Examples of First Day Writing Sample Prompts

1. Can your teacher or a writing class teach you how to write? How do we learn to write? What can you, your classmates, and the instructor do to help you learn to write and think?

2. Some critics claim that many people lack interpersonal skills because of their dependence on technology to communicate. Some people say this dependence on technology is causing the decline of reading and writing skills. Other researchers believe that the advances in communication technology have positively affected the abilities of people to communicate. Write an essay responding to these claims. How has technology affected your abilities to communicate, read, and write?

3. During the Civil Rights movement, Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in the moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” In what ways is King’s statement relevant or irrelevant to American society today? Explain and support your answer with an essay.

4. What is an individual’s responsibility to society? As part of a community (college campus, neighborhood, city, state, country or the world) what, if anything, does an individual owe to the larger group of which she or he is a part? Explain/support your answer.

5. Some people say that you may learn more from failure than you do from success. What do you think? Describe a success or a failure from your own life. How was that experience valuable to you, and what did it teach you? Would you have learned more if you had not succeeded or failed?

6. How do you determine if information is reliable? If you read a story, watch something on the news, or are told something by a friend or family member, how do you know if what you’re reading, seeing, or hearing is the truth? How do you know if it’s not the truth? And if it’s not, how do you know if the source is simply incorrect, or if they’re intentionally lying? How do you decide who and what to believe, and who and what to not believe?

7. In *The War for Kindness*, Jaki states “Empathy’s most important role, though, is to inspire kindness: our tendency to help each other, even at the cost to ourselves” (4). What does *empathy* mean to you? What does *kindness* mean to you? Use examples to help explain these terms.