



**Upper Elementary School
Informative/Expository
Prompt Catalog**

Upper Elementary School Informative/Expository Prompt Catalog

Below each prompt title is the number of sources. Zeros denote prompts that are not research or source dependent. Zeros also indicate when the number of sources is unknown or unspecified (i.e., recommends but does not require sources, or requires research by the student (and/or teacher)).

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The Editor's Note provides an overview of the content for this catalog and brief descriptions of the index and appendices included herein.

Editor's Note

Statement of Purpose and Alignment

This catalog provides a list of all of the Informative/Expository prompts that are currently active in MY Access!® and available for use at the Upper Elementary School level. Each prompt aligns to Common Core and State educational standards and assessment practices expected of Upper Elementary School students for the Informative/Expository writing genres. All prompts also align to the educational standards outlined in our rubrics and writing genres, which in turn align to the National and State education standards. Each genre was re-evaluated and updated in accordance with current academic standards and practices to better serve teachers and students. As a result of this and the MY Access!® redesign, several prompts previously found in other genres have been moved to account for these shifts in educational standards and to provide a more accurate representation of the prompts in the system. Please refer to the list of migrated prompts available in the MY Access!® Resource and Training Center to locate prompts that recently moved to other genres, or contact our staff for further assistance in locating specific prompts in the system.

Catalog Overview

The catalog provides an overview of each prompt in the system. Each catalog entry provides the title of the prompt and the text of the prompt task. The catalog entry only includes the prompt task and basic data related to the prompt. Sources and our in-house specific genre-based prompt instructions are not included. These are accessible in the system for each prompt. However, wherever possible and if applicable, a list of source titles, authors, and data are provided for each prompt entry.

Lexile level data provides a basic reference for the textual complexity levels found in particular sources. This data features in each prompt entry as both a range (from lowest to highest level, or approximate level, for a prompt's sources) and a specific value (if known or available). Only text-based sources include a Lexile level. Any multimedia source, such as a video, audio clip, map, or chart, will feature a Lexile reading of 'N/A' in the system for 'not applicable.' Teachers are encouraged to perform their own assessment of any Lexile levels provided for sources and to assess each prompt to ensure the content is appropriate for your students. All genres include prompts with and without sources. The quantity and complexity of sources varies according to education standards in each grade band.

A Note about Sources

The catalog lists details about the sources for a particular prompt when known. Sources are considered unknown when a prompt only recommends rather than requires particular sources, or requires students (and/or teachers) to research and provide their own sources. In these cases, a prompt will list a zero as the number of sources. However, this does not necessarily mean the prompt does not include, require, or recommend sources. It merely means the actual source number is unknown or specific sources are not provided. Sometimes a zero source number does simply mean the prompt does not require, need, or provide sources. Some prompts specify a required number of sources to use, while others do not. Each prompt entry in the catalog records the number of sources (if known), Lexile levels (if applicable and/or known), source titles and authors, and notes pertaining to the types of sources used in the prompt. Each Table of Contents entry includes the title of a prompt, whether it is IntelliMetric™ or Pilot, and the number of sources. Source notes provide explanation as to why certain sources were not included directly in the prompt, most often due to copyright regulations and/or length of the source. Other source notes specify if a prompt is source-based, quotation-based, or research-based. Quotations, even if integrated into the prompt task as a stepping off point, are included in the catalog as a source.

Index and Appendices

New features in the catalogs include the Index and Appendices section found at the end of each catalog. The purpose of these sections is to provide a list of prompt titles at a glance that are specifically source-based, quotation-based, and research-based, as well as a list of titles for prompts that do not require sources or evidence-based research. New features are planned for subsequent publications of the catalogs to make viewing and accessing prompts easier for teachers.

IntelliMetric™ Prompts

A Clumsy Mistake

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Everyone has made a clumsy mistake in the past such as falling down at the worst possible time or spilling something on a favorite shirt. Have you ever made a clumsy mistake? How did everyone around you react? Were people involved embarrassed, or did everyone have a good laugh?

In a detailed essay, write about a time when you did something clumsy.

A Day at Home

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Imagine that a major storm is in your area, and all school and work is canceled for the day. You and your family now have a chance to spend the day together at home. What are some fun activities you would do to make this day special?

In a well-developed essay, describe the activities that you would do with your family on a day that you have off from school and work because of a major storm. Include examples and details to support your description.

A New Student

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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There is a new fifth grade student at your school who grew up in another country. What should this student do to be successful in fifth grade?

Explain what this student should do and how this student should act in order to be successful in fifth grade.

A Person You Admire

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Think of a person whom you look up to and admire. What do you admire about this person? How has this person had an influence on you?

Explain why you chose this person, what qualities you admire in this person, and explain how this person has influenced you.

“A Remarkable Explorer”

Prompt Source(s): 1 **Source Lexile Range:** 1000L-1200L

Source One: “A Remarkable Explorer” By Vantage Learning
Source Lexile Level: 1200L

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Carefully read “A Remarkable Explorer.” Then write a multi-paragraph essay in which you summarize the article. Be sure to use specific details and examples from the article to support your response.

An Empty Room

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

There is an empty room in your school that is not currently being used. There are many ways that this room could be used.

What do you think would be the best way to use this room? Explain to your principal how you would recommend using this room and how you feel it would benefit the students. Be sure to use specific details in describing the room and how it would be used.

Ancient Civilizations

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Think about an ancient civilization you have studied. What was life like? How was it similar to life today? How was it different?

Write an essay in which you describe the civilization you chose and compare it to life today.

Asteroid Selections

Prompt Source(s): 2 **Source Lexile Range:** 800L-900L

Source One: “Asteroid Away!” By Vantage Learning
Source Lexile Level: 800L-900L

Source Two: “Hitching a Ride” By Vantage Learning
Source Lexile Level: 800L-900L

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Carefully read the selected article “Asteroid Away!” and the short story “Hitching a Ride.” Write a multi-paragraph essay in which you explain how the information in “Asteroid Away!” would be helpful to Renata from “Hitching a Ride.” What steps could Renata take to change the path of the asteroid? Be sure to include details from both sources to support your answer.

Being a Responsible Student

Prompt Source(s): 1 quot. **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Source One: Quotation By Barack Obama
Source Lexile Level: N/A

Prompt includes quotation-based source(s).

While speaking to a group of our nation's students in 2009, President Barack Obama said the following:

“But at the end of the day, we can have the most dedicated teachers, the most supportive parents, and the best schools in the world-and none of it will matter unless all of you fulfill your responsibilities.”

As a student, how can you fulfill the responsibilities President Obama discusses? For example, can you complete your homework, be respectful to your classmates, or help your teacher(s) with tasks in the classroom?

Write a detailed, multi-paragraph letter to the president describing how you are a responsible student or what you plan to do to become a more responsible student. Be as descriptive and detailed as possible.

Benefits of Daily Exercising for Young Children

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Recent studies indicate that children today are not as physically fit as children were 30 years ago. Research the benefits of daily exercising for young children. Write a multi-paragraph essay discussing the benefits of daily exercise. Be sure to include details from your research to support your discussion.

Compare and Contrast a Product

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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A comparison and contrast essay is one in which the writer identifies the similarities and differences between two people, places, things, or ideas in order to inform, persuade, or express an opinion. Select two different brands of a product that you use or enjoy (e.g., two different magazines, brands of potato chips, types of candy, etc.). Think about how these products are the same yet different.

In a multi-paragraph essay, compare and contrast the two brands of the product you selected. Include facts and details to support your discussion.

Create an Animal

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Create a new animal that could live in one of the regions of your state. Your animal must have physical and behavioral characteristics that will allow it to survive in the region's environment.

In a multi-paragraph essay, describe a new animal and the characteristics that allow it to survive in one of your state's regions. Include details that will enable the reader to picture and understand your animal.

Creating a New Candy Bar

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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The Hershey Company was founded on February 9, 1894. Since that date, they have created many types of candy bars. If the president of The Hershey Company asked you to create a new Hershey's candy bar, what would it be? What ingredients would you put into it? How would you package it and name it?

In a well-developed essay, describe the new candy bar that you would create for The Hershey Company. Include details to support your description.

Dressing for Halloween

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Imagine that you are hosting a large Halloween party and have invited all of your friends to the party. What costume would you choose to wear, and what would you like to see

In the story *The Velveteen Rabbit*, written by Margery Williams and illustrated by William Nicholson, the Skin Horse says to the Velveteen Rabbit,

“When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but really loves you, then you become real.”

Write about the one toy you have had at any time in your life that you have loved the most.

Greek Mythological Figure for a Day

Prompt Source(s): 0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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A unit on Greek Mythology would include various Greek mythological figures, such as Zeus, Aphrodite, Apollo, Athena, Hades, and Cronus. Think about the unique characteristics of the Greek mythological figures, such as their personalities, their symbols, and what they represent. Do any of them remind you of yourself? If you could be any Greek mythological figure for a day, which one would you choose and why?

In a detailed essay, explain why you chose this particular Greek mythological figure, including what you like about him or her.

Handling a Bully

Prompt Source(s): 0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Almost everyone has had to deal with a situation involving a bully. School districts, teachers, and parents have become more aware of the amount of bullying that occurs and the effect it has on students. What are different ways that a bullying situation can be handled? When do parents and teachers need to get involved?

In a well-developed essay, discuss different ways that bullying situations at school can be handled. Include facts, details, and examples to support your discussion.

Harvest Time

Prompt Source(s): 2	Source Lexile Range: 800L-900L	
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Source One: “**Harvesting Plants: Ripe**” By the *Discovery Education* staff, provided courtesy of Discovery Education, Inc.

Source Lexile Level: N/A

Source Two: “**Grandpa's Garden**” By Vantage Learning

Source Lexile Level: 880L

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Watch the *Discovery Education* video “Harvesting Plants: Ripe” and read the selection “Grandpa’s Garden” to learn about gardening and harvesting fruits and vegetables.

After reading the selection and viewing the video, write a multi-paragraph essay explaining what you have learned about choosing and preparing fresh fruits and vegetables. Be sure to use details from the video and the selection to support your explanation.

How Can You Help Our World?

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Each and every person is responsible for looking after our world. Think about how you could help protect our environment, such as the air, water, plant life, or wildlife.

Write a multi-paragraph essay describing how you could take better care of our world. Make sure to use specific examples and details to support your response.

Ideal Field Trips

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Field trips can help students learn more about the things they learn in class. If you could choose a field trip for you and your class, where would you go? Describe the field trip you would plan for your class. Explain what things you would do, and what you might learn on the field trip.

Invent a Holiday

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Each year, the average American celebrates more than fifteen different holidays. Imagine that you have been asked to help create a special holiday just for your town. What would your new holiday include and why would the town want to celebrate it?

Write a multi-paragraph essay describing your new holiday and why the town should adopt it. Be sure to include specific details to help support your idea.

“The Patient Peregrine”

Prompt Source(s): 1 **Source Lexile Range:** 700L-800L

Source One: “The Patient Peregrine” By Vantage Learning
Source Lexile Level: 790L

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Carefully read “The Patient Peregrine.” Then, write a summary of the article. Be sure to use significant details from the article in your response.

Toy You Love

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Think about a favorite toy you have now or had when you were younger. Describe the toy and tell why it is your favorite.

What Do You Value?

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Some people say that the most valuable things in life aren't material things like money, jewels, or cars, but rather emotions like friendship, love, and happiness.

Do you agree with this statement? Write an essay that convinces your classmates which kinds of things are more valuable and why. Be sure to give specific reasons and examples.

What I Like Best About School...

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

What do you like best about school? Write an essay in which you discuss your favorite thing about school. Be sure to give specific examples and details.

and the last one is in the country. Make a decision about the best way to use each piece of land, and give reasons why you chose to use the land that way.

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Biography of an Early Explorer

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Research the life of an early explorer. Find out when the explorer was born, how long they lived, and what contributions they made to our history.

Write a multi-paragraph biography on an early explorer. Be sure to include plenty of details in your essay so readers can learn about the life of the explorer you choose.

“Block City” and Childhood Pastimes

Prompt Source(s):	1	Source Lexile Range:	NP
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Source One: “Block City” By Robert Louis Stevenson
Source Lexile Level: NP

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

In “Block City” the poet Robert Louis Stevenson describes how the speaker uses his or her imagination to play a favorite game. We all have fond memories of a game or pastime we enjoyed as children. Write a composition about your favorite childhood activity.

Bus Created for Kids

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Imagine you are going on a field trip in a bus created especially for kids. Describe this bus and explain why kids will like it.

Business Letter about a Tickets Problem

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Early European Settlers' Effect on the Americas

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

In the late 1400s, Europeans started settling what would later become North and South America. This began the movement of people, plants, animals, and diseases across the Atlantic Ocean. The movement brought about many changes for the native people and their land—some for the worst and some for the better.

In a multi-paragraph essay, discuss how the arrival of the Europeans in the 1400s had an effect on the natives of the Americas. Include facts and details to support your discussion.

Earning Money in Where the *Red Fern Grows*

Prompt Source(s): 1

Source Lexile Range: 700L-800L

Source One: *Where the Red Fern Grows* By Wilson Rawls
Source Lexile Level: 700L

Source(s) not provided due to copyright law and/or length of source(s).
Teachers should provide access to the specified source(s).

In *Where the Red Fern Grows*, Billy works several jobs to earn enough money to buy his beloved hounds, Old Dan and Little Ann. What would you do to earn money to buy something you wanted? Where would you be willing to work?

In a well-developed essay, discuss what you would do to earn money to buy something special. Include facts and details to support your discussion.

Earth Detectives: Exploring Rocks

Prompt Source(s): 2

Source Lexile Range: 900L-1000L

Source One: “Be a Rock Detective!” By Hank Green and the *SciShow Kids* staff, provided courtesy of *YouTube* and *SciShow Kids*
Source Lexile Level: 900L-1000L

Source Two: Excerpt from “Earth Science: Rocks and the Rock Cycle” By Ken Nelson of Ducksters.com, provided courtesy of Ducksters: Educational Site and Technological Solutions, Inc. (TSI)
Source Lexile Level: 900L-1000L

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

You are asked to write an informational article about Earth's rock cycle and present it to your class and teacher at the upcoming Science Fair. Your teacher has given you **two** sources to use in your research. In your article, describe the three main types of rocks found on Earth and how they form. Then, explain the rock cycle.

Review **both** sources and use the most important facts and details to develop your main idea. Write a multi-paragraph informational article about Earth's rock types and rock cycle. Clearly organize your article and explain your ideas. Reference the source title or number when quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing evidence from the sources.

Effects of Weather and Natural Disasters

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Dangerous weather events or natural disasters like hurricanes, tornados, and landslides can do major damage to our homes and can drastically alter the environment and our lives.

After researching a severe weather event or a natural disaster, write a multi-paragraph essay about the conditions that caused it and the effect it had on people and the environment. Include facts and details that allow the reader to fully understand the weather or disaster and its consequences.

Every Day Uses for Math

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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We often think about math as a subject that is used in school, but we actually use math every day outside of school. From the minute we wake in the morning, we use math and numbers for common activities including chores, games, and our daily routine.

In a detailed essay, describe some of the ways that you use math in your daily life.

Exciting Event That Makes Time “Fly”

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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There is a saying that time goes by quickly when you are having fun. Write about an exciting event in which the time seemed to go by faster than usual.

Most of us have a favorite place to vacation or visit. Before you write, think about the one place that is your favorite. In a detailed essay, explain why that place is your favorite to vacation or visit, using reasons and evidence from your own knowledge and experience to support your explanation.

Favorite Type of Entertainment

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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There are many different kinds of entertainment, such as music, games, books, or movies. Explain your favorite type of entertainment and why you like it.

Food in Our Lives

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Family, friends, teachers, and coaches often talk to us about nutrition and healthy eating habits. Today, there is also much concern about youth obesity. This concern is causing changes in school cafeteria offerings in some school districts. How do you make sure you are getting the nutrients that you need to grow and stay healthy? Have you ever made different food choices to keep a healthy diet? How do you know which foods are better for you?

In a well-developed essay, discuss the importance of eating healthy food and your own food choices. Include facts, details, and examples to support your discussion.

Friendship Song Analysis

Prompt Source(s):	1	Source Lexile Range:	NP
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Source One: “Make New Friends (But Keep the Old)” Performed by Two of a Kind
Source Lexile Level: NP

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Friendship is a very important part of growing up, and as children, we are always making new friends. After listening to the traditional song “Make New Friends” and reading the lyrics of the song, think about what the song means and how it relates to your life.

In a detailed essay, explain what you think the song means about friendship, and include relevant information about some of your new and old friends and why they are your friends.

Galactic Pen Pal

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Imagine that you have been chosen to participate in a letter-writing program with a student from another planet. Your new pen pal's life is very different from your life as a human, and she or he is very curious about your planet Earth.

Write a letter to your new galactic pen pal in which you describe your life on Earth. What are the people, animals, and plants like? What makes life on Earth special? Be sure to use specific details and examples to make your letter interesting to the readers.

Garden Secrets: Garden Growth and Care

Prompt Source(s): 3 Source Lexile Range: 1000L-1100L

Source One: Excerpt from “Gardening 101: How Much Time Will It Take?” By W. Atlee Burpee & Co., provided courtesy of *Burpee.com*

Source Lexile Level: 1000L-1100L

Source Two: Excerpt from “Planting Your School Garden: Planting Seeds Inside to Transplant Outdoors” By Alicia Dickerson of *Life Lab* and Debbie Delatour

Source Lexile Level: 1000L-1100L

Source Three: “Veggies: Kids in the Garden (Learn 360)” By Colin Grubb for Film Ideas: Education Through Visualization

Source Lexile Level: N/A

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

For a class gardening project, you are asked to plant, grow, and harvest fruits and vegetables. The produce grown will be donated to your local food pantry. Before gardening, your teacher asked you to write an informational article about planting, growing, and harvesting fruits and vegetables that you will present to your class before beginning your gardening project. You found **three** sources for your research. In your article, explain what you have learned about planting, growing, and harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables.

Review each of the **three** sources and use the most important facts and details to develop a main idea about gardening. Then, write a multi-paragraph informational

article about planting, growing, and harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables. Clearly organize your article and explain your ideas. Reference the source title or number when quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing evidence from the sources.

Healthy Lifestyles: Benefits of Exercise and Healthy Eating

Prompt Source(s): 3 Source Lexile Range: 600L-900L

Source One: Excerpt from “MyPlate Food Guide” By the *KidsHealth.org* staff
Source Lexile Level: 600L-900L

Source Two: “Kids' Exercise: How Physical Activity and Exercise Benefit Your Body” By the *WebMD.com* staff
Source Lexile Level: 600L-900L

Source Three: Excerpt from “Be a Fit Kid” By the *KidsHealth.org* staff
Source Lexile Level: 600L-900L

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Your class recently studied ways to encourage and develop healthy habits and practices. You are asked to write an informational article about the benefits of exercise and healthy eating to present to your class during the upcoming Science Fair. You found **three** sources to help you complete your research.

Review each of the **three** sources and use the most important facts and details to develop a main idea about the benefits of daily exercise and healthy eating habits. Then, write a multi-paragraph informational article about the benefits of daily exercise and healthy eating. Clearly organize your article and explain your ideas. Reference the source title or number when quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing evidence from the sources.

Helping Others

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

People often help one another. Write to explain how you or someone you know helps others.

“Here Kitty, Kitty...”

Prompt Source(s): 1 Source Lexile Range: 800L-900L

Source One: “Here Kitty, Kitty....” By Vantage Learning

Source Lexile Level: 860L

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Carefully read the article “Here Kitty, Kitty....” Then write a multi-paragraph essay in which you summarize the article. Be sure to use specific details and examples from the article to support your response.

How Do You Spend Your Summer Vacation?

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Everybody looks forward to the end of the school year and the beginning of summer vacation. However, everyone spends his/her summer differently. Some go to camp or travel with their families, while others just relax at home or spend time with friends. How do you usually spend your summer?

In a detailed essay, describe what you typically do on your summer vacation. Be sure to include details to support your description.

How a Video Can Help

Prompt Source(s): 1 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Source One: *Bridging the Gap video series*
Source Lexile Level: N/A

Source(s) not provided due to copyright law and/or length of source(s).
Teachers should provide access to the specified source(s).

Videos like those in the *Bridging the Gap* series give students ideas on how to handle real-life situations that might be difficult. Some examples are how you can handle disagreements or control your anger. What situation was discussed in the video you viewed? What new information did you learn that you can use in the future?

In a well-developed essay, discuss the situation that the video presented and how information from the video will help you a handle a similar situation in the future. Include facts and details to support your discussion.

How to Cook an Item of Your Choice

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Imagine a student from a different country is visiting you, and she loves American food. She would like to learn to cook an American dish and has asked you to write directions for cooking your favorite typical American dish (e.g., macaroni and cheese, pizza, hot dogs, chef salad, etc.).

Write directions for cooking your favorite American dish in a multi-paragraph essay. Be sure to include all ingredients and step-by-step instructions for cooking the dish.

Human Effect on the Environment

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Some human activities like farming, recreation, large land development, oil drilling, and mining can have positive and negative effects on the environment. All of these activities are taking place in the United States every day. What effect can human activity have on the physical environment of the United States?

In a multi-paragraph essay, discuss the effect that human activity can have on the physical environment of the United States. Be sure to include facts, details, and examples to support your discussion.

If I Had Magical Powers

Prompt Source(s):	2	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Source One: *Bewitched (TV Series 1964-1972)*

Source Lexile Level: N/A

Source Two: *Bewitched Film (2005)*

Source Lexile Level: N/A

Source(s) not provided due to copyright law and/or length of source(s).
Teachers should provide access to the specified source(s).

Bewitched was a popular television show in the mid-1960s to early 1970s that was made into a 2005 major motion picture starring Will Ferrell and Nicole Kidman. On the show, the main character, Samantha, lives a normal, everyday life, but in reality, she is really a witch with magical powers. What if you had magical powers like Samantha? What type of magical power, like flying, casting spells, being invisible, or reading people's minds, would you choose? How would your life be different with this special ability?

In a well-developed essay, describe the magical power you would choose to have and how you would use this power in your everyday life.

Importance of the Bison to Great Plains Indians

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

The bison (or buffalo) was important to the Great Plains Indians in many ways. Indians followed bison through their seasonal migrations, performed rituals when hunting and killing them, and used the entire animal for food, clothing, shelter, and weapons.

In a thorough essay, discuss the importance of the bison to the Great Plains Indians. Include facts, details, and examples to support your discussion.

Important Object

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

Think of an object that is important to you. Write to describe this object and explain why it is important.

Interpretation of a Photograph

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

You just saw a photograph of a woman walking through a puddle of mud. Her clothes are wet from the rain, the sky is gray, and she is smiling and laughing. Can you explain what caused her to laugh and smile?

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Invent the 51st State

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

A description of a state would include information on its geography, history, natural resources, and population. If you invented a 51st state, what natural resources would be important for its economy? Where would most of its population be centered? Would it have mountains, plains, or deserts?

In a well-developed essay, describe a 51st state. Include facts and details to support your description.

Inventing New Words in *Frindle*

Prompt Source(s): 1

Source Lexile Range: 300L-400L

Source One: *Frindle* By Andrew Clements
Source Lexile Level: 380L

Source(s) not provided due to copyright law and/or length of source(s).
Teachers should provide access to the specified source(s).

In the book *Frindle*, by Andrew Clements, fifth-grader Nick Allen learns an interesting lesson about words and where they come from. He comes up with the wild idea of inventing his own word for a writing device, and he succeeds in getting his class to call a pen a “frindle.” If you could make up a word, what would it be? Would you choose to rename something? How would you get others to use your new word?

In a well-developed essay, make up a new word, explain why you think this is a good word, and write about how you would get others to start using it. Use facts and examples to support your discussion.

Learning About an Animal and its Habitat

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

Animals adapt to their habitats in order to survive in the wild. Their bodies and behaviors change as their environment changes, whether they are predator or prey. Select an animal and research its physical appearance, adaptations to its habitat, and its role in the ecosystem.

In a multi-paragraph essay, describe the animal you have researched. Include details on its appearance, adaptations, habitat, and its role as predator or prey to support your description.

Learning About State Capitals

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

In each U.S. state, there is a city that serves as the center of government and law-making called the state capital. Each capital has its own unique story. Why was it chosen to be the capital? Was its location in the state important? What are highlights of its history?

In a well-developed essay, write about the history and government activities of a state capital. Include facts and details to support your description.

Learning from a *Magic School Bus* Video

Prompt Source(s): 1 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Source One: *The Magic School Bus* Video Series
Source Lexile Level: N/A

Source(s) not provided due to copyright law and/or length of source(s).
Teachers should provide access to the specified source(s).

The Magic School Bus video series takes you on exciting adventures while discovering scientific concepts with Ms. Frizzle and her class. What concepts are presented in the video you viewed? How does the class come to realize the scientific principles during their adventure with Ms. Frizzle? What did you learn most after watching this video?

In a well-developed essay, summarize the scientific principles presented and what you learned most after viewing this video.

Life Without One of the Five Senses

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

As humans, we enjoy the five senses of taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing. If you were told that you had to lose one of these five senses, which would you choose? In a well-developed essay, describe which sense you would choose to lose and what life would be like without that sense. Include examples to support your explanation.

Life Without Reading

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Write about what your life would be like as an adult if you had never learned to read.

Make a Wish that Helps Others

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

If you could make one wish that would help others, what would you wish for and why? Write to explain what wish you would make and how it would help others. Be sure to include details.

Making a New Friend

Prompt Source(s): 1 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Source One: "The New Boy in Town"
Source Lexile Level: N/A

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

Read this paragraph from a story titled "The New Boy in Town."

David was shocked by his new friend Carl's suggestion. Try out for the play? David had always enjoyed singing and acting - but only in the privacy of his room. Unlike David, Carl sang on the bus, in the cafeteria line, and almost everywhere else he had an audience. David, on the other hand, didn't like to be the center of attention. He preferred to blend in with the crowd. According to Carl, however, David didn't have to try out for one of the lead roles in the play. More importantly, David knew that Carl would continue to bother him about trying out until he agreed. Carl thought being in the play would help David meet more people and make new friends. David just hoped he wouldn't embarrass himself by forgetting his lines or tripping on the steps leading up to the stage. That was not the way he wanted the kids at his new school to get to know him.

Imagine David goes to your school. Think about David's problem. Write about what you would tell David he should do.

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Medicine for Healing

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

The field of medicine is always changing as doctors and scientists learn more about the human body and how to heal illnesses. If you could create a medicine that would heal an illness, what illness would you wish to heal?

Write an essay in which you describe the medicine you would create to heal the illness you have chosen.

Moving to a Different Country

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: AD650L

Source One: *Grandfather's Journey* By Allen Say
Source Lexile Level: AD650L

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Source(s) not provided due to copyright law and/or length of source(s).
Teachers should provide access to the specified source(s).

Grandfather's Journey tells the story of a man who was born in Japan and travels to the United States to live. He finds that he likes living in both Japan and California. Soon he goes back to live in Japan, marries, and then he and his wife move to California. When his daughter is nearly grown, he and his family move back to Japan. Eventually, the man's grandson relives the journeys that his grandfather took between the two countries. If you could move out of the United States, what country would you choose to live in? Why would you choose that country?

In a well-developed essay, choose a different country in which you would like to live, and discuss the reasons for your choice. Use facts and details for support.

Museum Exhibits

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Visiting a museum is an excellent choice for a field trip. Museums can be educational and fun. Exhibits in museums can range from learning about Cleopatra's reign over Egypt to viewing Picasso's paintings. Imagine your class is taking a field trip to a museum. What particular exhibit would you like to see?

In a detailed essay, describe the features of the exhibit you would like to see, and discuss exactly what your class will be viewing and learning about. Be sure to include facts and examples for support.

My Special Talent

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

We all have our own special talent, something we do especially well. Write an essay which describes what it is that you do best. Be sure to give specific examples and details.

Observations on a Sealed Box

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Your teacher hands you a closed, sealed box and asks you to describe its contents without looking inside it.

In a well-developed essay, describe how you would use your senses to make observations on what is in the box. How would you then use your observations to identify the contents?

Opening New Worlds

Prompt Source(s): 1 **Source Lexile Range:** 400L-500L

Source One: *Tomás and the Library Lady* By Pat Mora
Source Lexile Level: 440L

Source(s) not provided due to copyright law and/or length of source(s).
Teachers should provide access to the specified source(s).

In *Tomás and the Library Lady*, Tomás finds new worlds to explore in the library. This story is based on the life of Tomás Rivera, the son of a migrant worker who became the first minority chancellor in the University of California educational system. How could exploring in a library change your life? How could it help you succeed in the future?

In a well-developed essay, write about what you would like to explore in a library and how it might change your future. Include details and examples for support.

Physical Education Teacher for a Day

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

At the silent auction, you won an opportunity to be the P.E. teacher for a day. What skills would be in your lesson for the day? Why would you include those skills? Also, explain how you would teach these skills to a third-grade class.

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Pictures Taken at School

Prompt Source(s): 0 **Source Lexile Range:** N/A

Your teacher gives you a camera and asks you to take pictures of three things you like at school.

Explain what you take pictures of and why you like these things.

Regions of the United States

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

The United States is often sectioned into several regions such as, the Northeast, the Southeast, the Midwest, the Southwest, and the Northwest. The states in these regions share many characteristics, and each region differs from the others in distinct ways. If you could choose a region to live in, which would it be? Why would you select that region?

In a well-developed essay, describe the region in which you would choose to live. Include facts and examples to support your choice.

Resolution to Keep the Planet Clean

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

Read these paragraphs from a story titled “My New Year's Resolution.”

On the last day of school before winter break, Amy's teacher, Mr. Case, made an announcement.

“Class,” he began, “soon it will be the New Year. I'd like each and every one of you to set a new goal for yourself for the coming year. Focus on something you would like to improve. When you have it figured out, write your new goal on a piece of paper and sign your name at the bottom as a pledge to try your hardest to achieve your new goal. This new pledge will be called your New Year's resolution. Keep this paper in your pocket as a reminder of what you have set out to accomplish.”

Amy knew right away what her New Year's resolution would be. She would work harder to help keep the planet clean.

Imagine Amy has come to you asking for your help. She wants to know what she can do to help keep the planet clean. Write about the advice you would give her about how to help keep the planet clean.

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Ruby Bridges in Rockwell's *The Problem We All Live With*

Prompt Source(s): 1

Source Lexile Range: N/A

Source One: *The Problem We All Live With* By Norman Rockwell

Source Lexile Level: N/A

The shapes of different things are often very important for the use of those things. For example, wheels are round because circles roll smoothly.

In a well-developed essay, discuss the relationship between an object, its shape, and its use. Include reasons why the shape is important for its use.

Show Something Special to Your Class

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Imagine one of your teachers asks you to bring something special to show the class. Write to describe the item and explain why you would like to show it.

Someone or Something Special to You

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Think of someone or something that is special to you. Write to explain what is special to you and why.

Something You Would Change About Your School

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Think about something you would like to change about your school. Write to explain what you would change and why.

Something You Would Like to Learn

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Everyone has something that they would like to learn to do. Think about what you would like to learn to do. Now write to explain what you would like to learn to do.

Speech on a Hobby or Event

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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There may be occasions in the future when you are called upon to give a speech. Some might be informal, like a toast to a friend at a wedding or celebration; others might be formal and need preparation and practice, like a business presentation. To become familiar with speech writing, imagine you have been invited to give an informative speech on a familiar hobby or event. Your audience will be a group of middle school students.

Write an informative multi-paragraph speech about a familiar hobby or event to be given to a group of middle school students. Include facts and details that will engage your audience.

State Tourist Brochure

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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Every state has its own unique character, history, and sites. Write an article for a brochure on your home state which will be given out at the state tourist information center. This article should describe your state's geography, history, sites of interest, etc. Be sure to include specific details and examples in your article.

Summarize a Current Event

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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In a well-developed essay, write a summary of a current event. Include facts and details about the event in your summary.

Summer Vacation Experiences

Prompt Source(s):	0	Source Lexile Range:	N/A
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One of the most common questions friends ask each other after returning to school from summer break is, "What did you do over the summer?" Think about the things you did to keep busy during the summer.

In a detailed response, highlight some of the things you did this past summer. Use descriptive details to bring your summer experiences to life for the reader.

Think about a time when you were brave. Perhaps you had to speak in front of the class, do something that was difficult, or ride a fast roller coaster. Write about what happened. Be specific and include details.

Time You Worked Hard for Something

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Write about a time you worked hard for something. For example, you may have worked hard to win a game, make money for something, or earn a reward in class. Tell what you did and how you felt.

Tour through the Earth's Layers

Prompt Source(s): 0 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Imagine you are a professional tour guide leading a group of school children on a field trip from the Earth's surface to its inner core. In order to prepare for your "Inner Earth Tour," it will be important to research information about the Earth's layers.

After researching the Earth's layers, write a multi-paragraph speech to use during the "Inner Earth Tour" which describes each of these layers as you pass through it. Be sure to use specific details and examples from your research to hold the students' interest during the trip.

Washington Crossing the Delaware

Prompt Source(s): 1 Source Lexile Range: N/A

Source One: *Washington Crossing the Delaware* By Emanuel Leutze
Source Lexile Level: N/A

[Click here to view the source\(s\) for this prompt.](#)

[Click here to view the printable version of the image and assignment.](#)

The famous painting *Washington Crossing the Delaware* by Emanuel Leutze illustrates an important historic event that took place during the Revolutionary War.

In a multi-paragraph response, describe this painting in detail. In your own words, what does this painting illustrate? Tell your readers whether or not you think this painting is a valuable and important piece of American art.

Who is Your Favorite Teacher?

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

Who is your favorite teacher? Write to describe which teacher you like best and explain what makes him or her special.

Winning an Award

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

If you could win an award for doing anything, such as singing, acting, or accomplishing something that would make the world a better place, what would it be for and why? Why would winning this award be special to you?

In a detailed essay, describe something for which you would like to receive an award. Include the reasons for your choice to support your description.

Write About a Trip You Have Taken

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

Think about a trip you went on with your class, family, friends, or a group. Write about what happened on the trip.

Young Heroes

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

People of all ages can be heroes. Think of a time when someone your age did something that you thought was heroic. What did the person do? How was this action heroic?

In a well-developed essay, describe a heroic act performed by a person your age and give reasons why you think that action was heroic.

Your Favorite Place to Eat

Prompt Source(s): 0

Source Lexile Range: N/A

Index for Source-based and Non-source-based Prompts

The appendices that follow provide lists of prompts with different types of sources. These appendices are intended to assist teachers in more easily identifying and locating prompts in the catalog. Each appendix includes only the titles of prompts from this catalog. Prompts are arranged in alphabetical order in the catalog by type (IntelliMetric™ or Pilot), as indicated in the Table of Contents. The appendices are divided into two main categories: source-based (including research-based and quotation-based prompts) and non-source-based prompts. The first three appendices are for source-based prompts; the last appendix is for non-source-based prompts. The following are notes pertaining to the definitions and content specifications of source-based and non-source based prompts.

Source-based Prompts:

- Source-based prompts are research-based and often require sources (whether specified or not) and include quotation-based writing tasks.
- Some source-based prompts provide or indicate specific sources while others require students and/or teachers to conduct their own research to address a prompt topic.
- Quotation-based prompts require reference to, analysis of, and/or interpretation of a particular quotation.
 - Most quotation-based prompts integrate quotations into the prompt task rather than offer the quotation as a separate source.
 - Quotations are typically too brief compared to most sources or excerpts from works that are more extensive; thus they are usually not considered a formal 'source' for students to use in addressing a prompt task.
 - To prevent inaccuracy, Lexile levels for quotations are not provided due to the brevity of most quotations.
- The types of sources used in source-based prompts vary greatly by prompt and can include multimedia and text-based sources.

Non-source-based Prompts:

- Non-source-based prompts do not require or necessitate research and/or source-based evidence to complete the writing task.
- Most non-source-based prompts are typically knowledge, experience, and/or opinion-based prompt tasks.

Appendix I: Source-based Prompts (Sources Provided)

IntelliMetric™

"A Remarkable Explorer"
Asteroid Selections
Harvest Time
"The Patient Peregrine"

Pilot

"Block City" and Childhood Pastimes
Earth Detectives: Exploring Rocks
Friendship Song Analysis
Garden Secrets: Garden Growth and Care
Healthy Lifestyles: Benefits of Exercise and Healthy Eating
"Here Kitty, Kitty..."
Our Solar System
"Sea Fever" and Your Special Place
The Little Red Hen
Understanding Climate Change
Washington Crossing the Delaware

Appendix II: Source-based Prompts (Sources Not Provided)

IntelliMetric™

Favorite Toy

Pilot

Earning Money in Where the Red Fern Grows

Exploring Outer Space

How a Video Can Help

If I Had Magical Powers

Inventing New Words in Frindle

Learning from a Magic School Bus Video

Moving to a Different Country

Opening New Worlds

Ruby Bridges in Rockwell's The Problem We All Live With

Appendix III: Quotation-based Prompts

IntelliMetric™

Being a Responsible Student

Pilot

N/A¹

1. This type of prompt is not available at this time in MY Access!®. However, new prompts and IntelliMetric™ models are in development. Check back frequently for updates!

Appendix IV: Non-source-based Prompts (Sources Not Required)

IntelliMetric™

A Clumsy Mistake
A Day at Home
A New Student
A Person You Admire
An Empty Room
Ancient Civilizations
Benefits of Daily Exercising for Young Children
Compare and Contrast a Product
Create an Animal
Creating a New Candy Bar
Dressing for Halloween
Favorite Cartoon or Animated Movie Character
Favorite Dessert
Favorite Pet
Greek Mythological Figure for a Day
Handling a Bully
How Can You Help Our World?
Ideal Field Trips
Invent a Holiday
Make One Wish
My Favorite Season
Science Week
The Joy of Being a Kid
Toy You Love
What Do You Value?
What I Like Best About School...

Pilot

A Field Trip Letter
A Time of Hope
A Time You Were Kind
Advertising Brochure
An Important Special Event
An Item You Would Like to Have
Artwork Worthy of a Medal of High Honor
Best Way to Use Land
Biography of an Early Explorer
Bus Created for Kids
Business Letter about a Tickets Problem
Changing the Direction of a Moving Object
Class Gift to Your School
Create a School Rule
Describe a Fun, Educational Game
Describe a Lighthouse

Describe an Invention
Describe Someone Who is Brave
Describing a Rectangular Prism
Design a Teacher
Doing a Good Job
Early European Settlers' Effect on the Americas
Effects of Weather and Natural Disasters
Every Day Uses for Math
Exciting Event That Makes Time "Fly"
Favorite Game
Favorite Number
Favorite Place to Vacation or Visit
Favorite Type of Entertainment
Food in Our Lives
Galactic Pen Pal
Helping Others
How Do You Spend Your Summer Vacation?
How to Cook an Item of Your Choice
Human Effect on the Environment
Importance of the Bison to Great Plains Indians
Important Object
Interpretation of a Photograph
Invent the 51st State
Learning About an Animal and its Habitat
Learning About State Capitals
Life Without One of the Five Senses
Life Without Reading
Make a Wish that Helps Others
Making a New Friend
Medicine for Healing
Museum Exhibits
My Special Talent
Observations on a Sealed Box
Physical Education Teacher for a Day
Pictures Taken at School
Practicing for an Important Event
Presenting Data with a Graph or Chart
Read-a-Thon Prize
Rebuilding Your Park
Recommending a Classroom Pet
Reducing Pollution
Regions of a State
Regions of the United States
Resolution to Keep the Planet Clean
Running Your Own Business
Shape and Use
Show Something Special to Your Class
Someone or Something Special to You
Something You Would Change About Your School

Something You Would Like to Learn
Speech on a Hobby or Event
State Tourist Brochure
Summarize a Current Event
Summer Vacation Experiences
Taking Action during a Wildfire
The Culture of Ancient Native American Tribes
The Three Types of Rocks
ThreeD Printing Technology Improves Lives
Time When You Were Brave
Time You Worked Hard for Something
Tour through the Earth's Layers
What are You Afraid Of?
What Pet Would You Like to Own?
What Would You Like to Learn to Do?
When Someone Did Something Special for You
Where Would You Travel?
Who is Your Favorite Teacher?
Winning an Award
Write About a Trip You Have Taken
Young Heroes
Your Favorite Place to Eat
Your Favorite School Event
Your Favorite Year in School
Your State's Geography
