

**ENGLISH DIAGNOSTIC/123/127 PROMPTS AND QUESTIONS
FOR CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY'S EXIT EXAMINATION and
3-CREDIT HOUR QUALIFYING EXAM**

Choose one of the following topics and write a well organized, well developed 300-350-word expository essay.

1. Increasingly, children have been committing more crimes. In Chicago, two boys dropped a third boy out of a window. In a southern state, junior high school boys gunned down a teacher and several students.
Who should be held responsible when children commit murder?
2. Some students claim that they attend college because parents and other relatives told them they should. Other students say that they attend college because they believe they will be able to get better jobs when they graduate.
What are some reasons to attend college?
3. Many people believe that men and women should not get married until they are mature, have finished their education, and have established careers. Others say that if the two people involved love each other, it shouldn't matter how old they are when they decide to get married.
When should people get married?
4. When students have a bad teacher, they not only often fail to learn, but they also lose interest in school, or in a particular subject. There are probably more ways to be a bad teacher than to be a good one.
What are some ways in which a teacher can be a bad teacher?
5. The definition of family has changed. Some people consider a family to include anyone who lives in the same house or apartment, while others say that a family simply means blood relatives.
What does it mean to be a family?
6. Many children watch television for an average of four hours a day. Some watch even more.
How does television affect children?
7. The life style many people have these days is very stressful. Having too many responsibilities and not enough time to handle all those responsibilities creates a great strain on people's lives.
What are some ways people can deal with stress?
8. The weakening of the family structure has been blamed for many of society's problems, ranging from high drop-out rates in school to increased crime rates.
How can the American family be strengthened
9. Many teens are sexually active in spite of sex education provided in the school. Many girls get pregnant, some intentionally.
What are some reasons teenage girls get pregnant?
9. Over the years, talk shows have become very popular in America. In the past, they were usually seen in the mornings and early afternoons, but now it is not uncommon for talk shows to broadcast in the evenings and late nights.
Why are talk shows so popular?
10. The media is often criticized for such things as having too much influence on people's lives, for invading our privacy, and for being biased, yet the media still serves a number of important purposes. In a well-developed essay of 300-350 words, respond to the following question:
Why is the media an important part of our society?
11. Personal advertisements for dates, dating services, and internet chat lines are just a few examples that show how many people are lonely. Some people might meet someone through services such as these, while others may not.
What can people who are lonely do to make their lives fulfilling?
12. Gang violence in inner cities is a major problem in America. Some teenage boys turn to gangs for many reasons, and once they become involved, they often participate in immoral or criminal acts.
Why do some teenage boys become members of gangs?
13. Many people are excited about the possibility of becoming parents. However, there are many aspects of parenthood that should be considered before bringing children into this world.
What should people consider before deciding to have children?
14. For a variety of reasons, family members today sometimes don't spend enough quality time together which can eventually lead to serious problems in families.
How can families stay healthy and strong?
16. Many parents discourage their children from dating anyone of a different race. These parents fear the problems that may arise if their children fall in love with and marry someone of a different race.
What are some of the problems that biracial couples face?
17. There are many reasons for choosing a college, such as location, prestige, the make-up of the student body, or a particular curriculum.
Why did you choose to attend C.S.U.?
18. Psychologists say that married men are happier and live longer than single men, and women's standards of living increase when they marry.
Who benefits more from marriage, men or women?
19. Most people have dreams. Some dream of getting a college education and return to school even after they have retired. Others dream of becoming rich and famous.
How have your dreams shaped your life?

20. Many educators say that American students will do better in school if parents pay more attention to their children's schoolwork and show their children that school is important.

How can parents help children succeed in school?

21. Visa, Master Card, American Express, and Discover are all household words. Though most consumers know that large debts can ruin them financially, millions of people bury themselves in debt every year.

Why do so many Americans go so far into debt?

22. Teenagers are often extremely self-conscious or unhappy about the way that they look. Many people believe that television and magazines influence teens so deeply that they develop unrealistic expectations about how they should look.

How can parents help teens to accept themselves as they are?

23. Over half of all marriages end in divorce. Women say that men don't know how to be good husbands. Men claim that women don't know how to be good wives.

What are some qualities of an ideal spouse?

24. Education is needed now more than ever in order to secure a good job. But even as opportunities to get a good education increase, more and more teenagers aren't finishing high school.

How can we encourage teenagers to stay in school?

25. Many people are excited about the possibility of becoming parents. However, parents have many responsibilities.

What must a couple consider before deciding to have children?

26. America is known as the melting pot. However, misunderstandings arise because of people's ignorance of other people's cultures.

What are some reasons people stereotype others?

27. According to some people, stereotypes help us to organize a highly confusing world. However, they can also make us mentally lazy and frequently lead to prejudice.

What are some negative results of stereotyping?

28. Marijuana is currently classified as an illegal drug in the United States. However, there has been considerable debate over whether or not it should be legalized.

How would society be affected by the legalization of marijuana?

29. Interracial relationships, such as marriages, friendships, and business partnerships, are more common today than ever before in America.

How have you been affected by others of a different ethnic background than your own?

30. Some students claim that they attend college because parents and other relatives told them they should. Other students say that they attend college because they believe they will be able to get better jobs when they graduate.

Why are the benefits of obtaining a college degree?

31. Stereotypes are an easy way of judging or classifying other people before we get to know them. Because we learn stereotypes as children from our parents and friends, we do not realize how this way of thinking hurts people.

How have stereotypes affected your life?

32. In American society, many minorities feel that to be successful they must try to adapt to the dominant culture in language, dress, and mannerisms. Other minorities feel that this is an insult to their own culture and traditions.

How has the dominant culture influenced your behavior?

33. In today's modern American society, the relationships between males and females seem to be changing constantly. It is not uncommon for women to ask men out on a date. And it is not uncommon for men to expect women to share in the expenses for entertainment.

What is acceptable for men and women in dating situations?

34. People have a lot of responsibilities, errands and chores to do that might keep them from spending time with their immediate families and grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins. Many people today only see their families and relatives every few years.

Why are family gatherings a necessary part of family life?

35. People from a multitude of ethnic backgrounds and religions live in this country. However, we are not the most tolerant people, and preconceived notions are often formed about people who look different or have different beliefs. Some people believe these negative stereotypes keep them from getting ahead.

How can negative stereotypes hurt people's efforts to improve themselves?

36. As we approach the year 2000, many Americans are disheartened by the poverty rate in our country. These same individuals believe the government and American citizens should work harder to improve the quality of life for poor people.

What can the United States do to eliminate poverty among its citizens?

37. Millions of dollars are spent each year on buying name brand clothes, foods, and other items. Sometimes items that do not carry a brand name are of equal quality and are cheaper.

Why do people buy name brand items?

38. Nutrition specialists have told us that fast food is bad for our health, partly because of the high fat content, and yet many people continue to eat it.

Why do so many people eat fast food?

39. Many people fear the unknown. They are afraid of people who look different or belong to a different race. They fear things they do not understand.

In what ways do stereotypes influence people's judgement?

40. Music has been a part of almost every culture in the world. In the United States and many other countries, music is so popular that people spend millions of dollars on music recordings, concert tickets, and stereo equipment.
Why do people listen to music?
41. Many people hold stereotypes about other cultures, especially cultures they know little about. Some people say these preconceptions come from family and friends or from the way the media portrays these cultures.
How are preconceptions about others formed?
42. The definition of family has changed. Some people consider a family to include anyone who lives in the same house or apartment, while others say that a family simply means blood relatives.
What does it mean to be a family?
42. Going from high school to college is usually considered a big step in the lives of young adults. Most find that there are many differences, and many adjustments must be made.
What are some of the adjustments that students must undergo when making the transition to college?
43. Many people fear the unknown. They are afraid of people who look different or belong to a different race. They fear things they do not understand.
What are some things you are afraid of?
44. Most parents teach their children to be truthful, but politicians and other public figures have been found, at times, to be less than forthright.
Why do people lie?
45. Police brutality has continued to be a problem in Chicago and other major cities across the country. Police departments have implemented training and counseling sessions to increase the awareness and sensitivity of their officers, but some people say that citizens need to be involved in the solution as well.
What are some ways cities can decrease or eliminate police brutality?
46. Statistics say that over half of marriages today end in divorce. Sometimes couples get married too quickly or for the wrong reasons, and problems arise.
What should couples consider before getting married?
47. Talk show programs are soaring in popularity. Viewers watch these shows for various reasons, sometimes to learn, sometimes to laugh, or sometimes to live vicariously through the hosts or their guests.
Why are talk shows so popular?
48. Over the last few years, there has been an increase in school violence. Many people feel this is a result of children not being able to cope with their emotions or with certain situations
How can children learn to manage their anger?
49. Some people believe that others should only date and marry people of the same race, whether out of racial pride or to protect the children that these couple may produce from discrimination. Other people argue that the mixing of the races is exactly what will eliminate racial discrimination in the future.
What is your opinion about interracial dating?
50. Stereotypes can negatively affect people's lives, but few people really know why they stereotype others who are unfamiliar to them. Some believe the practice of stereotyping is learned in the home and from images in the media. Others say that placing labels on people is natural.
How can people overcome the habit of stereotyping?
51. Stereotypes can negatively affect people's lives, but few people really know why they stereotype others who are unfamiliar to them. Some believe the practice of stereotyping is learned in the home and from images in the media. Others say that placing labels on people is natural.
What are some reasons that people stereotype others?
52. Many students have trouble with their college studies because they don't like to read. On the other hand, students who have formed a love of reading can usually handle college assignments very well.
How can we instill a love of reading in students?
53. Police brutality has continued to be a problem in Chicago and other major cities across the country. Police departments have implemented training and counseling sessions to increase the awareness and sensitivity of their officers, but some people say that citizens need to be involved in the solution as well.
What are some ways cities can decrease or eliminate police brutality?
53. Television, radio and film have a tremendous effect on Americans. In fact, many people make judgements of others based on the images presented in the media.
What common stereotypes do the media present?
54. Beauty is a world that brings different images to the minds of different people. Some people focus on external attributes that make people attractive on the outside, while others focus on internal aspects of character and personality.
What makes people beautiful to you?
55. We all know that stereotyping harms people, and we have all experienced the harmful effects of being stereotyped. However, we still go through life using stereotypes.
Why do we create and continue to use stereotypes?

56. People generally agree that television programs can entertain and educate us. However, most of us think that television programs can also affect us negatively by presenting and reinforcing stereotypes.
What are some stereotypes of women and minorities that we see on television?
57. Unfortunately, we live in a world where many cultures rarely interact with each other. Some people believe that our world would be a better place if we simply knew more about each other.
What are some ways people can share their culture with others?
58. Many people think that children in America have it easy. Others feel that American children have a lot of difficulties to overcome.
What are some difficulties that children have growing up in American society?