

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
- Sodomy laws
- 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?
- Has science discredited ESP?
- Can intelligence increase?
- 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:
 - Emotional aspects
 - Psychological stresses
 - Short- and long-term affects
 - Socio-economic aspects
- Dietary deficiencies of American teens
- Is juvenile delinquency linked to family instability?
- Spending/purchasing power of teens
- Teenage alcoholism:
 - Socio-economic aspects
 - Short- and long-term affects
 - 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.

Abortion	College Entrance Exams	Hate Speech
Academic Eligibility	Constitutional Amendments	Hazing
Aerosols and the Environment	Credibility of the SAT	Hearing Disorders
Affirmative Action	Crime and Race	Herbal Supplements
Age Discrimination	Dangers of Junk Food	High Tech Toys
AIDS: Global Responses	Domestic Violence	HIV Testing
Air Bags	Ebonics	Home Schooling
Air Pollution	Education Standards	Hospice vs. Hospital
Air Safety	Effectiveness of MADD	Human Genome Research
Alcohol Issues	Effectiveness of SADD	Hunting Restrictions
Alternative Education Programs	Effects of Diet on the Brain	Hyperactivity in Children
Alternative Medicine	Electronic Privacy	Illiteracy in America
Americans with Disabilities Act	Endangered Species Act	Immigration
Animal Rights	Espionage	International Terrorism
Anorexia and the Media	Euthanasia	Iraq Crisis
Artificial Sweeteners	Evolution and Creationism	Judicial Double Jeopardy
Arts Education	Family Leave	Juvenile Detention Centers
Asbestos Removal	Fast-Track Trade Authority	Juvenile Justice
Aspirin and Heart Disease	FDA Drug Approval Process	Labor Unions
Assisted Suicide	Federal Reserve System	Land-Mine Ban
Automobile Safety	Feminism	Latchkey Kids
Beauty Pageants	Food Additives	Lead Poisoning
Bilingual Education	Food Safety	Learning Disabilities
Birth Order	Foster Parenting	Line-Item Veto
Cable Television Regulation	Fuel Prices	Logging in National Forests
Campaign Finance Reform	Gays in the Military	Managed Health Care
Celebrity Privacy	Genetically Engineered Food	Mars Exploration
Censorship	Gifted Education	Media Bias
Census Sampling	Global Warning	Medical Ethics
Children of Alcoholics	Grandparents' Visitation Rights	Medical Malpractice
Children's Television	Gulf War Syndrome	Medical Marijuana
Cloning	Gun Control Update	Medical Records Confidentiality

Medical Uses of Hypnosis	Pornography	Teacher Standards
Medicare's Future	Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome	Technology Export Controls
Mental Health Policy	Preschool Program	Teen Driving
Mideast Peace Process	Press Freedom	Teen Gangs
Military Preparedness	Prison Reform Programs	Teen Pregnancy
Miranda Warnings	Prisoners' Rights	Television Violence
Missile-Defense Program	Professional Sports Salaries	Test Tube Babies
Morality in America	Prostitution	The Farm Family in America
Music Therapy	Relationship of Twins	Tobacco Settlement
National Parks Policy	Religion and Medicine	Trash Disposal
Native American Sovereignty	Religious Symbols	Treatment of the Mentally Ill
Native American's Rights	Rights of the Handicapped	U.S.-Cuba Relations
NATO Expansion	School Uniforms	U.S.-Russian Relations
Nuclear Disarmament	School Vouchers	U.S.-U.N. Relations
Nuclear Energy	Science in the Courtroom	Urban Sprawl
Nursing Homes	Search for Extraterrestrial Life	Victim's Rights
Only Child vs. Siblings	Sexual Harassment	Violence in Rap Music
Organ Allocation	Single-Sex Education	War-Crimes Tribunals
Organ Transplants	Skateboard Discrimination	Water Use an the West
Parole	Social Promotion	Welfare Reform
Patients' Rights Laws	Social Security Reform	Wetlands Regulation
Performance Enhancing	Speed Limits	Women in the Military
Substances	Sperm Banks	Women in the Workforce
Pesticides and the Farming	Spousal Abuse and the Law	World Trade Organization
Industry	States' Rights	Year-Round Education
Pit Bulls	Stealth Bomber	Youth Depression
Police Corruption	Steroid Use	Youth-Oriented Advertising
Police Weaponry	Students' Rights	Zoos
Political Asylum	Sweatshops	