



# FCAT Writing



## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Persuasive Essay Prompts

- Situation:** The school board is considering eliminating pep rallies at the high schools.

**Directions:** Think about whether or not schools should have pep rallies and why.

**Prompt:** Now write to persuade your school board to agree with your opinion.
- Situation:** Lawmakers are considering raising the age for legal drivers from sixteen to eighteen.

**Directions:** Think about whether or not the legal driving age should be raised to eighteen and why.

**Prompt:** Now write to persuade the lawmakers to raise the age or leave it as it stands now.
- Situation:** Next year your school will be adding a sport to its current list of extracurricular offerings.

**Directions:** Think about a sport you would like your school to offer next year as a class and why.

**Prompt:** Now write to persuade the principal of your school to add this sport.
- Situation:** Almost 20% of U.S. children and teens are overweight. To fight this growing problem, major soft drink manufacturers have agreed to limit the sale of sugary sodas in schools.

**Directions:** Think about whether or not eliminating soda sales at school is a good idea and why.

**Prompt:** Now write to convince your school board that soda machines should or should not be eliminated.
- Situation:** Our country is divided in its opinion about the issue of illegal immigrants and whether they should be made to go back to their countries or become US citizens. As US citizens they will pay taxes and receive social benefits.

**Directions:** Think about your opinion about the issue of illegal immigrants.

**Prompt:** Now write to convince your legislature to accept your opinion.

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6. **Situation:** Recently there has been debate on whether or not schools should shorten the week to only four school days but with each day being longer.
- Directions:** Think of whether such a change in the length of the school week will be beneficial to students' academic and social progress or if it will hurt their progress and why.
- Prompt:** Now write to persuade an adult of your opinion.
7. **Situation:** Of all of your classes at school, there is one that is your favorite.
- Directions:** Think about your favorite class and why you like it.
- Prompt:** Now write to persuade a student to take that class with you.
8. **Situation:** The principal is considering adding an extra elective class for next year. This is a class that is not currently offered on the registration form.
- Directions:** Think of an elective that you would like your school to add and why.
- Prompt:** Write to convince your principal to include this elective as a choice for next year.
9. **Situation:** Every year thousands of immigrants move to Florida. Many do not speak English.
- Directions:** Think about whether or not immigrants should be required by law to learn English.
- Prompt:** Write to convince the Governor that immigrants should or should not be required by law to learn the English language.
10. **Situation:** A friend has tested positive on a school drug test, and as a result, will be suspended for six weeks.
- Directions:** Think about whether this punishment will help or hurt your friend and why.
- Prompt:** Write to persuade your principal whether or not suspension is a beneficial punishment.
11. **Situation:** Your history teacher wants to plan an unforgettable yet educational, week-long field trip.
- Directions:** Think about a field trip destination that would interest you and why.
- Prompt:** Write to convince your history teacher that your desired field trip destination would be the best choice.

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12. Situation: A friend is considering either a tattoo or a body piercing.
- Directions: Think about whether or not tattoos and/or piercings are a good idea and why.
- Prompt: Write to convince your friend of your opinion on tattoos and piercings.
13. Situation: Many teens today have cell phones
- Directions: Think about whether or not cell phones should be allowed in school and why.
- Prompt: Write to persuade your principal to allow or ban cell phones on campus.
14. Situation: Many students do not think the subjects they study in high school prepare them for the real world they will face after graduation. The principal at your school is asking students for their opinions about new courses that could be offered to prepare students for life after high school.
- Directions: What new course do you think should be offered?
- Prompt: Write a letter to convince the principal that your new course should be offered. Be sure to explain why your new course is needed, using specific examples and details.
15. Situation: The twentieth century has given us inventions that have changed our lives in many ways. Big inventions, like television, computers, or microwave ovens, have had such a great impact on our culture that they seem to overshadow the small ones, like ballpoint pens, headphones, or calculators.
- Directions: Think of big and small invention and their respective roles.
- Prompt: Write an essay in which you argue whether the "big" inventions or the "small" ones play a more important role in your daily life and provide reasons to support your position. You may use the examples of inventions given above or come up with some of your own. Give as many examples as you feel necessary to support your position.
16. Situation: Who are our heroes? The media attention given to celebrities suggests that these people are today's heroes. Yet ordinary people perform extraordinary acts of courage every day that go virtually unnoticed. Are these people the real heroes?
- Directions: Consider heroism and whether you agree or disagree with media's interpretation.
- Prompt: Write an essay in which you define heroism and argue who you think our heroes really are—mass-media stars, ordinary people, or maybe both. Be sure to use examples of

specific celebrities, other people you have heard or read about, or people from your own community to support your position.

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Expository Essay Prompts

- Situation:** Objects around school can often be important in the lives of students.

**Directions:** Think about one object in school that has influenced you in an important way this year. You may write about something you own or use on a regular basis (a book, a picture in your locker, or a gym uniform) or an object that you only interact with occasionally (the big dictionary in the library). The object that you choose should be one that you could hold: choose a book in the library rather than the whole library, for instance.

**Prompt:** Now write to explain specific ways that this object has influenced you.
- Situation:** The school's guidance department wants to create a myth-busting resource for students who will be in 9th grade next year. The guidance counselors want to reveal the truth about high school to new students in the fall and this booklet will explain the biggest falsehoods or rumors that 8th graders commonly hear about 9th grade. For example, some students might hear that it's impossible to pass a certain teacher's class, or that marching band is an easy A.

**Directions:** Think about the biggest myth you were told as an 8th grader about the ninth grade.

**Prompt:** Now describe what you heard and explain how that myth was not accurate.
- Situation:** The principal is considering allowing a student to run the school for a day.

**Directions:** Think about which one of your peers would be the best at running the school for a day.

**Prompt:** Now write to explain why this person would be a good choice.
- Situation:** Many people have careers that are challenging or even dangerous.

**Directions:** Think about the different jobs that people have that could be considered difficult or demanding.

**Prompt:** Now, select a career that you think would be the most challenging and explain your choice.
- Situation:** Everyone can remember a special year of school.

**Directions:** Think about a particular year before high school that was your favorite.

**Prompt:** Now write why that year was your favorite.

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6. **Situation:** Some high schools in Florida are separating the boys and the girls and becoming “Girls Only” schools and “Boys Only” schools.  
**Directions:** Think about the advantages and disadvantages of being at a school with no peers of the opposite sex.  
**Prompt:** Now write to explain why you would or would not want to attend such a school.
  
7. **Situation:** Living in big cities can be very different from living in small towns.  
**Directions:** Think about whether it is better to live in a big city or in a small town.  
**Prompt:** Now, write to explain which you would prefer.
  
8. **Situation:** Video games are addictive but fun. Sometimes, though, they can be dangerous.  
**Directions:** Think of the negative and positive effects of video games.  
**Prompt:** Now write to explain whether video games have good or bad effects on teenagers.
  
9. **Situation:** Most people have hobbies that they practice on their free time.  
**Directions:** Think of your favorite hobby and plan to write about it.  
**Prompt:** Now write to explain about your hobby and why you spend a lot of your time on it.
  
10. **Situation:** Many people drive their cars while speaking on their cell phones.  
**Directions:** Think of the effects of using the cell phone while driving on the quality of driving and the safety of the driver and the people around him or her.  
**Prompt:** Now write to explain whether using the cell phone while driving should be legal or illegal.
  
11. **Situation:** Three guests can be invited to dinner. The guests can be anyone living or dead.  
**Directions:** Think about whom you would invite and why.  
**Prompt:** Now write to explain why you would invite these people to dinner.

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12. Situation: Music has a big influence on young people today.
- Directions: Think about how the hip-hop or pop culture influences your life and your friends' lives.
- Prompt: Now write to explain the negative and positive effects of such music on today's youth.
13. Situation: Many students are involved in a number of after-school or weekend extra-curricular activities.
- Directions: Think of reasons that such activities help or hinder students to improve their character and why.
- Prompt: Now write to explain how extra-curricular activities help or harm students in improving their personalities.
14. Situation: Many people have a pet that they cherish more than others.
- Directions: Think about your favorite pet and the reasons you like it.
- Prompt: Now write to explain to the readers why your pet is your favorite.
15. Situation: You are the President of the United States of America for one day.
- Directions: Think about things you would improve or change about your country, society, or community.
- Prompt: Now write to explain the things you would do if you were the president for one day.
16. Situation: Many teachers require their students to put together projects that count as a major portion of their grade.
- Directions: Think of your favorite project that you have had to present to your teacher and the rest of your class.
- Prompt: Now write to explain why this project was your favorite and why you enjoyed doing it.



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17. Situation: A new high school is being built in the county. The community was asked to choose a mascot to represent the school.

Directions: Think about an animal or another item that would make a good mascot and why.

Prompt: Now write to explain why your choice is a good one.

18. Situation: A novel written in the 1950's describes a world where people are not allowed to read books. A small group of people who want to save books memorize them so that the books won't be forgotten. For example, an old man who has memorized the novel *The Call of the Wild* helps a young boy memorize it by reciting the story to him. In this way, the book is saved for the future.

Directions: If you were told that you could save just one book for future generations, which book would you choose?

Prompt: Write an essay in which you discuss which book you would choose to save for future generations and what it is about the book that makes it important to save. Be sure to discuss in detail why the book is important to you and why it would be important to future generations.