

2022-2023 Florida Student Essay Prompt for U.S. Senate Youth Program

ESSAY PROMPT:

*The founding fathers of the United States created the judiciary branch with the intent that it be an independent, co-equal branch of government. They wanted a branch of government that would be separated and protected from political influences and that would uphold the principle that everyone, including government, be accountable under the law. Based on the context above, write a well-developed essay that responds to the question: **Should the federal judiciary be the last line of defense in protecting constitutional rights and freedoms? Why or why not?***

Be sure your response includes the following components:

1. Identifies and discusses the debate between the federalists and the antifederalists regarding the federal judiciary. Be sure to provide historical context to this discussion. Provide at least two examples depicting what each side believed would happen as the judicial branch evolved.
2. Compares how membership in the federal judicial branch differs from membership in the federal executive and legislative branches, and why the difference is significant.
3. Addresses how the judicial system was set up to be free from political influence and based on the rule of law.
4. Identifies founding principles of American government and explains how those principles are exemplified in the functions of the judicial branch. Provide at least two examples of principles.
5. Explains judicial review and whether or not the founding fathers intended for the federal judicial branch to have the power of judicial review, including why or why not.
6. Provides examples of how the federal judicial branch uses judicial review to determine whether the acts of the Congress, the executive branch, and state governments comply with the Constitution. Use examples for all three of these or just one or two.
7. Provides examples of how judicial review has been used by the federal judicial branch to define and protect freedom, equality, and justice. Be sure to provide between one to three examples that show how the federal judicial branch has done this.
8. **Makes a final evaluation (based on your opinion)** of whether the federal judicial branch has evolved more along the lines of what the federalists argued would happen or along the lines of what the antifederalists argued would happen. Be sure to use at least one to three strong examples that clearly show how the judiciary has evolved to support the arguments of either the federalists or the antifederalists.
9. **Draws upon your final evaluation to take a position (your opinion)** on whether the federal judiciary should be the last line of defense in protecting constitutional rights and freedoms of American citizens. Why or why not? Be sure to provide a coherent explanation that includes your final evaluation to support your position.

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 at the top of the first page.
- MUST NOT exceed two pages. (If you have a works cited page it will not count as a part of your two pages.)

ESSAY EVALUATION: The rubric that will be used to evaluate and score your essay will be based on the question prompt and its nine outlined components. Consider 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.
- Information is not value laden.

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.