POSSIBLE RESEARCH TOPICS

Your research paper, and the resulting thesis statement, must be an ARGUABLE issue. Be prepared to

present the actual findings of your research convincingly even if you discover that your findings differ

from your personal opinions. Remember, research is objective and not a “soap box” for personal

views. The following topics have been divided by subject:

**BIOETHICAL ISSUES**

 Withholding the truth from dying patients

 Physician-assisted suicide

 Limits to confidentiality

 Involuntary commitment

 Organ donation

 Access to experimental drugs for dying

patients

**CRIME AND CRIMINOLOGY**

 Is criminal behavior biologically determined?

 Street crime vs. white-collar crime: which is

more serious?

 Is the criminal system racist?

 Plea-bargaining

 Does arrest reduce domestic violence?

 Execution of juveniles

**DEATH PENALTY**

 The death penalty for minors

 The death penalty for the mentally

handicapped

 Televised executions

 The death penalty as a deterrent

 The relationship between race and the death

penalty.

 Women and the death penalty

 The long appeals process for death row

inmates

 Death penalty methods, such as lethal injection

 The Constitutional question of "cruel and

unusual punishment"

**ECONOMIC ISSUES**

 Mandatory national service

 Minimum wage

 Is the middle class shrinking?

**EDUCATION**

 Should schools determine what is learned?

 Does a common curriculum promote equality?

 Home-schooling

 Measurement-driven instruction

 Mainstreaming: beneficial to all?

**ENVIRONMENT**

 Does the wilderness have intrinsic value?

 Nuclear power

 Is there a cancer epidemic due to industrial

chemicals in the environment?

 Global warming

**GAY MARRIAGE**

 Same-sex adoption and access to reproductive

technologies

 Immigration rights for gay partners of citizens

 Partnership benefits at state and federal

institutions

 Health care benefits and gay couples

 Property rights and gay couples

 Inheritance law and gay couples

**HUMAN ISSUES**

 Women in combat

 Surrogate motherhood

 Career vs. family

**LEGAL ISSUES**

 Censorship of student newspapers

 Religious displays on public property

 Affirmative action

 Reverse discrimination

 DNA profiling of criminals

 Insanity defense

 Tougher sentencing to reduce crime

 Flag burning

 Welfare

**MASS MEDIA**

 Does mass media shape American values?

 Media images of Blacks

 Privacy in the Information Age

 Advertising: is it ethical?

**MORALITY**

 Do the ends justify the means?

 Moral responsibility of rehabilitating criminals

 Should the law enforce morality?

 Animal rights

 Do rich nations have an obligation to help poor nations?

**POLITICS**

 Political parties: have they lost their power?

 Is Congress weak?

 Should federal courts be bound by the “original intent” of the framers?

 Do foreign investments threaten U.S. economic independence?

 Is a world government possible or desirable?

 Should morality and human rights influence

foreign trade policy?

**PRAYER IN SCHOOL**

 Public displays of the Ten Commandments

 Religious after school clubs at public schools

 Religious holiday decorations in schools

 School vouchers for religious schools

 A mandatory moment of silence in schools

 The Pledge of Allegiance

 Religious music sung in school choruses

 School days off for non-Christian holidays

**PSYCHOLOGY**

 Is behavior determined by biological

processes?

 Alcoholism as a disease: fact or myth?

 Academic instruction for preschool children

 Daycare

 Psychotherapy: is it effective?

**TEEN ISSUES**

 Adolescent health problems

 Communications between parents and teens

 Adolescent marriages

 Adolescent suicide

 Lack of discipline in American high schools

 Teen pregnancy:

o Emotional aspects

o Psychological stresses

o Short- and long-term affects

o Socio-economic aspects

 Dietary deficiencies of American teens

 Is juvenile delinquency linked to family

instability?

 Spending/purchasing power of teens

 Teenage alcoholism:

o Socio-economic aspects

o Short- and long-term affects

o Emotional aspects

 College vs. career

 Runaways

 Major causes of juvenile crime

**Here are some more topics in alphabetical order. These are just general ideas…you’ll have to think of a specific issue to argue in the essay.**

Academic Eligibility

Aerosols and the Environment

Affirmative Action

Age Discrimination

AIDS: Global Responses

Air Bags

Air Pollution

Air Safety

Alcohol Issues

Alternative Education Programs

Alternative Medicine

Americans with Disabilities Act

Animal Rights

Anorexia and the Media

Artificial Sweeteners

Arts Education

Asbestos Removal

Aspirin and Heart Disease

Assisted Suicide

Automobile Safety

Beauty Pageants

Bilingual Education

Birth Order

Cable Television Regulation

Campaign Finance Reform

Celebrity Privacy

Censorship

Census Sampling

Children of Alcoholics

Children’s Television

Cloning

College Entrance Exams

Constitutional Amendments

Credibility of the SAT

Crime and Race

Dangers of Junk Food

Domestic Violence

Ebonics

Education Standards

Effectiveness of MADD

Effectiveness of SADD

Effects of Diet on the Brain

Electronic Privacy

Endangered Species Act

Espionage

Euthanasia

Evolution and Creationism

Family Leave

FDA Drug Approval Process

Federal Reserve System

Feminism

Food Additives

Food Safety

Foster Parenting

Fuel Prices

Gays in the Military

Genetically Engineered Food

Gifted Education

Global Warning

Grandparents’ Visitation Rights

Gulf War Syndrome

Gun Control Update

Hate Speech

Hazing

Hearing Disorders

Herbal Supplements

High Tech Toys

HIV Testing

Holocaust

Home Schooling

Hospice vs. Hospital

Human Genome Research

Hyperactivity in Children

Illiteracy in America

Immigration

International Terrorism

Iraq Crisis

Judicial Double Jeopardy

Juvenile Detention Centers

Juvenile Justice

Labor Unions

Land-Mine Ban

Latchkey Kids

Lead Poisoning

Learning Disabilities

Line-Item Veto

Logging in National Forests

Managed Health Care

Mars Exploration

Media Bias

Medical Ethics

Medical Malpractice

Medical Marijuana

Medical Records Confidentiality

Medical Uses of Hypnosis

Medicare’s Future

Mental Health Policy

Mideast Peace Process

Military Preparedness

Miranda Warnings

Missile-Defense Program

Morality in America

Music Therapy

National Parks Policy

Native American Sovereignty

Native American’s Rights

NATO Expansion

Nuclear Disarmament

Nuclear Energy

Nursing Homes

Only Child vs. Siblings

Organ Allocation

Organ Transplants

Parole

Patients’ Rights Laws

Performance Enhancing

Substances

Pesticides and the Farming

Industry

Pit Bulls

Police Corruption

Police Weaponry

Political Asylum

Pornography

Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome

Preschool Program

Press Freedom

Prison Reform Programs

Prisoners’ Rights

Professional Sports Salaries

Prostitution

Relationship of Twins

Religion and Medicine

Religious Symbols

Rights of the Handicapped

School Uniforms

School Vouchers

Science in the Courtroom

Search for Extraterrestrial Life

Sexual Harassment

Single-Sex Education

Social Promotion

Social Security Reform

Speed Limits

Sperm Banks

Spousal Abuse and the Law

States’ Rights

Stealth Bomber

Steroid Use

Students’ Rights

Sweatshops

Teacher Standards

Technology Export Controls

Teen Driving

Teen Gangs

Teen Pregnancy

Television Violence

Test Tube Babies

The Farm Family in America

Tobacco Settlement

Trash Disposal

Treatment of the Mentally Ill

U.S.-Cuba Relations

U.S.-Russian Relations

U.S.-U.N. Relations

Urban Sprawl

Victim’s Rights

Violence in Rap Music

War-Crimes Tribunals

Welfare Reform

Wetlands Regulation

Women in the Military

Women in the Workforce

World Trade Organization

Year-Round Education

Youth Depression

Youth-Oriented Advertising

Zoos