PERSUASIVE WRITING PROMPTS

1. Many people believe that television violence has a negative effect on society because it promotes violence. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to support your response.
2. Medical researchers, cosmetic companies, and others often perform experiments on animals. Many people feel that experimentation on animals is wrong and should be stopped immediately because animals do feel pain, and there are other alternatives. How do you feel? State your position and explain your reasons.
3. Since the cloning of the sheep Dolly, there has been much debate over whether or not human beings should be cloned. Many people feel this is a violation of the natural order of things and that all research in the area of human cloning should be banned. Others feel that this is a natural progression of science and human evolution and that research in the area of human cloning should be a priority. How do you feel about this issue? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.
4. **Many parents give children a weekly or monthly allowance regardless of their behavior because they believe an allowance teaches children to be financially responsible. Other parents only give children an allowance as a reward for completing chores or when they have behaved properly. Explain what you think parents should do and why.**
5. We all have favorite activities that we enjoy. Write an essay convincing readers to try the activity that you enjoy most.
6. Research shows that the average American watches as much as six hours of television each day. Do you think this is too much? Write an essay convincing readers to spend less time in front of the TV.
7. Most states allow people to get a driver’s license at the age of 16. Some people feel that 16 is much too young

for the responsibility that comes with driving a car and that teenagers should not be allowed to drive until

the age of 18. In your opinion, at what age should people be allowed to drive, and why?

1. Write an essay convincing readers to break a specific habit that is harmful to their physical, emotional, or

financial health.

1. In many countries, citizens are required to serve in the military for a year or more. Do you believe the United
2. States should institute a similar practice? Why or why not? Use specific reasons and examples to support

your answer.

1. **More and more farmers and food manufacturers are genetically modifying their crops to reduce**

**susceptibility to disease, improve flavor, and reduce costs. Do you think genetically modifying foods**

**is a good idea? Why or why not? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.**

1. **Good habits improve our physical, emotional, and/or financial health. Select one of your good**

**habits and write an essay persuading readers to make that habit a part of their lives.**

13. What is your all-time favorite movie and why? Write an essay persuading readers to watch this film.

14. Today, there are more and more reality shows on television. Do these shows make good television? Why

or why not? Explain your answer using specific reasons and examples.

15. Have you ever made a change that improved your life or the lives of others? Write an essay that convinces

readers to make a change for the better.

1. Carpooling, recycling, and planting trees are all activities that are good for the environment. Write an

essay convincing readers to actively participate in one of these activities.

1. The Internet includes many websites with images and content that are inappropriate. Should websites like

these be censored by parents? Why or why not? State your position and support it with

specific reasons and examples.

1. Some people prefer to live in the quiet of the country; others prefer the hustle and bustle of the city.

Which do you think is the better choice? State your position and support it with specific reasons and

examples.

19. **Is there a book that you feel should be required reading for everyone? Write an essay persuading**

**your audience to read this book.**

**20. Some people think of the United States as a nation of “couch potatoes.” Write an essay persuading**

**readers to be more physically active.**

21. You have been asked to write a brochure to attract visitors to your hometown. Write an essay that convinces people to visit the place where you live.

**22. Today’s top professional athletes often have salaries and bonuses in the tens of millions of dollars.**

**Do you think these athletes deserve such high compensation? Why or why not? Explain your position and use specific reasons and examples.**

23. If someone discovered a formula that would enable us to live forever, would that be a blessing or a curse?

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

24. Some educators argue that every child in every school should have access to computers. Others believe that the value of computers in the classroom is overrated and that computers may actually interfere with the learning process. In your opinion, how important are computers in the classroom? Use specific reasons and examples to explain your answer.

25. Should the United States invest more time, money, and effort in space exploration? Why or why not? Use

specific reasons and examples to explain your position.

26. Many schools employ security guards and have installed security equipment such as video cameras and

metal detectors in the building. In your opinion, how should security in public schools be handled? Use

specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

27. Across the country, public places such as libraries and museums are now smoke-free environments, and

have separate smoking and non-smoking sections. Some smoke free advocates are now campaigning to ban

smoking in all restaurants and bars. Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not? Use specific reasons

and examples to support your position.

28. Many people immigrate to the United States because they believe that it is better than their native country.

In fact, many people believe that the United States is the best country in the world. Do you agree? Why or

why not?

**29. Some people think that school cafeterias should be required to provide low-fat and/or vegetarian**

**lunch options to accommodate the eating habits of all students. Do you agree or disagree? Explain**

**your position and use specific reasons and examples as support.**

30. Elementary and secondary schools around the country are beginning to actively address the problem of

bullies. In your opinion, is bullying an issue that should be addressed by schools or left to parents? Use

specific reasons and examples to support your position.

31. Most private schools require students to wear uniforms. Should public school students wear uniforms too?

Argue for or against school uniforms for public school students. Use specific reasons and examples to

support your position.

32. In order to solve your school’s recent litter problem, your principal asked students to take better care of

the campus, but the litter problem continued. Your principal’s reaction is to cancel all extracurricular

activities until the problem is resolved. Do you agree or disagree with his reaction? Use specific reasons

and examples to support your position.

33. If an alumnus donated a large sum of money to your school, how do you think that money should be spent?

Write an essay convincing school officials to allocate the money in the way you think is best for the school.

34. In our increasingly global society, many people feel that all students should be required to learn a foreign

language before graduating from high school. Do you agree? Why or why not? Explain your position using

specific reasons and examples.

35. Today, more and more colleges and universities are offering not only individual courses but entire degree

programs online. Some educators worry that online programs do not provide the same quality as an on-

campus education and that in an online program, students can get others to do their work. Others believe

online courses offer convenience and flexibility enabling students, who might otherwise not be able, to earn

a degree and complete their educations. In your opinion, should colleges and universities offer degrees

entirely online? Why or why not?

36. Is a good education a right or a privilege? Why do you think so? Use specific reasons and examples to

explain your answer.

37. The network that runs your favorite television show has suddenly decided to cancel it. Write a letter

convincing the station to continue running the show.

38. What would improve your hometown? Write an essay convincing town officials to make a change that

would improve your neighborhood.

39. Most students enjoy the long stretch of summer vacation, but some parents and educators feel that two and

a half months is too long a break from school. Some argue that students and families would be better

served if the school year were extended through July, with a three or four-week break in August, a longer

winter break, and a week off each in the spring and fall. Does this sound like a good idea to you? Why or

why not? Explain your answer.

40. **Many people feel that the use of surveillance cameras in public places, such as parking lots, is a**

**good idea that can help ensure our safety. Others worry that too many cameras violate our right to**

**privacy and give law enforcement officials too much power. In your opinion, should we install more**

**surveillance cameras in public places? Why or why not? Support your position with specific reasons**

**and examples.**

41. All across the country, state laws require drivers to wear seatbelts. Not everyone believes the use of

seatbelts should be mandatory. What do you think? Make a case for or against mandatory seatbelt

use. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

42. More and more Americans are deciding to eliminate meat from their diets and become vegetarians. Do you

think this is a good idea? Argue for or against becoming a vegetarian. Use specific reasons and examples to

support your position.

43. Many albums and CDs now contain stickers warning parents that the lyrics of some of the songs may not be

suitable for children. Some people argue that simply putting a sticker on a label is not enough. What do you

think the record industry should do to warn parents about inappropriate lyrics? Explain what you think

should be done and why.

**44. Some states have now made it illegal to drive while talking on a hand-held cellular phone. Do you**

**think this is a good law that should be passed in other states as well? Why or why not? Explain your**

**answer.**

45. Imagine that you have a relative who is unfamiliar with computers and has never been on the Internet.

Write an essay convincing this relative to get a computer and get online.

46. Is there something that you believe is truly worth fighting for? Write an essay persuading others that this

cause is worth a fight.

47. Write an essay convincing your best friend to try your favorite brand of junk food.

NOTE: Prompts in Bold Face have anchor papers to use for help with scoring.