

2021-2022 Florida Student Essay Prompt for U.S. Senate Youth Program

ESSAY PROMPT:

*Although the United States Constitution centered Congress at the core of America's system of government, the founding fathers worked conscientiously to ensure that one branch of government would not take too much power. Write a well-developed essay that responds to the question: **If the founding fathers believed it was advantageous that branches of government have unique constitutional roles and powers to prevent one branch from becoming more powerful than another, are those powers of government still effectively separated?***

Be sure your response includes the following components:

1. Integrates information connecting to the U.S. Constitution.
2. Identifies and discusses the branch of government the founding fathers were most afraid would become too powerful and what they did to try to prevent this. Be sure to provide historical context to this discussion.
3. Discusses the systems the founding fathers created in an attempt to ensure unique constitutional roles and powers. Be sure to discuss how these constitutional roles and powers ensured branches of government remained equal in power.
4. Compare the roles that the branches of government play in checks and balances and separation of powers in the American system of government and how each branch has traditionally ensured that power remains equal.
5. Compares the unique powers the founding fathers established between the two houses of Congress in an attempt to satisfy their hope that the Senate would protect the idea of republican values. Provide at least two examples that help explain in detail how this has been done.
6. **Takes a position (your opinion)** on whether the separation of powers and the system of checks and balances have both effectively restrained the government from gaining unequal balance of power or created political gridlock. Be sure to provide a coherent explanation for your position.
7. **Makes a final evaluation** of whether the powers of government are still effectively separated. Use at least two examples to best support your explanation of why or why not.

ESSAY CHECKLIST:

- ✓ Be sure the question is addressed clearly throughout your essay.
- ✓ Be sure your essay provides a clear, logical flow.
- ✓ Be sure to provide clear and coherent examples (evidence).
- ✓ Be sure your essay provides evidence, analysis of that evidence, and a strong conclusion.

YOUR ESSAY SUBMISSION:

- MUST NOT have a cover page.
- MUST be typed and double spaced.
- MUST have your name typed at the **top of the first page of your essay.**
- MUST NOT exceed two pages. (If you have a works cited page it will not count as a part of your two pages.)
- MUST provide evidence to support your explanations and positions.

ESSAY EVALUATION:

- The rubric that will be used to evaluate and score your essay will be based on the question prompt and its seven outlined components.
- Use the Helpful Writing Tips (next page) to support your work.

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HELPFUL WRITING TIPS

Keep the following information in mind as you write and proof your essay.

COHERENT AND LOGICAL INTRODUCTION

- Essay has a historical and practical background on the topic or issue addressed by the question.
- Essay has supporting ideas and facts. (No representation of personal or political opinions of the essay writer.)
- There is a thesis statement that speaks to the question asked.
- The thesis statement is clear and logically expressed.

ESSAY DETAILS AND SUPPORT

- The main points of the prompt are addressed in the essay.
 - The essay addresses what has been asked for in the essay prompt.
 - Arguments or information are presented for the points being addressed.
 - Supporting evidence is provided for any arguments or information presented.
 - The essay is detailed with information and evidence to support the thesis statement.
 - Examples used to highlight make a logical connection to what they illustrate.
- The essay uses evidence that offers historical, contemporary, and current examples/descriptions.
- Personal conclusions are supported with data and information to support the writer's perspective
- ALL the elements or components of the essay prompt are addressed with information, examples, data, etc.

Caution:

- *Avoid flowery writing and descriptions full of imagery.*
- *Avoid opinion unless to address the portion of the essay which asks that an opinion be provided.*
- *Focus on writing a well-detailed paper based on research and facts to support your views.*
- *You are writing an **expository essay** which presents a balanced analysis of a topic.*

ORGANIZATION

- The essay is written with a clear flow that is easy to read and comprehend.
 - Sentence flow, paragraph and thought transitions, and appropriate word choice are important.
- Information is organized and structured in a logical manner.
- There is a clearly defined introduction.
- There is a clearly defined conclusion.

ACCURACY OF INFORMATION

- Information is correct and researched; not based on opinion.

A STRONG CONCLUSION

- The concluding thoughts make a clear connection to the question or thesis based on the support and evidence presented in the essay.

MECHANICS

- Spelling is correct.
- Punctuation is correct.
- Capitalization is appropriate.