

# Grade 4, Prompt for Opinion Writing

## Common Core Standard W.CCR.1

(Directions should be read aloud and clarified by the teacher.)

Name:

*Before you begin, write your name, date and grade on a lined piece of paper. You will use this paper for writing.*

### **Which Monument would you rather visit, the Statue of Liberty or Mount Rushmore?**

There are many reasons why people visit these amazing monuments. These two National Monuments represent our country's freedom and greatness. Which monument do you think you would be best to visit?

Your teacher is going to read two articles aloud. One is about the Statue of Liberty and the other is about Mount Rushmore. As you listen to these texts, think about the advantages of each place. *Which national monument would be the best to visit?* After you have had a chance to hear the articles a second time, you will write an essay that states your opinion and explains your thinking.

For the essay, your focusing question will be:

### **Which National Monument would be best to visit?**

You will explain your thinking with facts and reasons from the articles.

Remember, a good opinion essay:

- *Has an introduction*
- *Clearly states your opinion/claim in a focus statement*
- *Uses specific evidence from the text(s) to support your opinion and explains your thinking*
- *Groups ideas in paragraphs*
- *Has a conclusion*
- *Uses precise language and linking words to connect ideas*
- *Has correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation*

You will have two class periods to complete this reading/thinking/writing task. You may take notes right on the articles or on a separate sheet of paper. You may want to take some time to plan your writing before you begin work. The essay will have a single draft. When you have finished, be sure to proofread your work.

***GOOD LUCK! WE LOOK FORWARD TO READING YOUR GOOD WORK!***

## *Teacher Directions*

**Which Monument would be best to visit, the Statue of Liberty or Mount Rushmore?**

### **Day 1 (45 minutes)**

- Give out the assignment sheet.
- Read the assignment sheet aloud together and clarify the task for the students.
- Give each student a copy of The Statue of Liberty. Explain that they may want to underline or take notes on the article as you read it aloud. Read the article aloud.
- Pose the question, "Why might visiting the Statue of Liberty be best?" Remind students to use the article and their notes when thinking through their response. Have students turn and talk to a partner (teacher, parent, sibling...) about this question for 3 minutes.
- Give each student a copy of Mount Rushmore. Remind students that they may want to underline or take notes on the article. Read the article aloud.
- Pose the question, "Why might visiting Mount Rushmore be best?" Remind students to use the article and their notes when thinking through their response. Have students turn and talk to a partner (teacher, parent, sibling...) about this question for 3 minutes.
- Explain that tomorrow you will be writing about whether visiting the Statue of Liberty or visiting Mount Rushmore is the best. Collect the articles and assignment sheets. (Be sure names are on them.)

## *Teacher Directions*

### **Which Monument is the best to visit?**

#### **Day 2 (45 minutes)**

- Return the articles and re-read both aloud.
- Ask students to think about both articles. Which Monument would be best to visit? Why? Have students turn and talk to a partner (teacher, parent, sibling...) about this. Each student should talk for 3 minutes.
- Return the assignment sheet and re-read it aloud.
- Provide lined paper (or a computer if your students are accustomed to composing on a keyboard) and give students the remainder of the period to write. The writing should be completed individually, without help.
- When the period is over, explain that students may finish writing and proofread tomorrow. Collect student work and materials.

#### **Day 3 (45 minutes)**

- Return student work and materials. Students may be given access to a dictionary, thesaurus, spell check, or grammar check.
- Give students the remainder of the period to finish writing and proofreading.

Name:

## Why Visiting the Statue of Liberty Would Be Best

Approximately 4 million people visit the Statue of Liberty each year. Visitors have to climb 354 stairs to reach the crown. The crown has 25 windows from which the people can look out onto New York Harbor. In 1986, the Statue of Liberty was 100 years old. New York City had a huge birthday party for her. Thousands of people celebrated with fireworks and parades, not only in the streets but also on the water to say "Happy Birthday" to the Statue of Liberty.

On July 4, 1886 "The Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World" came from France to the United States. It is possibly the greatest gift anyone has ever given to America. It was a gift of friendship and is recognized as a universal symbol of freedom and democracy.

A French sculptor, Frederic Bartholdi, designed and built the statue. He had to build the statue in many segments because it was so large. The statue is 151 feet tall and weighs 450,000 pounds. It took 214 boxes to ship all the pieces from France to the United States by boat. When it arrived in the United States it took four months to put the Statue of Liberty together. The pedestal and base were finished in 1886.

The Statue of Liberty is affectionately called "Lady Liberty." She proudly stands in New York Harbor. In her right hand, she carries a great torch which represents lighting the way to freedom and showing us the path to liberty. Her left arm holds a tablet. The tablet is inscribed with the date of July 4, 1776 which honors America's Declaration of Independence. Her crown has seven rays which stand for the light of liberty shining on the seven oceans and seven continents.

Today the Statue of Liberty remains an enduring symbol of freedom and democracy as well as one of the world's most recognizable National Monuments.

Name:

## Why Visiting Mount Rushmore Would Be Best

The Mount Rushmore National Monument is known as the "Shrine of Democracy" and is located in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Carved into the mountain are the enormous faces of four former American Presidents, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln. These Presidents represent the first 150 years of American history and our cultural heritage.

A Dutch American sculptor Gutzon Borglum was chosen for this project. Work began in 1927. Sadly Mr. Borglum died before the project was finished. His son Lincoln took over and completed the work in 1941. It took 14 years and 400 men to carve the mountain. Over 90% of Mount Rushmore was carved by dynamite and each face is 60 feet high. In 1991 a Mount Rushmore commemorative half dollar was issued to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Mount Rushmore National Monument.

It is estimated that over 3 million people visit Mount Rushmore every year to admire these gigantic sculpted faces. Visitors come from all over the world to appreciate this man-made creation, learn about its construction, recognize the significance as a symbol of history and to learn about the natural and cultural history of the Black Hills region.

After admiring these magnificent sculptures here are a few ways to experience this sight to the fullest. First you may choose to visit the Lincoln Borglum Visitor Center where you can view exhibits and watch a 14 minute film describing the reason for and the methods used in carving Mount Rushmore. Next, walk the Avenue of Flags where 56 flags fly representing our 50 states, one district, 3 territories and 2 commonwealths. Then take the Presidential Trail which gives you an up close and personal look at this amazing sculpture. Finally, step into Gutzon Belgrum's studio allowing you to see where he spent much of his time refining the scale model of Mount Rushmore.

A visit to the Mount Rushmore Monument would enrich your understanding and appreciation for our country's history and cultural heritage.



# Writing Scoring Guide (Rubric)

(for Opinion/Argument writing)	<i>Great!</i>	<i>O.K.</i>	<i>Needs Help</i>
<b>Critical Components</b>			
Demonstrates clear understanding of purpose			
Provides specific textual examples and factual information			
Links opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses			
<b>Style</b> (lively, engaging and appropriate use of language)			
Precise words			
Strong, active verbs			
Includes a variety of sentence types and structures			
Maintains a consistent point of view and focus			
<b>Organization</b>			
Contains clearly presented central idea with supporting evidence			
Logical and orderly sequence of ideas			
Flows well-easy to understand-including use of transitional words			
Begins with strong introductory paragraph clearly stating thesis			
Has a defined conclusion			
<b>Conventions</b> (accepted practice established by usage)			
<b>Usage:</b>			
Correct use of pronouns			
Clear pronoun reference			
Subject/Verb agreement			
Correct word choice			
<b>Mechanics:</b>			
Ending punctuation			
Proper capitalization			
Correct use of commas			
Complete sentence formation (no fragments or run-ons)			
Quotation marks used appropriately			
<b>Spelling:</b>			
Words spelled correctly			