

## Intermediate Level Grades 5 & 6

### Sample Argument/Opinion Non-Stimulus Prompt

Should the School Year Be Extended?

The typical school year is made up of 180 days. Suppose that state legislatures were considering a law to extend the school year to 220 days in order to give students more time to learn and to improve achievement scores. Is this a good or a bad idea? Write a letter to your elected officials expressing your opinion. Be sure to give strong reasons with plenty of support.

#### Prewriting Suggestions

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1. Think about the length of the school year where you live.
2. Think about the arguments on both sides of this question.
3. Think about how lengthening the school year would affect you personally.
4. Think of the long-range affect of a change in the length of the school year.

#### Editing Suggestions

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- Have I organized my ideas in a logical way in order to clearly communicate my opinion?
- Have I illustrated my points with clear examples?
- Did I remember to write an introduction and conclusion?
- Have I included enough details or examples to make my ideas clear?
- Do all of my paragraphs relate to this topic?
- Are my ideas well organized? Do I have an introduction and a conclusion?
- Are my sentences clear and complete?
- Have I used transition words or phrases, when needed, that clearly show how my ideas are connected?
- Have I chosen the best words to express my ideas?
- Are my spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation correct?

Intermediate Level Grades 5 & 6  
Sample Informative Non-Stimulus Prompt  
Beach vs. Mountains

Some people like to go to a beach for vacation and some people prefer the mountains. In some ways these places are similar and in some ways they are different. Is the beach or the mountains a better place for a vacation? Write an essay that informs the reader about each vacation location, noting the similarities and differences. Be sure to give facts and examples in your essay.

### Prewriting Suggestions

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1. Think about all of the sensory images at the beach.
2. Think about all the sensory images in the mountains.
3. Think of specific details that they have in common.
4. Think of specific details that make them different.
5. Be sure to give strong details and personal examples about each vacation location.

### Editing Suggestions

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- Have I organized my ideas in a logical way in order to clearly describe each vacation location?
- Have I illustrated my points with clear examples?
- Did I remember to write an introduction and conclusion?
- Have I included enough details or examples to make my ideas clear?
- Do all of my paragraphs relate to this topic?
- Are my sentences clear and complete?
- Have I used transition words or phrases, when needed, that clearly show how my ideas are connected?
- Have I chosen the best words to express my ideas?
- Are my spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation correct?

Intermediate Level Grades 5 & 6  
Sample Narrative Non-Stimulus Prompt  
Saturday

If you could choose to spend one Saturday any way you like, what would you choose to do? Write a story about this special Saturday, using narrative techniques such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop your events and/or characters.

### Prewriting Suggestions

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1. Think about what kind of a day Saturday is usually for you.
2. Think about whether you will tell an imaginary story about how you will spend the day.
3. Or will you retell an actual adventure of a special Saturday.
4. Are you the only person in your story?
5. Do you have any obstacles in your special Saturday?

### Editing Suggestions

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- Have I clearly described what happens on my adventure and any obstacles I have?
- Have I explained clearly, with specific detail, how I spent the day?
- Have I included enough details or examples to make my ideas clear?
- Do all of my paragraphs relate to this topic?
- Does my story have a beginning, a middle, and a satisfying end?
- Are my ideas well organized?
- Are my sentences clear and complete?
- Have I used transition words or phrases, when needed, that clearly show how my ideas are connected?
- Have I chosen the best words to express my ideas?
- Are my spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation correct?