

Sample Writing Topics

Choose a topic from the list below. Remember to choose the topic you know the most about. Make your writing piece 1 to 2 pages in length, handwritten.

Persuasive

1. Pretend a friend of yours has decided to eat ONLY junk food. Write a paper that would CONVINCe your friend to eat a healthy diet.
2. Think of a rule you would like to have changed. Try to CONVINCe an adult that the rule should be changed.
3. If you could change just ONE thing, what would it be? It might be a big change everyone would notice, or only a little change. Write a paper that clearly tells what change you would make and why. Give reasons that will CONVINCe a reader that the change you want is important.

How to Write a Persuasive Paper

Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader that a point of view is valid, or to persuade the reader to take specific action. It is based on a topic that is debatable – a topic about which there could be more than one point of view. Persuasive is different from expository writing in that it does more than explain or enlighten; it also takes a stand, and endeavors to persuade the reader to take that same stand.

Persuasive writing:

- Presents and supports a point of view to convince and influence.
- Has a clear position.
- Has details to support the position – give provable facts and examples to back up your opinion.
- Is logical.
- Sounds convincing.

For more examples of writing: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?=525>

How To information from *Writers Express: A handbook for young writers, thinkers, and learners*, by Kemper, Nathan, and Sebranek.

Grade 5: Persuasive (Example of a “High” paper)

Title: “My Sister Meg”

Topic: People do many things to help each other. **Write a paper to convince** someone that a helpful person in your life deserves an award.

SCORES AND COMMENTARY (Phrases in bold are taken from the *Official Writing Scoring Guide*):

Ideas and Content: 5 **The writing is clear, focused, and interesting.** The writer involves the reader with **main ideas that stand out** and details that are **suitable to audience and purpose**. This paper is not a 6 because it does not have a level of rich details and an in-depth explanation required of that score.

Organization: 5 There is an **inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a satisfying sense of closure**. **There is effective sequencing and paragraph breaks.** This paper is not a 4 because **the order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text**.

Voice: 5 **The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere.** The writer begins with expressing the difficulty of the task at hand (“to choose one person that has helped me the most is quite difficult.”) and gives examples of how her choice has supported her. The examples show the writer’s commitment to the topic. The reader feels **a sense of interaction** (“I think she deserves a gold medal, don’t you?”).

Word Choice: 5 **Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose.** A scorer might be tempted to score this paper a 4 for Word Choice because the writer does not experiment much with language, but the expression is better than functional.

Sentence Fluency: 5 **The writing has an easy flow and rhythm.** It has a **natural, fluent sound that glides along with one sentence flowing into the next**. It is not a 6 because the piece does not demonstrate sentences with a high degree of craftsmanship and varied structures.

Conventions: 5 **The writing demonstrates a strong control of standard conventions. There is little need for editing.** To reach a 6, a wider range of conventions would need to be attempted.

There have been many people in my life that have helped me. To choose one person that has helped me the most is quite difficult. I have my father who is always up for a game of catch. Mother, who is willing to move so she knows I get a good education. Even though they have helped me much, I'd have to say it would be my sister.

She lived in Portland and I lived in Gearhart, it seemed she was always there. It has always been convenient having our age difference. Meg could look at things (especially problems) at a different angle than I could. Someday I hope I can repay her for all she has done for me.

She knows when to interfere and when not to. I feel I can tell her anything. Meg speaks the truth, and says what needs to be said. Even if it hurts.

Now she lives four blocks away. She is married, has a child of her own and a stepson. Meggan teaches first grade. (once I was even in her class) Every day at 4:15 pm I call her on her cellphone. We talk about the day and complain.

If someone helpfull in my life were to get an award I have to choose my sister. She is a great role model and is always ready to teach, help or listen. I think she deserves a gold medal, don't you?

Persuasive Writing

Student Model

This model is based on an essay submitted by fourth-grader Kristyn. She clearly states her opinion in the first paragraph. Then she shares a supporting reason in each of the middle paragraphs.

Adopting a Pet from the Pound

Owning a pet from the pound or Animal Rescue League has many advantages. First of all, a child feels good about rescuing an abandoned or abused animal and giving it a whole new life. Besides, if the animals from the pound aren't adopted right away, they might be put to sleep. Having a pet also means lots of responsibilities. A child has to feed, clean up after, brush, and exercise the pet.

Another great advantage of having a pet from the pound is the price of these cute and cuddly animals. Pets from the pound cost only a few dollars while pets at a fancy pet store can cost hundreds of dollars.

Once you adopt a pet from the Animal Rescue League, it will quickly become a part of your family. If you are thinking of adopting a pet, you might consider choosing a dog or a cat. Dogs and cats can bring lots of happy times to a family, and they can be excellent companions for a person who lives alone or someone who has lost a loved one. Dogs are also a wonderful source of protection. Cats are funny, and they may help to calm people down when they are sad or mad.

Please consider adopting an animal. If you remember all of the advantages of adopting a pet from the pound, you might find the bird, mouse, hamster, dog, or cat of your choice.