Argumentative Essay Prompts

## 1. The Board of Education has decided to extend the school day for one hour because of the increased graduation requirements. Do you agree or disagree with making the school day longer? Write an essay to the Board of Ed and argue your point of view.

2. A leading doctor has published research claiming all students should be in bed by 9:00 PM in order for them to learn well in school. Your parents are considering doing what the doctor suggests. Write an argument to your parents explaining your position.

3. The administration at your school has instituted random locker and purse searches to check for guns, knives, drugs, and cigarettes. Anyone caught with these weapons will be immediately suspended and may face expulsion. The administration argues that the searches will not only guard against contraband being brought into the school, but will make the students feel safer. What is your position?

4. A litter problem has developed in your school. Students are throwing trash on the grounds, in the hallways, and classrooms. The administration has asked for students to take more care, but the litter problem persists. The administration has reacted by limiting food and beverages to the cafeteria only. What is your position on the issue?

5. The increase in school violence has prompted one district to institute a school uniform policy. This decision came after researching the positive impact of uniforms in other schools. What is your position on this issue?

6. Some states have enacted legislation outlawing teachers and students to be Facebook friends. Write an argument for or against this law.

7. Recent cuts to school funding have forced one district to cut (all middle school athletics, busing, art class, performing arts, etc.). Write an argument sharing your position on this cut.

8. As part of a new technology initiative, your district is increasing the number of computer labs in the school. The district plan calls for an additional computer lab of 32 seats. Teachers at your school are lobbying instead for laptop or handheld devices that can move from class to class. Write an argument for one of these plans.

9. There has been much discussion about violence and video games. Some experts even argue it is a cause for juvenile crime. Write an argument taking one side or the other.

10. What is the most important event of the 20th century? Choose an event and write an argument convincing others.

11. What is the most important invention of all time? Choose one and write an argument.

12. Who is the most influential person in history? Choose one person and write an argument.

13. Suppose you learn a historical neighborhood is about to be condemned. Write an argument to stop this from happening.

14. Write an argument on whether to use metric or English measurement in math and science classes.

15. Inventions are made to advance our society, but not all inventions ultimately have good effects. Identify one invention that has harmed society and write an argument on why we would be better off as a civilization without it.

16. You are faced with the decision of whether or not to work while in high school. Write an argument either for or against teen employment.

17. Imagine you are a political candidate for the Presidency. 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.

18. Because of budget cuts, your school will have to drop either the elite choir class or strength and conditioning classes. You are not involved in either, but you have friends in both programs. Write an argument supporting a decision on which to drop.

19. 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 incidents 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. Write an essay in which you explain your thoughts about this change in the legal driving age. Your essay will be sent to a state commission that is considering a proposal to raise the driving age.

20. Imagine your school had a full program of extracurricular activities. Now, with the severe budget cuts, the district must cut all programs but one. Write an argument on which program should be saved.

21. Some people have said that the schools in the United States are not nearly as good as schools in China. Write an argument informing us whether this is true.

22. The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is one of the cited reasons for blocking websites and images in school settings. Write an argument on whether this law impedes education or protects students in an educational setting.

23. Some experts would argue that race is no longer the number one divide in America, but rather poverty. Make an argument for or against this idea.

24. Some would argue that the fashion industry has been a root cause for eating disorders and poor self image among girls and women. What is your opinion?

25. Bullying in school has taken on a new face with technology and social networking sites. Write an argument on whether state legislation should be enacted.

26. Some Tea Party opponents have made accusations of racism and a return to “Jim Crow” laws. Support or refute their accusations in an argument essay.

27. In Texas, law that would require women seeking an abortion to view a picture of the embryo or fetus and hear a description of its development before having the procedure has been blocked in federal court. The law was to go into effect September 1. The judge found several portions of the law to be unconstitutionally vague and that it violates the First Amendment by compelling doctors and patients to engage in government-mandated speech. What is your opinion on this? Write an argument essay supporting the law or supporting the judge’s decision.

28. J.C. Penny has recently landed in the news for its T-shirt “I’m too pretty to do homework, so my brother has to do it for me.” Some might argue that J.C. Penny has a right to sell shirts regardless of whether the content is appropriate or not. Others would argue that it is detrimental to the self image and development of girls. Write an argument taking a side to this issue.

29. Scholars have long argued that a major consequence of the media’s tendency to sexualize women’s athletic accomplishments is the reinforcement of their status as second-class citizens in one of the most powerful, economic, social and political institutions on the planet. In doing so, media images that emphasize femininity/sexuality actually suppress interest in, not mention respect for, women’s sports. Defend or refute.

30. Some would argue that two parent families are in the best interest of children. Others would say that parents who stay together only for the sake of the children serve neither their needs nor their own. Make an argument defending your position on this issue.

31. Is health care an undeniable right of citizenship like public education or is it a worker’s benefit of employment. Consider the issues and recent legislation before making an informed opinion. Then, write an argument supporting your position.

32. Same sex marriage has been a recent headline, and for citizens of New York state, a new law. Consider the arguments both for and against this issue and write an argument defending your view.

33. Should state child welfare laws apply to religious sects who use spanking and other forms of punishment? Write an essay defending your views.

34. Should adoption law legislation be written to allow children access to birth records?

35. What is an individual’s personal responsibility to preserving the environment? Explore this issue and write an argument defending your views.

36. Are there any circumstances when forgiveness is not an option? Consider Holocaust survivors, victims of crime, and family relations. Explore the topic of forgiveness and write an argument defending your position on this topic.

37. Are we as a human race becoming more or less civilized?

38. Teachers have come under fire for Facebook postings. Do you believe employers have the right to cease employment in any field based on a person’s Facebook page?

39. Do college admissions put too much stock in ACT and SAT scores?

40. Should men be allowed to take paternity leave from work?

41. Is our tax system fair?

42. Are teens better or worse than in the past?

43. Some states now have restaurants that do not allow children as patrons. Is this fair or even legal?

44. Are beauty pageants exploitive?

45. Should the United States of America make English its OFFICIAL language?

46. Should the military be allowed to recruit at high schools?

47. Should students be allowed to grade their teachers? In other words, should they have a say in the evaluation process for teachers?

48. Does religion cause war?

49. Should public schools be segregated by gender?

50. Does competition breed excellence or anxiety? Examine the effects of competition in high schools through sports, class ranking, and college admissions. Consider whether it pushes students toward excellence or leads to emotional problems.