen if they don't.
188. Does somebody do something that really drives you crazy? Do you have a friend who always insists on being in charge? Is there someone in your class who always takes credit for other people's work? Choose something that bothers you. Now take a moment to figure out a way to solve this problem. Then write a composition in which you describe the problem and explain your proposed solution to it. Address your composition to others who are also troubled by this behavior.
189. Think about some of the problems in your community that affect you and your friends. Choose a problem that concerns you. Then prepare a brief written report in which you state the problem, and offer a solution to it. In your report, make clear to your neighbors why they should do something about the problem.
190. Do you have a special relationship with someone? Take a moment now to consider why this person matters to you and what he or she adds to your life. Then write an essay in which you define the role of this individual in your life. You might begin with words like "An aunt is someone who..." Plan to share this essay with the person about whom you are writing.
191. Most hobbies and sports have special words to describe the equipment and the plays unique to that activity. For example, chess players talk of rooks and pawns, and baseball players speak of knuckle balls and sliders. Imagine you are helping to write a manual for beginners in a hobby or sport you know well. Write an explanation of an important term that all beginners need to understand.
192. Choose a custom or holiday that you enjoy or that has special meaning to you. For instance, do you love celebrating Independence Day? Hanukah? In a letter to a pen pal, explain the practice or event you have chosen. As you write, remember that this pen pal lives in another country and knows nothing of your customs or holidays.

193. A magazine for children is conducting a survey on children's taste in movies. The editors want you to compare and contrast a movie that is in the theaters now with your favorite film of all time, and then draw a conclusion about what makes a movie great. The best responses will appear in a future issue of the magazine, so be sure to write for an audience of magazine readers your own age.
194. Your principal is considering a new dress code requiring all students to wear uniforms. State whether you think this is a good policy. Support your answer.
195. Name a favorite book and give reasons why you think it's worth reading.
196. Think about your favorite activity when you are out of school. Write about this activity and tell why it is your favorite activity.
197. Think about an animal you would like to be for one day. Write about this animal and tell why you would like to be this animal for one day.
198. If you could go anywhere in the world, think about the place where you would go. Write about this place and tell why you would go there.
199. Think about the famous people you know and choose one you would like to meet. Write about this person and tell why you would like to meet them.
200. Think about a place where you like to go to be alone. Write about this place and tell why you like to go there to be alone.
201. Lucky you! You are going on a trip to the moon. Think about three things you would take with you and tell why you would take these three things.
202. Name one goal you would like to accomplish and give specific reasons why. Give enough details so that your teacher will understand your ideas.
203. Your teacher has asked you to write about one person you would choose to be if you could be someone else for one day. Name that person and give specific reasons why you would like to be that person for one day. Give enough details so your teacher will understand your ideas.
204. Your teacher has asked you to write about one person who has made a difference in your life. Name that person and give specific reasons why that person has made a difference in your life. Give enough details so your teacher will understand your ideas.
205. You wake up at night and find your room filled with smoke. Describe the problem and explain how you would solve it.
206. After he takes your lunch money every day, a bigger kid warns he'll hurt you if you tell anyone. Since you don't believe in fighting to solve problems, what other actions might you take?
207. Your family has just moved to a country where you don't speak the language. What will you do to get through your first week of school?

208. Students in your school are unhappy with the student bathrooms. Write a letter to your principal describing the problem and suggesting ways to solve it.
209. The students in your school think that there is a problem at recess. Write a letter to your principal stating the problem and suggesting ways to solve it.
210. A classmate is being picked on during recess. Describe the problem. What could you do to help him/her solve it?
211. Write a letter to your principal explaining a problem in your school cafeteria (library, playground, bus, etc.) and offer a solution to the problem.
212. Think about a problem in our environment such as air pollution, overcrowding or endangering species. Write a letter to a younger child identifying this problem and offering a possible solution to the problem.
213. Imagine you have just been given the name and address of a pen pal. Describe yourself to that person.
214. Describe your favorite park or playground.
215. Describe your favorite relative.
216. Describe a really fun day.
217. Describe your favorite meal.
218. Describe your favorite outfit including any accessories.
219. Think about a new invention you would like to create. Describe this invention and tell what it can do.
220. Think about an outdoor scene, such as a mountain, a beach, a waterfall, a park, that you consider interesting. Describe this sight so that your reader will be able to picture it.
221. Select a particular place you have come to know well and that is special to you. It can be a back yard, a setting in the woods or on the water, a store, a secret hideout, a certain room or any other spot that is special to you. Name the place and describe it so your reader can picture it.
222. What is your favorite room in your house. Explain why it is your favorite.
223. What is your favorite pastime? Name the activity and give reasons why you like it.
224. You have the chance to be the first student astronaut to explore another planet. Would you accept the job? Give reasons why or why not.
225. Almost everyone has had at least one teacher who is hard to forget. Think about what makes it so hard to forget. Tell what happened.
226. What's your pet peeve? Is it graffiti? Too many television commercials? Violence in movies? Write an editorial for your school newspaper. Clearly state what your gripe is and what you think should be done about it. Try to persuade your readers to accept your opinion.

227. It is ten years from now. Write a letter to an old classmate telling where you are. Where do you live? What do you do? How did you get where you are? What goals have you reached? etc.
228. Write a letter to a teacher you've had in your past that really made a difference in your life. Describe a specific experience that you remember vividly. Thank this person for taking the time to care about you. (replace teacher with person or adult.)
229. Write a story about something that has been recycled, like a can, newspaper, or plastic bag, and its adventures along the way.
230. Write a story about a ride in a hot air balloon.
231. Choose a problem from last night's homework assignment, and write an explanation to your teacher of the steps you used to solve that problem. Be sure you list and explain the steps you took to solve the problem. Include enough information and details so the reader will understand your steps.
232. You are a Confederate/ Yankee soldier of the Civil War. You fought valiantly in the Battle of Gettysburg. You are cold, tired, and hungry, yet before you fall asleep, you must first write a newspaper account of your experiences for your hometown paper. Describe your experience. Give details that are specific and relevant to your experience.
233. Imagine that someone invented a time travel machine and offered you the opportunity to invite and transport any person to your classroom from any time in the past. If you had your choice of the most interesting person with whom you could share the class day, who would it be? This person could be someone from any part of life: politics, military, media, the arts, sports etc. Write a five-paragraph essay to explain how this person could be of benefit and interest to your class.
234. Invention and technology have always been an important part of changing the way one lives. Things that did not exist when your parents or grandparents were young now have changed the way most people in this country live. Some of those inventions are large and others are small. No matter what their size, they have altered the lives of the average person today. Think about an invention that came about in the last hundred years or so. Write an essay on how that invention changed the lives of the people. Explain how life was then, how it is different today, and whether the result is positive or negative.
235. You have studied about the early settlers to this country. You know about the hard times that they encountered and know that most of the settlements survived and prospered. They lived in environments that were often difficult, but they overcame those difficulties. Many of the simple everyday acts required individual creativity and effort. They had to live everyday being resourceful enough to meet their needs and the needs of their family and community. Even at an early age, each member was expected to contribute. Write an

- essay about how the colonists used their creativity and resourcefulness to survive and succeed.
236. You probably have read many interesting books or watched an exceptional TV show recently. It probably stands out in your mind for many reasons. It is the kind of show that many people really enjoyed and would not mind watching again. Maybe it was a painless way to learn, perhaps it dealt with a subject that you particularly enjoy. Maybe it stimulated the imagination. Whatever the reasons, you know that many people found it interesting. Choose a book or TV show that that many people enjoyed. Write an essay telling the reader why many people enjoyed it.
237. Your class has been discussing the problems in our environment such as littering the land and water, using products that cannot be recycled, burning toxic chemicals and other waste products, cutting down trees, filling in the wetlands, and killing rare kinds of birds and animals. Your teacher has asked each of you to choose one problem in our environment, explain why it is a problem, and suggest things that can be done to help solve it.
238. Your class discussed the different kinds of workers in our society and the things they do to make our community a better place. Your teacher has asked you to choose one type of worker and explain how the work is important to your school, your community, or the country as a whole. Write an essay telling how the work is important for you and your town, the school or the country.
239. Describe your best friend.
240. Describe how you make your favorite sandwich.
241. What this class needs to make it better is...
242. Describe your favorite place to eat.
243. We all have favorite objects that we care about and would not want to give up. Think of one object that is important or valuable to you. For example, it could be a book, a piece of clothing, a game, or any object you care about. Write about your favorite object. Be sure to describe the object and explain why it is valuable or important to you.
244. Regardless of where they live, everybody knows of a special place. Describe your special place, wherever it is. What does it look like? How does it feel to be there? Who shares it with you?

# Persuasive Essay Prompts

Persuasive writing seeks to influence the reader to take some action or bring about change to an idea or opinion. It may contain factual information, such as reasons, examples, or comparisons; however, its main purpose is not to inform, but to persuade the reader to think or act in a certain way. Examples include editorials or persuasive speeches, and advertisements.

1. The Board of Education has decided to extend the school day for one hour because the State of Illinois has increased the number of subjects students must know about. Do you agree or disagree with making the school day longer? Write an essay to the principal, and explain your answer.
2. Your teacher has decided to give exams in three subjects on one day. Persuade your teacher to spread out the tests over several days.
3. A leading doctor has published a research paper which claims that all students should be in bed by 8:00 p.m. in order for them to learn well in school. She suggests that all televisions should be off and all lights turned out by 8:00 p.m. so that students get a full night's rest. Your parents are considering doing what the doctor suggests. Write an essay for your parents and explain your position.
4. The school board is debating on whether or not to mandate school uniforms, write a persuasive essay either for or against the idea
5. Write a letter home to mom/dad trying to persuade them to grant permission for something you want.
6. There has been a problem in local schools with discipline and violence. Your school board has decided to institute a school uniform policy in order to cut down on these problems, based on the positive examples that they have seen at other schools. What is your position on this issue? Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper stating your position on this issue and supporting it with convincing reasons.
7. The principal at your school has instituted random locker and backpack/book bag searches to check for guns, knives, and other weapons. Anyone caught with these weapons will be immediately suspended. The principal argues that the random searches will not only guard against illegal weapons at school but will also help students feel safer. What is your position on this issue? Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper stating your position and supporting it with convincing reasons.
8. Some of the parents at your school have started a campaign to limit the homework that teachers can assign to students. Teachers at your school have argued that the homework is necessary. What is your position? Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper stating your position and supporting it with convincing reasons.

9. A litter problem has developed on your school's campus. Students are throwing trash on the ground, leaving empty soda cans and bottles outside on benches, and dropping napkins and other trash on the cafeteria floor rather than carrying them to the trash can. Your principal has asked students to take more care, but the litter problem persists. The principal has reacted by canceling all after-school activities until the problem is taken care of. What is your position on this issue? Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper stating your position and supporting it with convincing reasons.
10. As part of a new technology initiative, your local school district is increasing the number of computers in every school. The district plan provides for two computers in every classroom. Teachers at your school are lobbying instead to place all the computers together, creating two computer-based classrooms so that all students in a class can work at the computers together, rather than only one or two students at a time. The district is worried about the additional cost of creating and maintaining these special classrooms and is concerned about how access to the classrooms can be provided fairly and efficiently. What is your position on this issue? Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper stating your point of view and supporting it with convincing reasons.
11. Following a reading of "The Gingerbread Man" children brainstorm ideas to persuade the Gingerbread Man not to take a ride across the river with the fox. Children will draw a picture and write sentences to show alternate ways of crossing the river.
12. Following a unit on underwater creatures, the students will write a letter to their PTA convincing the PTA members to make a donation to the Save A Whale Foundation.
13. The snow has melted from the playground. Much litter is now visible. Create a poster to convince your schoolmates to stop littering.
14. Soccer season begins next week. You have observed a new student on the playground who seems to be a good athlete. Write a note convincing him/her to join your team.
15. Some fifth graders think they are old enough to decide how late they can stay up at night. What do YOU think? Explain when you think kids are old enough to set their own bedtimes. Give reasons that will convince your readers to agree with you.
16. Think of a rule you would like changed. Try to talk an adult into changing that rule.
17. The staff of Pioneer has applied for a grant to provide Pioneer with a state-of-the-art computer system for the library. The grant will be given to this school IF the students can convince the grant committee that it is needed. Write a letter to the President of the grant committee, Dr. David Johns, for or against this plan. Be sure to take note of your opposition's point of view. Sign your arguing name, "B.D. Best."

18. We know that many students begin smoking, even as young as students in our class. Write a letter to your classmates convincing them not to begin smoking.
19. The principal of your school has been asked to discuss with a parent group the effect watching TV has on students' grades. Think about the effect watching TV has on your grades and your friends' grades. Now write to convince your principal to accept your point of view on the effect watching TV has on grades.
20. The President's Council on Physical Fitness has reported that 65 percent of all elementary students are seriously out of shape. The Council has recommended that elementary schools adopt a policy requiring physical education classes daily for all students. Pioneer is considering implementing this proposal. Write a letter to your principal expressing your agreement or disagreement with this proposed policy. State your reasons, and please consider the other side of the argument.
21. Think about where people live. People live in small towns, large towns or even big cities. Some people live on farms or in houses in the country. Think about where it is best to live and why. Choose the one place where you would like to live and give reasons why you think it is the best.
22. Your newspaper is offering a prize for the Best Relative of the Year. Think about which one of your relatives should win this prize. This relative could be a parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt, cousin, or anyone in your family. Think about the reasons your relative is the best. Think about how you will persuade the judges to give your relative the prize. Decide which relative should win the prize. In the beginning of your paper, name the relative and give reasons he or she deserves the prize. Explain the reasons in order to convince the judges that your relative should win. These reasons may include what the relative is like or things he or she has done.
23. There has recently been much discussion about violence in the music, film, and television that children enjoy. Some experts argue that the media is one major reason crime rates are on the rise. They believe the violence that youths hear and see through TV, film, and music leads them to behave in violent ways. Write an editorial for your local newspaper convincing readers of your point of view.
24. As a resident of Arlington, you are quite concerned over plans to construct a trash incinerator in your community/ Write a persuasive letter to your town council stating and supporting your opinion.
25. You have just found what you think will be a wonderful pet (dog, cat, bird, dragon, tiger, rat). Now you must convince your parents to allow you to keep it. Give several reasons and support your ideas with details and examples.
26. Your school has decided (to change the dress code, to stop assigning homework on the weekend, to end summer vacations and go to year-round schooling, etc.). Write a letter to persuade the school board to make the change or to keep the policy.

27. If you were to include an item in a time capsule for future generations, what would it be? The item should exemplify the culture of the late twentieth century. Convince the committee sponsoring the time capsule to include your item, explaining thoroughly the item's use and significance in the 1990's.
28. What is the most important (invention, historical event, author, idea) in this subject? As someone who has studied this subject, convince your teachers to keep this part of the course.
29. Imagine that you are a political candidate for the Presidency, and you are asked at a debate to agree or disagree with one of the following statements: "All Americans are free," or, "All people are equal." Respond to the American public.
30. You are faced with the decision of whether or not to work while in high school. Present an argument to your parents either for or against teen employment.
31. NASA is looking for a professional in (journalism, science, politics, medicine, education) to travel aboard a space station. Who would you propose NASA choose? Convince the administration to select your choice.
32. A company has just announced that they plan to build a chemical manufacturing plant next to your home. Local officials have asked for input from nearby residents. Write an editorial that convinces your leaders to welcome or reject the company's plans.
33. The station that carries your favorite TV show has just decided to cancel it and replace it with reruns of a show for very young children. As an avid viewer, write a letter that influences the station to continue showing your program.
34. You want to convince your parents to let you buy a very expensive item (TV, computer, ski vacation, etc.). Write to persuade them to purchase the item for you.
35. Inventions are made to advance our society, but not all inventions ultimately have good effects. Identify one invention that has harmed society. Write a newspaper editorial that convinces your community why we would be better off as a civilization without that invention.
36. "Failure is often a better teacher than success." As someone who has experienced both, write a letter to a younger student either agreeing or disagreeing with this statement.
37. The city council wants to pass an ordinance banning the use of bicycles in the park. Write a letter to the editor of the local paper explaining why this action should or should not be taken.
38. In your science and math classes, you have studied both the English and metric systems of measurement. Your science project team must now select one of the measurement systems for use throughout the school year. Write a composition urging them to choose the metric system.

39. Suppose that you learned that your neighborhood might be condemned so that the property could be used for a new freeway. Your family would be paid for your house and land, but you would have to relocate somewhere else. What is your position on this issue? Write a letter to your local newspaper, explaining your point of view and explain them completely.
40. Because of budget cuts, your school will have to drop either shop or chorus classes. You are not involved in either of these programs, but you have friends in both. Write a letter to your local newspaper discussing both options. State your position on the issue and give good reasons for your position and explain them completely.
41. Some states are considering changing the legal age for getting a driving license from sixteen to eighteen. The people who are in favor of this change base their views on the number of accidents that claim the lives of teenagers as well as the number of accidents they feel are caused by the reckless driving habits of young people. Your teachers have asked you and the other students in your class to write essays in which you explain your thoughts about this change in the legal driving age. Your essays will be sent to a state commission that is considering a proposal to raise the legal age for driving.
42. Imagine that your school had a full program of extracurricular activities. Now, however, tax cuts have made it necessary to cut all but one of these activities. Write a speech to be given at a public hearing of the school board in which you tell which program you think should be saved. Remember that to convince the board members you will need to support your opinion with reasons and specific examples.
43. What's your pet peeve? Is it graffiti? Too many television commercials? Violence in movies? Write an editorial for your school newspaper. Clearly state what your gripe is and what you think should be done about it. Try to persuade your readers to accept your opinion.
44. One student will have the chance to work at a local television studio this summer. This student will be expected to answer phones, run errands, and do some library research. Above all, however, this person needs to be responsible, reliable, and eager to learn. Write an essay to convince the station managers that you are the ideal person for this job. Include specific incidents and examples to support your statements.
45. Your class has decided to stage a mock trial. The defendant is the villain from one of your favorite fairy tales. The lawyer for the defense is you. Choose the villain you would like to represent. This might be the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood, the stepmother in Cinderella, or any other character. Then write down what you will say in your final remarks to the jury. In this speech, you need to

- convince the jury to find your defendant "not guilty." Therefore, be sure to support your points with facts and examples and to answer important objections to your views.
46. The amount of cultural diversity has increased in your school during the last year. People are forming groups along ethnic lines. Nothing bad has happened, but it is obvious that something needs to be done to make everybody feel like part of the same school. Write an article for your school newspaper clearly describing both this problem and your plan for solving it. Try to write in such a way that you will convince your readers (both students and teachers) that your ideas are worth trying. Be sure to organize your ideas so they are clear to the reader.
  47. Some people have said that the schools in the United States are not as good as the schools in other countries because students do not spend enough time in school. Your school district is trying to decide whether to have students go to school on Saturday mornings in order to have more time to learn. Your principal is asking students to write an essay giving their opinion and reasons that there should or should not be school on Saturday mornings.
  48. Write a letter to your principal persuading him/her to buy pop and candy machines for your school.
  49. Write a newspaper article to the local newspaper about what your class has been doing.
  50. Everyone has done something that he or she will remember. Before you begin writing, think about a time you did something that you will always remember. Now tell the story about the time you did something that you will always remember.
  51. Convince your parents to let you have a special pet.
  52. Convince your parents to let you have a friend spend the weekend.
  53. Think about a club, sport, or activity that you've enjoyed participating in. What would you say to persuade other students to join your club? Write a letter to your school newspaper urging students to participate in the club, sport, or activity that you believe would be enjoyable for them.