

## LOTS AND LOTS OF WRITING PROMPTS

### A. Writing Prompts Appropriate for All Grades

1. Think about a time when something special or unusual happened at school. It could be a time when something unexpected happened in your classroom or any event at school that you remember well. Write about what happened and why it was special or unusual.
2. Sixth grade is a time of many changes. Describe the changes that have taken place in your life since you entered sixth grade. For instance, you could write about school, friends, family, or other changes. (TEACHERS: Change the grade level as necessary.)
3. Write about your first day at school. It may be the first day of kindergarten or the first day of any other year that you wish to describe. Tell what occurred that stands out in your memory.
4. On rainy days, our plans often change and we have to find other things to do. Think about what you do for fun on rainy days. Then, write your idea of how to have fun on rainy days.
5. If you wanted an unusual pet, you might find some opposition at home. You would have to be quite persuasive when you describe this new pet idea to your parent. Tell about the pet and convince your parent to let you have it.
6. Imagine that your family lives in a busy city and you want to move to the country. Describe the country in such a way that your family will want to move, too.
7. Think of an animal which is endangered. Describe this animal in such away that other people your age will appreciate it and want to protect it.
8. In science you have studied different families of animals. Reptiles and mammals are two different families of animals. Write a composition for science comparing and contrasting characteristics of mammals and reptiles.
9. You have old milk cartons and straws. Think about how you could design a toy using these materials. Describe the toy and explain how you made it.
10. If your class could decide to take a field trip this year, where would you like to go? Write a composition describing where you would like to go with your class this year so that the teacher will choose your suggestion!
11. Think about the best way you know to earn money. Write a composition telling a friend how to earn money.
12. Think about all the gifts people can give each other. Some gifts can be wrapped up in pretty paper. Others cannot be wrapped. Write a composition describing a gift that cannot be wrapped.
13. Some people like to be surprised by gifts. Others like to know what they are getting. What are the advantages and disadvantages of surprise presents?
14. Write a letter to a member of your family persuading the person to do something with you.
15. How old are you now? Write about the advantages and disadvantages of being your age.
16. Explain the step-by-step process of how to do something you do well, or choose one of the following tasks:
  - building a campfire, ironing a shirt, making a sandwich, riding a skate board, starting a car, taking care of a pet, teaching a dog tricks, throwing a Frisbee, washing a dog
17. Select one of the following quotations and explain a meaning which you find in the quotation:
  - “The art of teaching is the art of discovery.”
  - “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”
  - “By appreciation, we make excellence in others our own property.”
  - “Good things come to those who wait.”
  - “If we must judge, let us use the mirror on our wall first for practice.”
  - “If you want students to improve, let them hear the nice things you say about them to others.”
  - “If you’re never scared or embarrassed or hurt, it means you never take chances.”
  - “Laughter is the best medicine.”

“The need for money changes our behavior.”  
“The only nice thing about being imperfect is the joy it brings to others.”  
“Our life comes to us moment by moment.”  
“A penny saved is a penny earned.”  
“Success is a journey, not a destination.”  
“If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow.”

18. You have a computer which can be programmed to do any of the activities for which you are responsible. Explain the activities you would or would not assign to the machine. Explain why.
19. Describe your favorite season of the year. What do you see, hear, feel, taste, or smell during that season? Why is it your favorite season?
20. You have been given the opportunity to tell about your favorite story or book to a group of younger children. What book would you tell about and why would you choose this book?
21. Tell about the first time you ate a particular vegetable. Describe its appearance, its smell, its taste, and its texture. Why did you like or dislike this vegetable?
22. Having beautiful outdoor places to play is important. What are some of the things that people can do to make sure that parks and other outdoor areas stay pretty and healthy? Write a composition telling your friends how to take care of outdoor camping areas this summer to keep them safe and beautiful.
23. Many people enjoy a variety of outdoor activities. For example, people enjoy climbing, taking raft trips down rivers, spending time at lakes, skiing, or camping. Select an activity which you would enjoy and describe it so a friend would enjoy it, too.
24. Imagine that your parents wanted to spend the summer in an area that you didn't want to go. Describe this place in such a way that your parents would change their minds and decide NOT to spend the summer there.
25. If someone offered you a free airline ticket to anywhere in the world, where would you choose to go and why?
26. We all have favorite things, whether it is a toy, a day, a season. Select something from the following list of favorite things and tell why it is your favorite.  
Childhood toy  
Day of the week  
Holiday  
Month of the year  
School subject  
Season of the year  
Sport or game  
Time of day
27. Write a friendly letter to a pen pal in another country telling about your preparations for some holiday. Your letter should be as detailed as possible because your friend probably does not know how you do things where you live.
28. A rainy day can be a really pleasant experience. Write an essay in which you explain what is good about a rainy day. Include description of feelings, sights, sounds, and smells of a rainy day in addition to description of good rainy day activities.
29. Write about a task you had to perform that you didn't like. It could be a job you had, a household chore, or something else that you were required to do. Include enough details so the reader can understand exactly why this task is so disagreeable.
30. Choose either of the following topics as the subject for a composition:  
"Advantages of Living in Central [or other region] Oklahoma"  
"Things to See and Do in Central [or other region] Oklahoma"

## **B. Writing Prompts Appropriate for Younger Students**

- I. Your teacher has placed a large white sack on a table in your classroom. As the teacher walks away from the table, the white sack begins to move. Tell what is in the sack and write about it.

2. Write about an event you and your family enjoyed together.
3. You have just spent the weekend with a good friend. Write a letter to your friend telling how you felt about the weekend. Describe what you most enjoyed doing during the weekend and tell what you would like to do the next time you see your friend.
4. You are writing for the first time to a pen pal who is your same age but who lives in a different state. Introduce yourself by describing yourself and telling what your interests and hobbies are. Ask your pen pal to write to you.
5. Write a story about a disappointment you have had. Describe what happened and tell how you reacted to it.
6. Most of you know that a radio or TV commercial tries to get you to buy something. Describe your favorite commercial, tell what it is trying to sell, and tell what methods the commercial uses to sell the product.
7. Describe your favorite person. Tell what he or she looks like and acts like and what makes him or her your favorite person
8. I will never forget the day . . .
9. Describe an adult you know.
10. Friends are special people in our lives. Write about the qualities of a friend.
11. Pretend you can trade places with anyone you would like to be. This person can be real or imaginary, from the past or present. Tell who that person is and why you would like to trade places. Write about what you would do as that person for the day and how you would feel about it.
12. Write about a person who is very important in your life. Tell why this person is special. Be sure to include several reasons for this person's importance to you.
13. Your parents have just told you that you can have your own bedroom. Describe how you would decorate your room. Tell what colors you would like, what you would hang on the walls, and what new furniture you would get.
14. Everyone likes to get away for a break. Choose a favorite vacation spot and describe it and explain why you like it.
15. You have received a wonderful surprise package in the mail from someone who cares for you very much. Tell what is inside the package and describe what it looks like. Tell who sent the package and give the reasons you think that person sent it to you.
16. You arrive home from school to discover that a window which had always been locked is open. Write a story about what happens next.
17. Pretend that you are spending the day with a friend on a farm. Write a story about your friend and an adventure you had on a farm. (TEACHERS: You could change this prompt to a setting more appropriate for your students.)
18. Think about your favorite playground game. Tell how to play the game and explain why you like it.
19. Stories of space creatures who visit from other planets can be exciting and fun to read. Write a story about the night an alien spacecraft visited your neighborhood.
20. Explain what you think makes school enjoyable.
21. Write a story about something that happened at school one day that you will remember for the rest of your life.
22. Write about a job or responsibility you have at home.
23. Tell how to make a dinosaur model. What materials would you use? What steps would you take to make this model?

24. Think about two games you like to play. Tell how they are alike and how they are different.
25. Imagine traveling in a foreign country. What sights and activities would you enjoy and what problems might you have?
26. Here it is! The gift you have always wanted! Write a description of the gift and tell why you have always wanted it.
27. Imagine that space travel had become easy, fast, and safe. You have just read this ad in Children's Space Magazine:

**WRITING CONTEST THAT IS OUT OF THIS WORLD!**  
**WIN A FREE, MONTH LONG VACATION**  
**FOR YOURSELF AND TWO GUESTS**  
**TO THE PLANET ZOOMTOY!**  
 Plus

**ONE MONTH'S EXCUSED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL!**

Just describe yourself and  
 tell why you would be the best young  
 astronaut in the United States.

28. What kind of animal makes the best pet? Why?
29. Describe your favorite pet or animal. Tell why it is special to you.
30. Write about a happy event in your life. Describe what happened and tell why it made you happy.
31. What would you like to be when you grow up? Write about the kind of job you think you might like to do someday. Be sure to tell what it is, what you know about that job, and why you think it would be a good job.
32. Describe your favorite school subject this year. Tell about the kinds of activities that occur while you are in that class. Why is this subject your favorite?
33. You have the opportunity to start a new club at your school. Why is there a need for this club? What would the club be called? What would be the requirements for membership?
34. Tell about your favorite day of the week. What happens on that day? Why is this your favorite day?
35. What is your favorite television commercial? What product does it promote? Why is this commercial your favorite?
36. Your neighbor's dog just had 10 darling puppies! You would really love to have one. Write to your parents describing the puppies and telling them why you want one.
37. Would a robot make a good friend? Think about all the good points and bad points of having a mechanical buddy. Write a composition telling why you would or would not want a robot for a friend.
38. Choose one kind of animal you know something about. It might be a pet, an animal you have seen at the zoo or on TV, or an animal you have read about. Write a description of the animal: what it looks like, what it eats, where it lives; tell something interesting about it.
39. You have experienced and known animals in many ways--at home, in school, on television, in a zoo, at a fair. You may tell a true or imaginary story about a real or imaginary animal. Include a description.
40. You have just been told that you and another person are tied for winning a \$100 prize. To break the tie you must write a letter to Mr. L.M. Smith telling how you would use the

prize money. The person who plans to use the money in the best way will be the winner.

41. You have received a wonderful gift for your birthday. You have always wanted this gift. Write a thank-you letter to the person who gave it to you. Include how much you liked it, how you felt when you received it, and what you plan to do with it.
42. Pretend that yesterday you won an award you have always wanted. Write a letter to your best friend describing the award and what you did to win it. Describe your feelings about receiving the award.
43. Your next-door neighbor, Mr. Winters, would like to pay someone to take care of his dog while he is away. Write a letter telling him you would like the job and explaining why he should choose you.

### **Writing Prompts Appropriate for Older Students**

1. One day you found what appeared to be a box. Write a story telling about its contents and what happened after you found it.
2. A door in your school has always been kept locked. One day, as you walk past, you discover the door is open. Write a story about what happens next.
3. Write a story or explanation about one of the following topics. Your narrative or expository paper may be about anything related to the topic.
  - Anger
  - Challenge
  - Disappointment
  - Discovery
  - Embarrassment
  - Fear
  - Friendship
  - Happiness
  - Surprise
  - Survival
4. Write a narrative using one of the following topics:
  - A Frightening Experience
  - If I Could Do It Over
  - It Wasn't Funny
  - My Room--Love it or Leave it
  - My Special Friend
  - A Person I Truly Admire
  - Some Things Do Not Change
  - There Was Really Nothing to Fear
  - A Time I Had to Say Goodbye
  - An Unforgettable Experience
5. Write an expository essay using one of the following topics:
  - Education also takes place outside the classroom...
  - If I could change the world, I would...
  - If I could meet one famous person from history, it would be...
  - If I were principal, I would...
  - If I were President of the United States, I would...
  - The qualities of an ideal friend are...

My family has helped to make me who I am by...

To make myself a better person I would...

What I like most about me is...

What scares me...

6. Think of something that interests you. It may be something at school or at home: it may be an activity or an idea. Choose one thing that you are interested in and write about it so that the reader will understand your enthusiasm.
7. Describe a place you have been and would like to be again. Write about it to a person who has never been there. Tell why you would like to be there again.
8. Describe a perfect day and tell how you would spend it. Give reasons why this would be the perfect day.
9. Write about something you wish you didn't have to do. Tell why you don't like to do it. Include details that help explain your main idea.
10. Describe a person who influenced your life in a positive way, someone who has made a difference in your life. Tell what this person did and how it made your life different.
11. What would you like to tell adults about being a young person during this time period?
12. Write about something you have learned which you think will be helpful to you. Describe what you have learned and explain how it will be helpful.
13. Write about a time when someone was blamed for something he or she did not do. Tell about the situation and describe its effects.
14. What learning experience (a class, a skill, an activity) have you had which you think will be most helpful to you in your life after high school? Describe the experience and explain why you think it will be helpful.
15. Write a persuasive essay in which you convince someone that your school is or is not the best school to attend.
16. People feel proud of many things: themselves, others, school, community. Choose one particular thing you are proud of and write about it.
18. Growing up involves assuming responsibilities. Write about one important responsibility in your life.
19. A good teacher can influence a person for life. Choose one teacher who has had a positive influence on you and describe that teacher. Explain what it was about the teacher that made him or her the best teacher you've had and the effect he or she has had on your life.
20. There are many things that are important to you, but choose just one thing to write about. You may tell about a person, a place, a special hobby, or something that belongs to you.
21. Write about something that has special meaning to you because it reminds you of a person, place, or time that you like to remember.
22. As children we all had toys. Think about your favorite toy and write about it. How did it look, feel, and smell? What made it special?
23. What if YOU were an alien from another planet? Imagine that YOU came in peace to study Earth and its creatures. What steps would you take to have a pleasant visit? Write a composition telling HOW TO VISIT ANOTHER PLANET successfully.
24. Traveling in foreign countries would be fun and educational! It could also cause some problems. You have studied many countries in social studies. Write a composition telling the advantages and disadvantages of traveling in a country you have studied.
25. Many professions have similarities in the job requirements or in the characteristics of the workers. Think about the ways two professions can be similar. What are some ways that they are different? For example, how are cowboys like farmers, policemen like firemen, teachers like nurses? Write a composition comparing and contrasting two professions.
26. You have now spent \_\_\_\_\_ years in school. Choose the grade you enjoyed the most and explain why.

27. Discuss a school rule you would like to change. Explain the rule and give your reasons for changing the rule. If you cannot think of a rule to change, choose a rule you think is important. Explain the rule and tell why it is so important.
28. Write about a subject (object, animal, or person) which has deep meaning for you and has been a special part of your life. You may want to describe the subject, tell how the subject came into your life, or explain how the subject has taken on meaning through time.
29. Anticipation may be defined as an especially happy or eager expectation. Write about a time when you experienced anticipation. What were you expecting? How did you feel? What did you do? Did your experience live up to your expectation?
30. Write about an experience in which you earned, lost, spent, found, or were given some money. Tell what the experience was and why the experience was important to you.
31. Everyone makes mistakes. Sometimes the consequences of our mistakes teach us valuable lessons. Describe one mistake you have made and tell what you learned from the mistake.
32. Recall an incident in your life you would like to relive. You may want to relive it because it was a good experience or because you would change something about it. Write about this incident in detail and tell why you want to relive it.
33. Describe an incident in which you have been treated unfairly.
34. Many times people are influenced by something they see, hear, or read. Write about one such influence in your life.
35. Many decisions affect our lives. Sometimes we make decisions; other times the decision is made for us. Write about an important decision and tell how it has affected you.
36. Tell about your favorite place to visit. Describe how it looks, what you do there, and why you enjoy it time after time.
37. Think about an animal that you will always remember. It may have been a pet, a 4-H project, or an animal you saw only once. Describe what the animal was like and tell why you remember it.
38. Think about a special day or event you have shared with your family or a member of your family. You might talk about a trip, a project, or a holiday celebration. Describe what you did and tell why this was important to you.
39. Choose an event in your life that you remember very well. It might be an embarrassing moment, a sad or scary time for you, or an exciting, happy event. Write in detail about what happened and tell how you felt about the event at that time.
40. Think of an event in your life when time was very important. Tell what happened and why time was so important to you.
41. Suppose a man was stricken blind and deaf for a few days at some time during his early adult life. Think about what it would be like to live without one of your five senses. Explain what your life might be like without one of your senses.
42. You ordered a \$10 T-shirt with your name printed on it. The shirt arrived two weeks late with your name misspelled. Write a business letter explaining the problem. Ask the company to refund your money or send a properly printed shirt. Use good business letter form.
43. Looking for a special gift? We can provide you with a pair of fascinating sea horses for less than you will pay elsewhere. Send \$3. We guarantee live delivery and include food and instructions. Reply to this ad with a letter ordering the sea horses.
44. HELP WANTED: Handyperson to help retired couple with yard work, errands, shopping, cleaning, painting. Write a letter of application for the above ad. Include why you can be trusted, your experience, and your expected pay.
45. HELP WANTED: Person needed to deliver pamphlets door-to-door. Part-time or weekend work. Transportation provided. Write a letter of application for the above ad. Tell that you want the job and why

you feel you would be a good person to hire.

46. Your aunt Elizabeth has sent you a check for \$50.00 for your birthday. Write a thank you letter to her telling her how you will use the money and any other information you feel should be included.
47. Identify a change that might take place in the next ten years and discuss how the changes would affect you personally. The change might be in one of these areas or another of your choosing:
  - Entertainment
  - Environment
  - Government Regulations
  - Social Issues
  - Technology
  - Transportation
48. You have discovered that NASA has found a spaceship staffed by creatures from another planet. No information about the creatures has been released, but they are at the Space Center. National news asks if they should be released or detained. Write a paper explaining your views and reasoning on this matter.
49. Some schools want to bar students who do not achieve passing grades from participating in extra curricular activities such as sports, music, drama. Should students who are not passing their regular classes be allowed to participate? Write a paper expressing your opinion. Explain and support your reasons.
50. George ordered 100 pencils from the Palleto Pencil Company, 1170 Janeway, Moore, OK 73160, for his father's birthday with the name Ted Wilson on them. The pencils arrived April 25, stamped Fed Wilson. George wrote to request correction. Write George's letter.
51. Someone has told you that the Youth Employment Agency helps students get jobs. Write a letter to this office telling them the kind of job you would like, your training or experience, classes in school that would help in this job, and any other helpful information. Use standard business letter form.
52. All people make plans for the future. Write about something you would like to accomplish.
53. You have been asked to submit suggestions about how to improve the community. Write a letter to the City Council or city newspaper explaining what improvements you would make, why the improvements are needed, and how you would accomplish them.
54. Not all inventions or discoveries have been good for the world. Write about one invention or discovery the world would be better off without, explaining why we would be better off without it.
55. There has been discussion about changing the driving age. Some say the age should be lowered from 16 to 14, and some say it should be raised to 18. Tell why you think the legal driving age should be lowered to 14, raised to 18, or left as it is at 16.
56. Pretend that in the near future the school district will build another high school. How would you make the new school better than the one you now attend?
57. What do you think was the most important news event in the last year? Tell why you think it was important.
58. Convince someone that music, art, or computers are important in your life. Present your reasons in a way that makes your reader appreciate your point of view.
60. Show the importance or lack of importance of participation in extra curricular activities such as sports, clubs, academic teams.
61. Suppose your school began to require each student to spend two hours each week volunteering on a community project. You would have the choice of individual or group projects. You might wish to work with children or senior citizens. Civic organizations also rely on volunteers. Explain with what group you would volunteer and tell why you chose that group.
62. Incoming freshmen or sophomores have many things to learn and get used to in high school that are very different from middle school or junior high. Explain some of these differences so that the student's first year in high school will be successful.
63. Should students be required to take seats in reading, writing, and math before they are allowed to graduate? Explain your position.



64. Describe the kind of person you believe makes a good class president. Include as much detail as you can about the traits, characteristics, or qualities a good president should have. Also, describe the ideas and goals you would want a president in your school to work for.
65. Some people believe that sports in public high schools are overemphasized. Explain why you feel sports are or are not overemphasized.
66. Some people feel high school students should not work at after-school jobs, take a position on this issue and write an essay stating the advantages or disadvantages of working after school.
67. You can look back on many experiences in your life--some happy, some sad, some embarrassing, some proud. Focus on one experience that was especially meaningful to you and explain what important lesson you learned from that experience.
68. Think of a person whom you believe is successful in his or her work or career. Explain in as much detail as you can what it is that you believe makes that person a success.
69. Different people have different reasons for liking their favorite kind of music. Explain why you like your favorite music.