

Kid Reporters: Election Topic Suggestions for 6th-8th Grade

You may tweak any of these topic suggestions to fit the type of writing that interests you! For example, if a challenge asks you for your opinion (editorial piece) on health care, you may turn it into a hard news piece. In your hard news piece you could explain health care and the different party's position on it. In a human interest piece, you could interview someone personally affected by the current health care program and tell the reader that person's story

1. If you could vote in this election, which issues would be most important to you and why?

Keep in Mind:

- Give accurate and sufficient background information
- Explain clearly!
- Use quotations to make a better article
- Cite (identify the source of) everything that is not your own thought

2. The legal age to vote in the United States is 18. Do you think that this is an appropriate age. Explain why or why not.

Keep in Mind:

- Give accurate and sufficient background information to strengthen your argument (e.g. what other things can you do legally before the age of 18)
- Use quotations to make a better article
- Explain your information clearly Cite everything!

3. Welfare is an important issue to many people in this election.. Do you think the government should play a role in helping citizens in need? If so, what might that role be?

Keep in Mind:

- Give accurate and sufficient background information (e.g. brief of history of welfare laws that have been passed, or previous debates on topic)
- Explain clearly
- Use quotations to make a better article
- Cite everything that is not your own thought

4. If you had five minutes with the President, what would you say or ask him?

5. Do you think the media (TV, radio, internet, newspapers) effects the election? Does the media just help us formulate our own opinion or does it influence our opinion?

Keep in Mind:

- Give accurate and sufficient background information Explain clearly Use quotations to make a better article Cite everything that is not your own thought

Hard News: Write this article as a small research paper. Explain how different forms of media have been used throughout history to influence public perception. Give examples, background, and quotations to support your article.

6. Literacy in the United States has been in a decline. What do you think the President could and should do help students struggling with literacy issues?

7. Who do you think should win the Presidential election and why?

8. Jobs and the struggling economy are major issues in this election. How have changes in the economy or fewer jobs affected you or your surroundings? Which candidate has a better plan to fix this issue and why?

9. Between the past election and this upcoming one, health care has been a hotly debated issue. How do you think health care should be provided and paid for in the United States? Which candidate or party do you side with in regards to this issue?

Hard News: Explain the health care reform. What are the Democratic and Republican positions on health care reform? Provide background and give examples of other countries with different types of health care programs.

10. Gun control has been a huge topic of debate. Should individuals in the U.S. continue to be allowed to own and carry their own guns? Should guns or certain types of guns be banned? Should the government control the use of guns, and if so, how?

Hard News: What are the current laws on gun ownership, purchase, and control? What are the proposed changes? How do Republicans and Democrats differ on this issue?

11. The DREAM Act, which would allow some immigrants who were brought to the United States as minors, who have no criminal background have lived in the U.S. for at least five years, and have graduated from a United States high school, to obtain conditional legal residency. Research the DREAM Act, then explain how do you feel about it. Do you think that children brought to the United States by their parents should be allowed to obtain residency? What is the difference between *residency* and *naturalized citizenship*?

Hard News: Explain what the DREAM Act is, and each political party's position on it. Give background information about the DREAM Act, legal and illegal immigration to the U.S., and provide proper quotes to support your article.

12. Do you think the amount of money politicians spend on their campaigns is appropriate? How is campaign money used? Do you think it helps them get their message across and helps the voters better understand where they stand on certain issues? Should there be limits on how much a candidate can raise or spend?

Hard News: Compare and contrast the funds that each political party has spent during the elections (may want to include data from recent past elections). Explain how the funds are raised, as well as how they are used..

13. The separation of church and state has been a topic debated amongst citizens since the beginning of the United States.. Explain the history and meaning of the phrase “the separation of Church and State” and give examples of its use in this year’s election. Why is this a topic that is debated so much?