

## **JOURNAL OR ESSAY TOPICS**

The topics in the following lists are all appropriate for development according to the various rhetorical modes (description, classification/division, narration, process, etc.). Whenever your teacher asks you to choose a subject for composition, study these lists for free to change their wording, to limit their scope, or to write on any other subjects which these topics suggest to you. The lists for *Imagination and Personal Affairs* are especially suited to journal writing.

### **The Arts**

1. What to listen for in music
2. The movies vs. the stage (or vs. the novel)
3. My favorite novel (poem, play, etc.)
4. Photography as an art form
5. Decorating a room
6. Modern vs. traditional houses
7. Jazz—America’s music
8. How a poem communicates
9. The potter’s wheel
10. Art in advertising
11. At the ballet
12. Fashion in costume design
13. Staging a play
14. Book illustrations—good and bad
15. Should Italian opera be sung in English?
16. What an abstract painting is “about”
17. Planning a tape (or CD) collection
18. Color in the home or office
19. Trends in popular music
20. Should books be banned/censored?
21. The importance of the arts to humanity

### **Sports**

1. The good referee
2. When sportsmanship counts
3. Fancy diving
4. The cheerleader’s job
5. Is football a dangerous sport?
6. Coaches’ nightmares
7. Team sports vs. individual sports
8. The thrill of a race
9. On not making the team
10. Teamwork in basketball, baseball, etc.
11. Tennis—a young person’s game?
12. My favorite sports figure
13. Why practice?
14. Swimming safely
15. Should boxing be banned?
16. A well-equipped gym
17. Great sports stories
18. “Rolling with the punches”
19. Women’s athletic programs
20. Professional wrestling—sport or spectacle?
21. How statistics for a certain sport (baseball, tennis, etc.) are common

## Social Studies

1. Why a two-party system?
2. Neighborhood gangs
3. Causes of labor disputes
4. A workable disarmament plan
5. Flaws in the UN
6. A turning point in American history
7. How a bill becomes a law
8. Democracy vs. dictatorship in school policy-making
9. Cleaning up the slums
10. The meaning of (a topic in current affairs)
11. Telling America's story to the world
12. The case for (or against) universal military training
13. Changing our constitution
14. Installment buying—blessing or curse?
15. The cause and cure of inflation
16. The federal soil bank
17. Describe a worthwhile project in current affairs.
18. How to read an advertisement
19. What do you think is the worst problem facing the U.S.?
20. Helping the third-world nations
21. Should the minimum voting age be raised to 21?
22. Merit system vs. spoils system
23. The things all Americans share
24. The geography of my town
25. Two important government services
26. Obligations of the citizen
27. The political boss—hero or villain
28. Traffic in our cities
29. Causes of juvenile delinquency
30. Is a sales tax fair?
31. The effects of an aging America
32. The Bill of Rights today

## People

1. My grandfather/grandmother
2. Mr./Ms. Know-it-all
3. My favorite singer
4. Our doctor
5. The local law enforcement officer
6. A person I'll never forget
7. My kid brother/sister
8. "A laugh a minute"
9. "He/She runs the college."
10. "He/She may be a genius."
11. The politician
12. A teacher who has influenced me
13. My closest friend
14. The typical college student
15. The oldest person I know

## Social Life

1. Is chivalry dead?
2. Planning a party
3. Handling the “life of the party”
4. Social maturity and immaturity
5. Singles in a couples world
6. Meeting his/her family
7. An ideal recreation center
8. How to meet a compatible mate
9. Do’s and Don’ts in getting acquainted
10. The art of conversation

## Personal Affairs

1. On keeping a diary
2. A young/old person’s hopes and fears
3. How to be unpopular
4. My changing ideas on (clothes)
5. An ideal day
6. A significant childhood experience
7. Earning my own money
8. My biggest problem
9. I believe strongly in . . .
10. Finding and using my strong points
11. If I could pick my own name
12. The dangers of self-pity
13. My views of the older/younger generation
14. Where do I go from here?
15. Can I use my time more efficiently?
16. On being bored
17. My finest performance
18. One time I was glad to be sick
19. Why I would like to be a \_\_\_\_\_
20. “That doesn’t interest me anymore.”
21. Good reputations—and the other kind
22. Do I play politics?
23. My frenzied finances
24. The values I live by
25. List some favorite TV personalities and tell about each.
26. List your favorite TV shows and tell why you like them.
27. Tell a scary dream.
28. Tell a weird dream.
29. Tell a funny dream.
30. Tell about an experience you’ve had at an amusement park or fair.
31. When I am alone, I like to . . .
32. My worst fear is . . .
33. My favorite word is . . .
34. My favorite sound is . . .