

From Alfonso Correa

Long time listener, first time caller here. Just wanted to brag a little on my kids. They created synthesis prompts in small groups (we are in hybrid mode but most have fortunately remained home) and I just thought they were pretty good. These are still not edited, so be kind. I hope you don't recognize any of them, but if you do please let me know!

They may be useful as jumping off points. They have sources, but I only required five, including the two visuals.

I think they are great, both as actual prompts and as models for a student activity. Sandra Effinger

1. The issue of climate change and the role the government has in mitigating the effects of it has been hotly debated over the last few decades. Some argue that government intervention in the form of climate policies will hurt the economy, but others, still, say that the negative impact on the economy caused by climate change will be far greater, so they believe a formalized and organized organization should take responsibility to mitigate climate change.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize material from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-written essay in which you develop your position on the extent to which the government should pass laws that attempt to mitigate the risks of climate change and the effects on the economy thereof.

2. Meat consumption being the cause for global warming has been a topic of discussion in many parts of the world today. With knowledge of meat production's effect on the climate and more meat substitutes being researched and released, many are discussing whether meat consumption should be decreased in all citizens.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on to what extent do you believe that Meat consumption leads to global warming?

3. Transhumanism (the belief that humans should augment both their bodies and minds with technology) has become a topic of discussion in many parts of the world today. The benefit of such augmentations could benefit society greatly. However, ethical questions, such as whether limitations should be enforced, have sparked many debates on the extent to which humans should be able to use technology to enhance themselves.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which transhumanism should be accepted by society.

4. Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, or CAFOS for short, are intensive, high-density agricultural facilities that feed and house at least 1000 animals. These factory farms have been the primary process of producing meat to feed consumers around the world. With regards to the conditions of the animals within these farms and the impact on the environment, people have been debating whether this process should continue.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the current methods of mass-produced meat to feed today's society.

5. Hate speech is defined as any form of expression through which speakers intend to vilify, humiliate, or incite hatred against a group or a class of persons on the basis of race, religion, skin color, sexual identity, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, or national origin. The United States First Amendment states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." In today's climate, there is a debate on whether hate speech is protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which the first amendment protects hate speech.

6. Artificial intelligence has been able to solve problems and even able to "think" them through when taught, something other computers are not capable of, making people fascinated with their abilities and potential to learn by themselves. With the rapid development of technology and the use of machine power over labor, many have become concerned about the power we give technology to do our tasks.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on whether Artificial Intelligence has more benefits than cons.

7. Extended Copyright terms (laws which protect corporate authorship of a work, usually even after the death of the creator) has become a topic of discussion in many parts of the world today. With changes in the availability and accessibility of information, entertainment, and right to transform works, many people are discussing whether or not extended copyright terms should be kept.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which extended copyright terms should be in use, if any.

8. The topic of museums taking artifacts from areas around the world has become an important idea for debate. Museums believe that the knowledge of history should be shared with the rest of the world, but certain groups believe that they have the right to keep the objects that have been with their families for generations.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on whether it is ethical for museums to take artifacts from their original location.

9. In recent years, fracking has become a much larger topic of discussion in different countries. There is a constant change in availability of the resources gained from fracking, and new research pertaining to the effects of fracking. These new changes and developments lead to the discussion of whether its advantages surpass its drawbacks.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on whether or not fracking is beneficial to society.

10. After the 2016 election, discussions about the electoral college, the system by which American presidents are elected, have become increasingly prevalent. Two presidents within the last twenty years, George W. Bush and Donald Trump, have been elected not by gaining a majority of the popular vote but of the electoral vote. The electoral college has become an increasingly controversial subject, inspiring a national conversation.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the necessity and practicality of the electoral college.

11. Animal testing (the use of non-human animals in experiments that seek to find information about biological interactions or reactions) has grown into a popular topic of discussion across the world as it grows in popularity in companies and laboratories. With increasing awareness of animal rights and cruelty, as well as humane lab treatments, many people are opening dialogue on whether animal testing should be allowed, and under what conditions.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and analytically develops your position on the extent to which animal testing should be embraced or eschewed.

12. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. Seats are held for life, and oftentimes, the court has the power to set judicial precedent for decades to come. If a seat is vacated during an election year, a potentially departing president can fill that seat with their candidate of choice. With the recent passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, debate swirls around this question: should President Donald J. Trump be able to fill the seat with his nominee, Amy Coney Barrett?

Carefully read the following five sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develop your position on if Supreme Court vacancies should be filled during an election year.

13. COVID-19 has impacted life for many in many ways, and has become an important part of American discussion. Many businesses, small and large, closed shop or halted production because of the virus, in order to keep people safe. As we go further and further into COVID-induced quarantine, there has been increased discussion on whether shops should reopen in a COVID-filled world.

Carefully analyze the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the reopening of stores during the COVID-19 pandemic.

14. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, a spur in drastic changes to educational systems from around the world occurred. Multiple universities called into question the validity of the SAT, a test administered by the College Board, as a tool for college acceptance. Still, many universities have kept SAT scores as a factor of consideration in their application process.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the validity of the SAT for evaluating student performance for college admissions.

15. Since the start of the COVID-19 global pandemic, a majority of students have been doing school online. Some people think that returning to school, though somewhat compromising safety, is important to students' education whereas others think it is not worth the risk. While considering these opinions, schools have been debating whether or not to allow students to return to in-person learning in the 2020-2021 school year.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on how schools should be handling online versus in-person learning during the pandemic.

16. The SAT is a standardized test that measures students' reading, writing, and math skills. The SAT is administered by the College Board and is used by most universities in their admissions processes. Looking at concerns about the accuracy of the SAT in its representation of a student as a whole, many people are discussing whether colleges should be weighing the SAT so heavily in their admissions processes.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which colleges and universities should factor SAT scores in their admissions process.

17. Standardized testing has acquired a decisive role nationally in the academic world to the extent where one can safely assume that every American high school student in the education system has at least taken one of these tests. With the number of tests that students have to take, many teachers and students discuss whether standardized testing should be a requirement for a successful high school education.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which standardized testing should increase or decrease in the American public education system.

18. With the advancement of modern-day technology, human gene manipulation has become easier and more practical to implement into everyday life. However, there has been an ongoing debate on the ethics of it and whether the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on whether human gene manipulation should be practiced.

19. The COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 United States Election have inexplicably become linked, with unforeseen consequences barreling down on the general citizen. With this polarizing election, many Americans lie on either end of the spectrum regarding the coronavirus and the vaccine.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which politics and the 2020 election has affected the manner in which COVID-19 has been handled in America.

20. Resource extraction in Alaska, a hotly debated topic, has the possibility of greatly impacting both the environment and the economy. The abundance of both wildlife and valuable resources has caused tension between environmentalists and people that stand to benefit from resource extraction.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the effects of resource extraction from the alaskan wilderness and whether or not greater restrictions are needed to protect the environment.

21. Privacy Rights (rights concerning the balance between public safety and individual privacy) have become a controversial topic of discussion in many parts of the world today. With the U.S. government expanding its capabilities to conduct mass surveillance on its people in the name of preserving national security, many privacy rights advocates argue the government surveillance violates the fourth amendment. However, proponents of mass government surveillance believe that the the threat of terrorism and other dangerous interferences justify the potential infringement of individuals' privacy.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which the U.S. government should perform surveillance on its people.

22. Cosmetic declawing is the practice of removing a cat's claws, which is connected to their knuckles thus requiring amputation. Animal welfare and domestication have been topics of discussion among professionals themselves and pet owners. Declawing falls between the grey-area of both welfare and domestication considering its possible cruelty, effectiveness, and medical benefit.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which an owner should take the initiative to declaw their cat.

23. Vegetarianism is the widespread practice of maintaining a diet which excludes animal meat. It is becoming increasingly popular due to the growing availability of animal-free protein and increasing awareness surrounding sustainability. However, with this popularity comes the controversial question: is the vegetarian diet actually beneficial?

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which vegetarianism is beneficial.

24. The decision on whether or not to decrease the minimum legal drinking age has historically been a topic of discussion in the US. With pressing concerns such as underage drinking and traffic fatalities, it is important to consider how changing the drinking age will affect public health and safety. Teenage responsibility and security remain at the forefront of this discussion.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which the government should regulate the minimum legal drinking age.

25. Direct-to-consumer advertising (DTCA) refers to the marketing and advertising of pharmaceutical products directly to consumers as patients, as opposed to specifically targeting health professionals. The most common example of DTC advertising involves prescription pharmaceuticals, but may also include medical and diagnostic devices or services, as well as financial products and services. Since consumers may not be able to obtain products featured in DTC advertising on their own, such as with prescription drugs, the objective is to create a dialog between patients and their doctors with the ultimate goal of increasing sales. The United States and New Zealand are the only countries in the world that permit DTCA.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on whether direct to consumer pharmaceutical advertising should remain legal in the United States.

26. The word calorie, commonly defined as the amount of energy needed to raise the temperature of 1 gram of water by 1 degree Celsius, has become increasingly prevalent in mainstream culture. The emergence of diet culture and the preoccupation with food that it promotes raises the question of whether knowing the calorie count of meals at restaurants does more harm than good.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which the disclosure of calorie counts on restaurant menus is beneficial.

27. Throughout American history we've introduced a multitude of ways to immortalize the accomplishments made by those who came before us in building this great country. One way in particular is commemorating those who've contributed the most to our shared history by naming a park, or school after them, creating a national holiday in their honor or erecting a monument in their honor. As of recent years controversy over the means of which certain statues & monuments were created and allowed to stay has been questioned.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize material from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-written essay in which you develop your position on the considerations protestors should take when defacing historical statues in the United States.

28. Presidential debates (public events held during the election campaign period during which the candidates bring to light their political opinions and public policy proposals for potential voters) are an essential part of the election process. The idea of these debates came about when Abraham Lincoln and Senator Stephen A. Douglas had seven, face-to-face debates in 1858; however, presidential debates only became a reality in 1948 when the Republicans held a radio debate during the party's presidential primary. This was followed by the televised Democratic presidential primary debate in 1956, and another in 1960. With the 2020 Presidential Election in mind, people are questioning whether or not the publicized debates between the presidential and vice-presidential candidates are an effective part in the presidential election.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on whether or not the publicized debates between the presidential and vice-presidential candidates are an effective part in the presidential election.

29. Puritanism, the belief that the English Church needed a reformation founded by a group of English protestants in the 16th to 17th century, has developed the founding principles of American government and society. From the beginning of European colonization to the development of modern American society, Christian values expressed in our daily lives connect back to the roots of Puritans in New England and how they functioned under their social structure. With exceptional amounts of religious involvement in US politics and social hierarchy, there is a profound amount of discussion about the parallels to the foundations of Christian beliefs and the establishment of significant historical developments it has influenced.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which puritan practices influenced modern American society and politics.

30. Assimilation (the idea of a minority group adopting the values and ideals of a dominant culture to assume the mindset and behaviors of the majority), has become a predominant facet of Western society for its immigrants. With the diverse nature of the country and the emphasis placed on possessing an individual identity, many people are questioning whether or not assimilation should be required of all immigrants to a foreign country.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which immigrants should assimilate to the country they are immigrating to.

31. Oil Extraction, the process of separating triglyceride (TAG) lipids from the harvested and concentrated algal biomass and it could be done through a variety of mechanical or chemical manipulation techniques, has been constantly discussed all over the world for decades. With different oil extraction practices and techniques come different effects on the environment and the people in the area and it has always been discussed whether or not the process is safe enough to continue.

Carefully read the following sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which the oil companies today are practicing safe or unsafe practices.