



Winter Writing Prompts

Grades 6-8

There are many fun things to do and see in the winter. Whether you celebrate with outdoor activities such as sledding and skiing or by curling up indoors with a hot cup of cocoa, the snowiest season has something for everyone to enjoy! With these winter-themed writing prompts, adolescents can draw inspiration from their favorite winter activities and practice valuable writing skills at the same time.

Practicing responding to creative writing prompts can help students strengthen skills such as crafting a narrative, establishing a clear sequence of events, developing an argument, and more. Creative writing can also help young students develop stronger reading skills, especially when they are encouraged to read their written responses aloud.

This guide includes fall-themed creative fiction and nonfiction writing prompts for adolescents in Grades 6-8. These prompts would be appropriate for use in the home as well as for classroom use. The prompts were written to encourage responders to draw from various literacy skills included in the [Common Core ELA Writing Standards](#).

Reflection and Feedback—Suggestions for Caregivers and Educators

When administering these prompts, provide adolescents with ample time to respond thoroughly and carefully. After writing, there are a few different feedback methods that may be helpful.

Independent Reflection

- Encourage writers to go back over what they have written to check for spelling, grammar, or logical errors.
- Encourage writers to read their written responses aloud. Some may have an easier time hearing mistakes than seeing them on the page.

Peer Feedback

- If multiple adolescents are participating in this activity, encourage them to read one another's responses. Then, have them share what they liked about the other writers' responses, and any questions they have about them.



Caregiver/Educator Feedback

- Read over the responses. Check for the following elements:
 - Do their responses effectively address the question of the prompt?
 - Did they structure their narratives with a clear progression of events and/or ideas?
 - Did they successfully implement narrative techniques such as dialogue, descriptive language, and sensory details?
 - Do they back up any argumentative claims with logical supporting details?
 - Do their responses include clear and effective conclusions?
 - Did they demonstrate repeated or consistent mechanical errors, such as issues with spelling, sentence structure, or punctuation? If so, provide corrective feedback.
- Pick one or two areas of feedback to highlight for your writers and take time to discuss them together. You may be able to find additional resources on the web to provide practice opportunities in particular areas where improvement is needed. Be sure to also point out a few things that they are doing well in their writing

Lastly, celebrate the writing process! Encourage writers to share their responses with friends, family members, and other loved ones. Perhaps they could send a handwritten copy of their response to a grandparent or call up a cousin and read what they wrote over the phone. And if a writer seems passionate about a specific prompt or topic, encourage them to keep writing about it, either via more guided practice or as something to do in their free time!

Additional Resources

- For more information on writing prompts, read our: [Understanding and Responding to Writing Prompts Guide](#).
- For more information on the benefits of at-home writing practice, see our blog post titled "[Literacy Education at Home: Approaches for Practicing Reading and Writing](#)" by Laura Szech, M.A., and Dr. Deborah K. Reed.



Grades 6-8 Writing Prompts

The writing prompts that are listed below are also included on the pages that follow with fillable fields where children can write their responses via typing.

Fiction

Many different cultures have stories about the yeti, a large, white-furred, ape-like creature that lives in the mountains. Write a story about a group of explorers who find a yeti in the wild. Be sure to use lots of details. Also, use dialogue to show what the characters say to one another.

There are many ways to spend time outside in the winter. One popular activity is downhill skiing! Write a story about a character who has a wild skiing adventure. Tell what happens using details that show what the character sees, hears, feels, and smells.

Have you ever participated in a snowball fight? Write a story about a group of friends who have a fun fight in the snow and describe the action using lots of details. For a challenge, try to use as many different, creative verbs as you can.

Winter is a beautiful season, with shimmering icicles, colorful lights on trees and people's houses, and sheets of bright white snow. Write a poem that describes the beauty of the winter season. Your poem should be at least 15 lines long and should use at least one simile (a comparison using "like" or "as"), one metaphor (a comparison that does not use "like" or "as"), and one instance of alliteration (using two-or-more words in a row that all start with the same consonant sound).

Lots of people like to go ice fishing in the winter. Write a story about a character who goes ice fishing with their parents and catches something surprising. Be sure to use lots of details to describe what your characters see, hear, feel, and smell.

Nonfiction

February is Black History Month. To celebrate, take some time to research a famous African American person. For example, you might choose to write about track star Jesse Owens, activist Ella Baker, singer Nina Simone, or poet Maya Angelou. Write a three-paragraph essay explaining your person's story. Be sure to use lots of details. Also, organize your thoughts in a logical way.

There are many winter holidays that involve giving and receiving gifts. Write about a time when you gave someone a gift that they really loved. It can be something you purchased or something you made yourself. Explain what the gift was, how the person reacted, and how the experience made you feel. Be sure to use lots of descriptive language to tell the story.

There are many fun winter sports to participate in, including hockey, skiing, figure skating, and more. What is one winter sport you would love to try, and what do you think you would like about





Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

it? If you already play a winter sport, pick a different one you would like to try. Be sure to explain your answer using lots of details.

Whether you celebrate on New Year's Day, the Winter Solstice, the Lunar New Year, or another day entirely, there are many ways to celebrate the arrival of a new year. What kinds of things do you do to celebrate the new year? Describe any new year traditions you and your family may have. Explain your answer using lots of details.

There are many fun movies that celebrate the winter season. What is your favorite winter or holiday-themed movie? Write a movie review that is at least one paragraph long describing what you like about this movie and explaining why you think other kids should watch it. Be as detailed and persuasive as you can.



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Fiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Many different cultures have stories about the yeti, a large, white-furred, ape-like creature that lives in the mountains. Write a story about a group of explorers who find a yeti in the wild. Be sure to use lots of details. Also, use dialogue to show what the characters say to one another.



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Fiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

There are many ways to spend time outside in the winter. One popular activity is downhill skiing! Write a story about a character who has a wild skiing adventure. Tell what happens using details that show what the character sees, hears, feels, and smells.



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Fiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Have you ever participated in a snowball fight? Write a story about a group of friends who have a fun fight in the snow and describe the action using lots of details. For a challenge, try to use as many different, creative verbs as you can.



IOWA
READING
RESEARCH
CENTER

Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Fiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Winter is a beautiful season, with shimmering icicles, colorful lights on trees and people's houses, and sheets of bright white snow. Write a poem that describes the beauty of the winter season. Your poem should be at least 15 lines long and should use at least one simile (a comparison using "like" or "as"), one metaphor (a comparison that does not use "like" or "as"), and one instance of alliteration (using two-or-more words in a row that all start with the same consonant sound).





Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Fiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Lots of people like to go ice fishing in the winter. Write a story about a character who goes ice fishing with their parents and catches something surprising. Be sure to use lots of details to describe what your characters see, hear, feel, and smell.



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Nonfiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

February is Black History Month. To celebrate, take some time to research a famous African American person. For example, you might choose to write about track star Jesse Owens, activist Ella Baker, singer Nina Simone, or poet Maya Angelou. Write a three-paragraph essay explaining your person's story. Be sure to use lots of details. Also, organize your thoughts in a logical way.



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Nonfiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

There are many winter holidays that involve giving and receiving gifts. Write about a time when you gave someone a gift that they really loved. It can be something you purchased or something you made yourself. Explain what the gift was, how the person reacted, and how the experience made you feel? Be sure to use lots of descriptive language to tell the story.





Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Nonfiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

There are many fun winter sports to participate in, including hockey, skiing, figure skating, and more. What is one winter sport you would love to try, and what do you think you would like about it? If you already play a winter sport, pick a different one you would like to try. Be sure to explain your answer using lots of details.



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Nonfiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Whether you celebrate on New Year's Day, the Winter Solstice, the Lunar New Year, or another day entirely, there are many ways to celebrate the arrival of a new year. What kinds of things do you do to celebrate the new year? Describe any new year traditions you and your family may have. Explain your answer using lots of details.



IOWA
READING
RESEARCH
CENTER

Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

Grades: 6-8

Category: Nonfiction

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

There are many fun movies that celebrate the winter season. What is your favorite winter or holiday-themed movie? Write a movie review that is at least one paragraph long describing what you like about this movie and explaining why you think other kids should watch it. Be as detailed and persuasive as you can.

