

YWP Prompts for 2010-2011

Teachers and students are encouraged to participate in Young Writers Project by submitting best work done in class or outside of school, or by responding to weekly prompts. This year's prompts were gleaned from hundreds of ideas suggested by teachers and students. Post work by creating an account and creating a Newspaper entry on youngwritersproject.org. Deadlines are Friday evenings at midnight. Work is selected and published in your local newspaper within several weeks. Students are encouraged to send photos and scanned artwork as well. More info on youngwritersproject.org under CREATE>Images.

5 Mannerisms. Write about a funny or annoying mannerism you've observed in someone. Or, what are your own annoying mannerisms that you wish you could change? *Alternate: If I ran the world, I would . . .* Write a story or poem that finishes this sentence and tell us the first thing you'd do and why. Due Oct. 22.

6 Red. Write about the color red. *Alternate: Grateful.* Go beyond the cliché: Write about one thing for which you are grateful that no one knows about or no one expects. Due Oct. 29.

7 Hunting. Share your favorite hunting story or tell us how you feel about hunting. *Alternate: Facebook.* Imagine, for a moment, that Facebook was no more. It was done. You go to the site and it tells you it no longer exists. What would you do? How would you communicate with your friends? Due Nov. 5.

8 Winter Tale. Tell a story about winter; it can focus on the holidays or the season – the weather, the outdoors, and the emotions. A dozen selections will be given dramatic presentations by Vermont Stage Company in early December. *Alternate: General.* Send us your best work of any genre. Due Nov. 12.

9 Three. The number three. Use it in a story or poem. *Alternate: Golden Rule.* What does it mean to “do unto others?” Tell a story about how you've seen it applied locally or globally. What struggles have you had trying to live by it? Family stories, personal experiences. Due Nov. 19.

10 Heard in the halls. Take a snippet of conversation you hear in the hallway or in some public place. Create a story that finishes the sentence or the conversation. Make it up. *Alternate: Character.* Create a character. Describe her/him and show us what he/she likes most, hates most; what is he/she good at? Bad at? Who likes him/her? Who doesn't? What's annoying/engaging about the character? Tell a story about this character's secret. Due Dec. 3.

11 Grades. You are assessed, tested and graded throughout your school careers. Does it help? Does it get in your way? Do you wish more things were graded? Less? Why? *Alternate: Cheating.* How much cheating happens in your school? How do you feel about it? What have you done about it? Tell a story if you'd like, but no real names. Due Dec. 10.

12 Ancestry. Where are you from? Who in your family immigrated to the U.S.? Where from? How did they get here? Write a journal entry as if you were one of your ancestors; make it historically accurate, and give details – specifics that may have actually happened to you or your ancestor. Include a photo if you have one. *Alternate: Shopping.* If you could buy one thing, what would it be? Why? Due Dec. 17.

13 Closet. You open your closet door: What do you see? *Alternate: General.* Send us your best work in any genre. Due Jan. 14.

14 Alien discovery. An alien visits our planet. Write about what is most confusing to the alien about the way we live our lives. *Alternate: Mistakes.* Have you or someone you know ever made a terrible mistake? Write a story or poem about it. Can all mistakes be forgiven? No names please. Due Jan. 21.

15 Clothing. What do you wear? Why do you wear what you wear? Write about clothing, style, expression. *Alternate: Kyrielle.* Write a poem in Kyrielle format; rhyme scheme is a/b/a/B (refrain repeated in all stanzas). Due Jan. 28.

16 Time travel. Write a story about traveling to a different place or time. Your story can be real or made-up, but make it believable. *Alternate: Obsession.* What are you obsessed with? Due Feb. 4.

17 Fire. Imagine that your house has caught fire and everyone has escaped but you. You have time to grab ONE object; what would it be? Why? *Alternate: Community issue/Current event.* Choose an event, a situation, a trend – that pertains to something happening in your community, the state, the nation. Write about it. Tell us how it affects you, or could affect you. What would you like to do about it? Due Feb. 11.



18 Photo #2. Write about this picture. *Alternate: General.* Send us your best work in any genre. Due Feb. 25.

19 Discovery. Write about a moment when you discovered something new. You found something or you understood something or you came upon something or some place you had never seen before. *Alternate: Sad.* Write a poem or tell a story about your saddest moment. Due Mar. 4.

20 Friends. Write about a moment in which someone you know and care about proved they were a friend. What did they do? How did they support you or what you believe? *Alternate: Renewable energy.* Do people in your family or community think it's important to support the development of renewable energy in Vermont? What are they doing to promote it? If the people you know don't support the use of renewable energy, tell us why. Due Mar. 11.

21 Through the window.... Use these words in a story or poem. *Alternate: Favorite book.* What is your favorite book? Tell us why you like it. Or, pick a favorite author and write 250 words in that writer's style. Due Mar. 18.

22 Flight. Sometimes I feel like taking off and going to *Alternate: Advertising.* We are bombarded with ads in newspapers, on the radio, television, and on the internet. How does it affect you? How does it affect others? If you want, pick an advertisement that you find really annoying – or compelling – and write about it. Due Mar. 25.

23 Elder story. Get a picture of an elder in your family or your community. Write a story about that person and incorporate an anecdote. This must be a short piece – 150-300 words. Upload the photo with your story. (NOTE: The photo MUST be large file, high resolution, .jpg format.) We will publish the photo with the story if it is selected. *Alternate: General.* Due Apr. 1.

24 Vermont. What is it really like to live here? If you were to tell a story about living in Vermont to someone from Africa or Australia, what story would you tell to show that person what it was like. No odes to maple syrup or mountains or fall leaves. Tell the person a story that would show him/her what your life is like. *Alternate: Serendipity.* Tell a story about a weird coincidence that happened in your life or imagine one happening to you. Due Apr. 8.



25 Adventure. What was the best adventure you ever had? *Alternate: Photo prompt #3.* Write about this photo. Photo prompt #3. Due Apr. 22.

26 Tall tale. Make up the wildest excuse you can think of for not doing something. But as wild as it is, there has to be some thread that makes it believable – almost. *Alternate: Misunderstood.* Write about a time when you were completely and utterly misunderstood. Due Apr. 29.

27 Decision. Think about a moment when you made a decision that had big consequences, or create a character who makes a decision. It could be a big decision or a small one, a quick one or one you spent a long time thinking about. Write about what would have happened if you had chosen to do something different. How would that have affected others? *Alternate: My proudest moment . . .* Tell us about a moment when you felt proud about something you did or accomplished. Due May 6.

28 Rant. Write about something that bothers you. Show your emotions. Keep it civil and engaging. Convince the reader you are right. *Alternate: Walls.* Are you someone who puts up walls or takes them down? Tell a story about a time when you did this. Or, if you prefer, tell a story about a wall you got past. Due May 13.

29 Rewards. What rewards are worth working toward? *Alternate: General.* Due May 20.