Writing Prompts

Situation: Everybody knows what it is like to lose something or someone of special importance. Valuable things may be lost or broken, close friends or relatives may die or move away and favorite pets may be lost or killed.
Prompt: Write about a time when you lost something valuable to you.

Situation: During an earthquake, most of us do not have the time or the presence of mind to do more than duck beneath a table or into a doorway. Afterwards, if the quake was destructive enough, we wish we had been able to save an object of sentimental value. We wish we had grabbed our favorite stuffed toy or a picture of a loved one before we ran out the door
Prompt: Pick one thing you would want to save from destruction and write about it. In your composition, describe this thing and why it is special to you. You might want to include an incident which illustrates why it is special.

Situation: We all have special talents. Some of us excel in sports, music, art, or writing. Some people skateboard, cook or dance.
Prompt: Write a composition that describes your special talent. Tell when you first discovered this talent. How have you developed it, and how do you feel when you are actively using it?

Situation: By the time students enter high school, they have learned about many moments in history that have influenced our world today. Think about a moment in history you studied and consider its importance.
Prompt: Write a composition in which you discuss a moment in history. Share its importance in today’s world. Be sure to support the moment with details and examples.

Situation: Some students at your school expressed an interest in making the school more attractive by getting rid of the trash on the school grounds.
Prompt: Write a persuasive essay for your school paper in which you convince the readers of the importance of getting rid of the trash and making the school more attractive. Convince your readers through the use of specific reasons and examples.

Situation: In the story “Blah, Blah, Blah,” the reader learns about the main character, Fred. Fred’s personality and emotions are revealed through the actions and dialog presented in the story.
Prompt: Write an essay in which you describe the personality and emotions of Fred, the main character. How does his personal characteristics add to the events in the story? How does the author reveal this information about Fred in the story? Use details and example from the story to support your ideas.

Situation: Think about a technical process with which you are familiar. Think about your hobbies and interests. Do you cook? Can you make things? What can you make, build, or do that many other people might find difficult to accomplish? Think carefully about the steps involved in making or doing this thing.
Prompt: Write a composition in which you describe this technical process. Explain step-by-step how to work through this process to achieve the desired end.
Situation: Think about historical figures you have found interesting or intriguing. If you could have dinner with any famous person from the past, whom would you choose, and why? What would you talk about? What would you want to ask him or her?
Prompt: Write a composition that explains why you would like to meet this person and what you would want to ask him or her.

Situation: Should high school students be forced to say the Pledge of Allegiance in school every morning?
Prompt: Think about the arguments on both side of the issue. Write an essay in which you take a position on the topic. Make sure you list several reasons and details to support your position.

Situation: One suggestion being made across the country to improve student achievement is year-round schooling. Under this proposal, students would have several short breaks throughout the year, but would not take a long vacation in the summer. Advocates say that this will keep students from forgetting so much of what they have learned, year to year.
Prompt: Write a composition in which you argue whether or not your school should adopt a year-round schedule.

Situation: Teachers can be the most important influence in a person’s life. That teacher may be found in the classroom or out in the real world. A teacher can teach a skill or give knowledge, or they may just listen to a problem and provide advice.
Prompt: Write about a teacher who has influenced you. This may be a teacher that you have had in class or it may be a person who has been a teacher in your life outside of school.

Situation: Hard work can be rewarding. People who do their very best should feel great pride when they succeed. It is often the hard work and not the success that makes them feel the most proud.
Prompt: Write about a time that you worked hard to succeed: in school, at home, or in your community. How did that hard work make you feel?

Situation: Most of us at some time in our lives have been afraid of something. Perhaps it was a strange sound late at night, a particular person or place, or a threatening animal.
Prompt: Describe in detail a time when you were frightened.

Situation: We all get stuck in places we don’t enjoy. Sometimes it is for a brief time like being stuck in a traffic jam. Sometimes a person must live for a time in a place where he doesn’t like it.
Prompt: Think about a place you have been that you didn’t like. Write about why you were there and why you didn’t like it. You might want to describe its appearance, smells, sounds and the memories that happened there. Finally, write about how you feel now when you think about this place.

Situation: Men and women have been complaining about each other for centuries. Some men say that women have an easier life, while some women say they have to work harder than men for the same benefits. Who works harder in your opinion, men or women? Why do you believe this?
Prompt: Discuss who must work harder in society, men or women. Explain your reasons for what you believe. Remember that work can be both inside and outside the home.