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2025 FREDRICKIA HARGROVE POSTER CONTEST

Division 6: 9th – 12th Grade

Argumentative Essay Prompt

SCENARIO

In Paducah, Kentucky, a new generation of leaders is emerging, eager to tackle the challenges of the 21st century.

However, you face a world increasingly divided by political polarization, social inequality, and a widening gap between the haves and have-nots. In Frankfort, state legislators grapple with issues such as education reform, economic development, and racial justice, often struggling to find common ground.

Meanwhile, community activists are working to address the root causes of violence and poverty, calling for a greater investment in education, job training, and affordable housing. Across the state, young people are organizing for change, demanding a more equitable and sustainable future.

As Kentucky's next generation of leaders steps up, you must decide what form of leadership you want to embody. Will you build bridges of understanding and cooperation or erect walls of division and exclusion?

WRITING TASK

In an argumentative essay, take a position on the following statement: **"Effective 21st-century leadership in Kentucky requires building bridges across lines of difference, fostering inclusivity, and prioritizing collaboration over competition."**

SUPPORTING YOUR ARGUMENT:

Use evidence from a variety of sources to support your argument, including:

- Historical and contemporary examples: Analyze the successes and failures of past and present Kentucky leaders who have built bridges and erected walls.
- Research on leadership: Explore the latest research on effective leadership in the 21st century, including the importance of emotional intelligence, cultural competence, and systems thinking.
- Social and political commentary: Examine the opinions of experts and commentators on the challenges and opportunities facing Kentucky's next generation of leaders.



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- Personal experiences and observations: Share your experiences and observations as a young person growing up in Kentucky.

CONSIDERATIONS:

As you develop your argument, consider the following questions:

- What challenges and opportunities are facing Kentucky's next generation of leaders?
- What qualities and skills are essential for effective leadership in the 21st century?
- How can young people in Kentucky develop their leadership potential and positively impact their communities and the state?
- What role can education, mentorship, and community engagement play in fostering the next generation of leaders?

ALIGNMENT WITH KENTUCKY WRITING STANDARDS:

This essay prompt aligns with the Kentucky Academic Standards for Writing, specifically the standards for argumentative writing (W.9-10.1) and research (W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8). Students will develop a clear and concise thesis statement, provide relevant and sufficient evidence to support their claims and demonstrate their ability to research and cite sources effectively.

Additional Notes:

- Draw on your own knowledge and experiences and research from reputable sources.
- Be sure to cite all sources used in your essay.
- Your essay should be well-organized, clearly written, and persuasive.

ESSAY SCORESHEET

Student ID Number:	0	Competition:	0	Total Points	0
Grade Level:	8th	Set Number:	0	Rank	1
		Round:	0		

SECTION 1: SPECIFIC COMPONENTS OF THE ESSAY

COMPONENT	ANALYSIS QUESTION	1	2 - 3 - 4	5 - 6 - 7	8 - 9 - 10	SCORE
1.) Introduction/Hook	<i>Did the opening sentence or hook effectively capture your attention and make you want to continue reading?</i>	The opening does not capture attention	The opening somewhat captures attention	The opening moderately captures attention	The opening strongly captures attention	
2.) Opinion/Argument	<i>How clear and specific is the opinion/argument presented in the introduction?</i>	The opinion/argument is unclear and irrelevant	The opinion/argument is somewhat clear and relevant	The opinion/argument is moderately clear and relevant	The opinion/argument is very clear and highly relevant	
3.) Opinion/Thesis Statement Relevance	<i>Does the opinion/thesis statement connect well with the prompt and make you understand the writer's</i>	The opinion/thesis is unrelated to the purpose of the essay.	The opinion/thesis somewhat aligns with the purpose of the essay.	The opinion/thesis moderately aligns with the purpose of the essay.	The opinion/thesis strongly aligns with the purpose of the essay.	
4.) Opinion/Thesis Statement Points	<i>Do the points supporting the opinion/thesis make the argument clear and logical?</i>	Points are unclear and unsupported.	Points are somewhat clear and supported.	Points are moderately clear and well-supported.	Points are very clear and highly supported.	
5.) Idea Transition	<i>How smoothly do the ideas transition from one to another in the essay?</i>	Ideas transition poorly and disrupt understanding.	Ideas somewhat transition smoothly, but with some disruption.	Ideas moderately transition smoothly, with minimal disruption.	Ideas transition very smoothly with no disruption.	
6.) Idea Development	<i>Are the ideas in the essay well-developed and explored in depth?</i>	Ideas are underdeveloped and lack depth.	Ideas are somewhat developed with moderate depth.	Ideas are moderately developed with some depth.	Ideas are very well-developed with significant depth.	
7.) Opposing Views	<i>How effectively does the writer present and consider opposing viewpoints?</i>	Opposing viewpoints are ignored or dismissed.	Opposing viewpoints are somewhat acknowledged.	Opposing viewpoints are moderately acknowledged.	Opposing viewpoints are fully and effectively acknowledged.	
8.) Rebuttal(s)	<i>How well does the writer address and counter opposing viewpoints?</i>	Rebuttals to opposing viewpoints are absent or weak.	Rebuttals to opposing viewpoints are somewhat effective.	Rebuttals to opposing viewpoints are moderately effective.	Rebuttals to opposing viewpoints are very effective.	
9.) Conclusion/Call to Action	<i>Does the conclusion/call to action effectively summarize the essay and leave you with a clear understanding or course</i>	The conclusion/call to action is unclear or ineffective.	The conclusion/call to action is somewhat clear and effective.	The conclusion/call to action is moderately clear and effective.	The conclusion/call to action is very clear and highly effective.	

SECTION 2: HOLISTIC OVERVIEW OF THE ESSAY

10.) Purpose	<i>How well does the essay convey its purpose and make you understand the writer's intentions?</i>	The purpose is unclear and leaves the reader confused.	The purpose is somewhat conveyed but lacks clarity.	The purpose is moderately clear and understandable.	The purpose is very clear and effectively conveyed.
11.) Audience	<i>Does the essay seem to consider its audience and effectively communicate with them?</i>	The essay neglects the audience's needs and perspective.	The essay somewhat considers the audience but lacks effectiveness.	The essay moderately considers the audience and communicates with them.	The essay effectively considers the audience and communicates with them.
12.) Voice/Tone	<i>How well does the essay's voice and tone engage you as a reader and convey the writer's attitude?</i>	The voice and tone are unengaging and fail to convey the writer's attitude.	The voice and tone somewhat engage the reader and convey the writer's attitude.	The voice and tone moderately engage the reader and effectively convey the writer's attitude.	The voice and tone strongly engage the reader and effectively convey the writer's attitude.
13.) Persuasive Strategies	<i>How effectively does the writer use persuasive techniques to make their opinion/argument compelling and convincing?</i>	Persuasive techniques are ineffective and fail to make the argument compelling.	Persuasive techniques are somewhat effective in making the argument compelling.	Persuasive techniques are moderately effective in making the argument compelling.	Persuasive techniques are highly effective in making the argument compelling.
14.) Historical/Cultural Context	<i>Does the essay effectively integrate historical or cultural context to support its argument or perspective?</i>	Historical/cultural context is absent or irrelevant to the argument.	Historical/cultural context is somewhat integrated but lacks effectiveness.	Historical/cultural context is moderately integrated and supports the argument.	Historical/cultural context is effectively integrated and strongly supports the argument.
15.) Grammar, Spelling, and Capitalization	<i>How well-written is the essay in terms of grammar, spelling, and capitalization?</i>	The essay is riddled with grammar, spelling, and capitalization errors, hindering understanding.	The essay contains some grammar, spelling, and capitalization errors, affecting readability.	The essay is mostly free of grammar, spelling, and capitalization errors, enhancing readability.	The essay is impeccably written with no grammar, spelling, or capitalization errors.
16.) Sentence Variety	<i>How varied and engaging is the sentence structure in the essay?</i>	The essay lacks sentence variety, making the writing monotonous and uninteresting.	The essay has limited sentence variety, somewhat impacting the writing's engagement.	The essay exhibits moderate sentence variety, enhancing the writing's interest.	The essay showcases rich and varied sentence structures, greatly enhancing the writing's interest.
17.) Vocabulary	<i>How rich and appropriate is the vocabulary used in the essay? Does it enhance the writer's argument and make the essay more engaging to read?</i>	The vocabulary is limited and inappropriate, detracting from the argument's persuasiveness.	The vocabulary is somewhat rich and appropriate, but lacks impact.	The vocabulary is moderately rich and appropriate, enhancing the argument's persuasiveness.	The vocabulary is highly rich and appropriate, greatly enhancing the argument's persuasiveness.
18.) Citations	<i>Are the citations in the essay accurate, consistent, relevant, credible, current, complete, correctly attributed, balanced in terms of source types, and ethically used?</i>	Cites little or no evidence; little or no use of quotes and/or paraphrasing of details, examples, and ideas; incorrect format.	Inconsistently cites evidence. Attempts to quote and/or paraphrase details, examples, and ideas; format has some errors.	Accurately uses sources to support opinion/argument; cites evidence by quoting and/or paraphrasing; correct formatting.	Skillfully uses sources to support opinion/argument; consistently cites evidence by quoting and/or paraphrasing; no errors in formatting.