200 Prompts for Argumentative Writing

Education

- 1. Is cheating getting worse?
- 2. Should students be able to grade their teachers?
- 3. Does your school hand out too many a's?
- 4. Should middle school students be drug tested?
- 5. Should reading and math be taught in gym class too?
- 6. How seriously should we take standardized tests?
- 7. How well do you think standardized tests measure your abilities?
- 8. Do you spend too much time preparing for standardized tests?
- 9. Should schools offer cash bonuses for good test scores?
- 10. Should we rethink how long students spend in high school?
- 11. Do schools provide students with enough opportunities to be creative?
- 12. What are you really learning at school?
- 13. How important is arts education?
- 14. Does gym help students perform better in all their classes?
- 15. Who should be able to see students' records?
- 16. Are children of illegal immigrants entitled to a public education?
- 17. What is the right amount of group work in school?
- 18. Is your school day too short?
- 19. Do you think a longer school calendar is a good idea?
- 20. Should the dropout age be raised?
- 21. Should students be allowed to skip senior year of high school?
- 22. How does your school deal with students who misbehave?
- 23. Should schools be allowed to use corporal punishment?
- 24. How big a problem is bullying or cyberbullying in your school or community?
- 25. How should schools address bullying?
- 26. Should schools put tracking devices in students' id cards?
- 27. What do you think of grouping students by ability in schools?

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- 28. Do we need a new way to teach math?
- 29. Does class size matter?
- 30. Should all students get equal space in a yearbook?
- 31. Is prom worth it?
- 32. How important are parent-teacher conferences?
- 33. Should all children be able to go to preschool?
- 34. Should colleges use admissions criteria other than sat scores and grades?
- 35. What criteria should be used in awarding scholarships for college?
- 36. Do you support affirmative action?
- 37. Do college rankings matter?
- 38. How necessary is a college education?
- 39. Should engineers pay less for college than English majors?

Technology and Social Media

- 40. Are the web filters at your school too restrictive?
- 41. Does technology make us more alone?
- 42. Are you distracted by technology?
- 43. Do apps help you or just waste your time?
- 44. Do you spend too much time on smart phones playing 'stupid games'?
- 45. Has Facebook lost its edge?
- 46. Does Facebook ever make you feel bad?
- 47. Should what you say on Facebook be grounds for getting fired?
- 48. Should people be allowed to obscure their identities online?
- 49. What should the punishment be for acts of cyberbullying?
- 50. Is online learning as good as face-to-face learning?
- 51. Do your teachers use technology well?
- 52. Should tablet computers become the primary way students learn in class?
- 53. Can cellphones be educational tools?
- 54. Should computer games be used for classroom instruction?
- 55. How young is too young for an iPhone?
- 56. Should companies collect information about you?
- 57. Would you trade your paper books for digital versions?

- 58. Are digital photographs too plentiful to be meaningful?
- 59. Do you worry we are filming too much?
- 60. Would you want a pair of Google's computer glasses?
- 61. How would you feel about a computer grading your essays?
- 62. What role will robots play in our future?
- 63. How many text messages are too many?
- 64. How much do you trust online reviews?

Arts and Media: TV, Music, Video Games and Literature

- 65. Why do we like to watch rich people on TV and in the movies?
- 66. Do TV shows like "16 and Pregnant" promote or discourage teenage pregnancy?
- 67. Does TV capture the diversity of America yet?
- 68. Is TV too white?
- 69. Is TV stronger than ever, or becoming obsolete?
- 70. Does reality TV promote dangerous stereotypes?
- 71. What current musicians do you think will stand the test of time?
- 72. What artists or bands of today are destined for the rock and roll hall of fame?
- 73. What musician, actor or author should be a superstar, but hasn't quite made it yet?
- 74. Will musical training make you more successful?
- 75. Should video games be considered a sport?
- 76. Should stores sell violent video games to minors?
- 77. Can a video game be a work of art?
- 78. Do violent video games make people more violent in real life?
- 79. When should you feel guilty for killing zombies?
- 80. What game would you like to redesign?
- 81. What were the best movies you saw in the past year?
- 82. To what writer would you award a prize?
- 83. Do you prefer your children's book characters obedient or contrary?
- 84. Where is the line between truth and fiction?
- 85. Can graffiti ever be considered art?
- 86. Do we need art in our lives?
- 87. What makes a good commercial?
- 88. Why did a cheerios ad attract so many angry comments online?

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89. Does pop culture deserve serious study?

Gender Issues

- 90. Do parents have different hopes and standards for their sons than for their daughters?
- 91. Is school designed more for girls than boys?
- 92. Is there too much pressure on girls to have 'perfect' bodies?
- 93. How much pressure do boys face to have the perfect body?
- 94. Do Photoshopped images make you feel bad about your own looks?
- 95. Is it O.K. for men and boys to comment on women and girls on the street?
- 96. What should we do to fight sexual violence against young women?
- 97. How do you feel about Rihanna and Chris Brown getting back together?
- 98. Do fraternities promote misogyny?
- 99. Why aren't there more girls in leadership roles?
- 100. Why aren't more girls choosing to pursue careers in math and science?
- 101.Should women be allowed to fight on the front lines alongside men?
- 102.Do you believe in equal rights for women and men?
- 103.Are women better at compromising and collaborating?
- 104. Do boys have less intense friendships than girls?

Sports and Athletics

- 105.If football is so dangerous to players, should we be watching it?
- 106. Should parents let their children play football?
- 107. Should college football players get paid?
- 108. When do pranks cross the line to become bullying?
- 109. Has baseball lost its cool?
- 110. Are some youth sports too intense?
- 111.Is it offensive for sports teams to use Native American names and mascots?
- 112. Where should colleges and sports teams draw the line in selling naming rights?
- 113.Should colleges fund wellness programs instead of sports?

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- 114.Is cheerleading a sport?
- 115. How big a deal is it that an N.B.A. player came out as gay?
- 116.Should there be stricter rules about how coaches treat their players?
- 117. Should athletes who dope have to forfeit their titles and medals?
- 118. Should sports betting be legal everywhere?
- 119.Should home-schoolers be allowed to play public school sports?
- 120. Would you want a bike share program for your community?

Politics and the Legal System

- 121. What local problems do you think your mayor should try to solve?
- 122. If you were governor of your state, how would you spend a budget surplus?
- 123. When is the use of military force justified?
- 124. What is more important: our privacy or national security?
- 125. Should the U.S. be spying on its friends?
- 126.Do you trust your government?
- 127. What do you think of the police tactic of stopand-frisk?
- 128.Do rich people get off easier when they break the law?
- 129. Should rich people have to pay more taxes?
- 130.Do laws that ban offensive words make the world a better place?
- 131. Is it principled, or irresponsible, for politicians to threaten a shutdown?
- 132.Do leaders have moral obligations?
- 133.Do great leaders have to be outgoing?
- 134. How should we prevent future mass shootings?
- 135. Should guns be permitted on college campuses?
- 136. Would you feel safer with armed guards patrolling your school?
- 137. What is your relationship with guns?
- 138.Do you support or oppose the death penalty?
- 139. When should juvenile offenders receive life sentences?

Parenting and Childhood

140.Do we give children too many trophies?

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- 141. When do you become an adult?
- 142. When should you be able to buy cigarettes, drink alcohol, vote, drive and fight in wars?
- 143. Should the morning-after pill be sold over the counter to people under 17?
- 144. Should birth control pills be available to teenage girls without a prescription?
- 145.Is modern culture ruining childhood?
- 146. Are adults hurting young children by pushing them to achieve?
- 147. How, and by whom, should children be taught appropriate behavior?
- 148. What can older people learn from your generation?
- 149.Do 'shame and blame' work to change teenage behavior?
- 150. How should children be taught about puberty and sex?
- 151. Is dating a thing of the past?
- 152. How should parents handle a bad report card?
- 153.Should children be allowed to wear whatever they want?
- 154. How should educators and legislators deal with minors who 'sext'?
- 155.Do you think child stars have it rough?

Health and Nutrition

- 156.Is smoking still a problem among teenagers?
- 157. Are antismoking ads effective?
- 158.Is drinking and driving still a problem for teenagers?
- 159.Do you think a healthier school lunch program is a lost cause?
- 160. How concerned are you about where your food comes from?
- 161.Is it ethical to eat meat?
- 162. Do you prefer your tacos 'authentic' or 'appropriated'?
- 163. Should the government limit the size of sugary drinks?
- 164. Should marijuana be legal?
- 165.Should students be required to take drug tests?

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Personal Character and Morality Questions

- 166.Do bystanders have a responsibility to intervene when there is trouble?
- 167.Should you care about the health and safety of those making your clothing?
- 168.Can money buy you happiness?
- 169. Does buying and accumulating more and more stuff make us happier?
- 170. Are we losing the art of listening?
- 171.Do people complain too much?
- 172.Can kindness become cool?
- 173. Which is more important: talent or hard work?
- 174. How important is keeping your cool?
- 175. When should you compromise?
- 176.Is your generation more self-centered than earlier generations?
- 177.Can you be good without God?
- 178. Have curse words become so common they have lost their shock value?
- 179. What words or phrases should be retired in 2014?
- 180. What words or phrases do you think are overused?
- 181. Should couples live together before marriage?
- 182. How important do you think it is to marry someone with the same religion?
- 183. How long is it O.K. to linger in a cafe or restaurant?
- 184. Does keeping a messy desk make people more creative?
- 185. How important is keeping a clean house?

Science

- 186.Should scientists try to help people beat old age so we can live longer lives?
- 187. Given unlimited resources, what scientific or medical problem would you investigate?
- 188. When is it O.K. to replace human limbs with technology?
- 189.Do you think life exists or has ever existed somewhere besides earth?
- 190.Should fertilized eggs be given legal 'personhood'?
- 191. How concerned are you about climate change?

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Other Questions

- 192. Is it wrong for a newspaper to publish a frontpage photo of a man about to die?
- 193. What causes should philanthropic groups finance?
- 194. Should charities focus more on America?
- 195.Should the private lives of famous people be off limits?
- 196.Did a newspaper act irresponsibly by publishing the addresses of gun owners?
- 197. Would you rather work from home or in an office?
- 198. What time should Black Friday sales start?
- 199. Do you shop at locally owned businesses?
- 200. How much does your neighborhood define who you are?