

- What personal achievements make you proud?
- What are some recent moments of happiness in your life?
- Describe the most unusual or memorable place you have lived.
- What are you grateful for?
- What rites of passage have you participated in?
- Who is your family?
- What have you and your family accomplished together?
- What events have brought you closer to your family?
- What holiday memories do you have?
- What sayings or advice did your family give you. Did you follow it?
- Do you have quirky or interesting relatives on your family tree?
- What have you and your family accomplished together?
- Describe a childhood or family injury or illness.
- What events have brought you closer to your family?
- What's your role in your family?
- Have you ever changed a family member's mind?
- How do you define 'family'?
- Did you grow up with family traditions? Describe one.
- What are your family stories of sacrifice?
- What possessions does your family treasure?
- What hobbies have been passed down in your family?
- How are you and your parents alike and different?
- Do your parents support your learning?
- What have your parents taught you about money?
- How do your parents teach you to behave?

- How do you make parenting difficult for your parents?
- What role do pets play in your family?
- What is your racial and ethnic identity?
- Have you ever tried to hide your racial or ethnic identity?
- How do you feel about your last name?
- What's the story behind your name?
- What are your favorite names?
- How have you paid tribute to loved ones?
- Would you most want to live in a city, a suburb or the country?
- How much does your neighborhood define who you are?
- What's special about your hometown?
- Who are the 'characters' that make your town interesting?
- What 'urban legends' are there about places in your area?
- What is your favorite place?
- How much time do you spend in nature?
- With your home in danger, what would you try to save?
- What would you put in your emergency 'go-bag'?
- Have you ever lost (or found) something valuable?
- What is your personal credo?
- What motivates you?
- What makes you happy?
- What are you good at?
- How much self-control do you have?
- How good are you at waiting for what you really want?
- What role does procrastination play in your life?

- When in your life have you been a leader?
- How well do you perform under pressure?
- How well do you take criticism?
- Are you hard or easy on yourself?
- How full is your glass?
- Do you have a hard time making decisions?
- How good are you at time management?
- How productive and organized are you?
- How would your life be different if you had better listening skills?
- How competitive are you?
- Do you perform better when you're competing or when you're collaborating?
- Do you take more risks when you are around your friends?
- Do you unknowingly submit to peer pressure?
- How much of a daredevil are you?
- How do you react when provoked?
- How often do you cry?
- Do you think you're brave?
- What are you afraid of?
- What are your fears and phobias?
- What are your personal superstitions?
- Do you like being alone?
- How impulsive are you?
- Are you a novelty-seeker?
- What annoys you?
- Do you apologize too much?

- Do you have good manners?
- Are you a saver or a tosser?
- Are you more introvert or extrovert?
- Are you popular, quirky or conformist?
- Are you a nerd or a geek?
- What would your personal mascot be?
- What assumptions do people make about you?
- What challenges have you overcome?
- What do you do when you encounter obstacles to success?
- What are your secret survival strategies?
- How do you find peace in your life?
- How have you handled being the 'new kid'?
- Has a book ever inspired you to live a better life? How?
- Do you ever feel overlooked and underappreciated?
- How stressed are you?
- How do you relieve stress?
- Does stress affect your ability to make good decisions?
- What challenges have you set for yourself?
- How often do you leave your 'comfort zone'?
- What did you once hate but now like?
- Does your life leave you enough time to relax?
- Do you set rules for yourself about how you use your time?
- Is 'doing nothing' a good use of your time?
- What's cluttering up your life?
- What were your most challenging goals?

- What work went into reaching them?
- When have you ever failed at something? What happened as a result?
- When have you ever succeeded when you thought you might fail?
- What life lessons has adversity taught you?
- What's the most challenging assignment you've ever had?
- What kind of feedback helps you improve?
- Is trying too hard to be happy making you sad?
- Do adults who are 'only trying to help' sometimes make things worse?
- What are five everyday problems that bother you, and what can you do about them?
- How do you help?
- What ethical dilemmas have you faced?
- Would you help an injured stranger?
- When is the last time you did something nice for a stranger?
- Have you ever 'paid it forward'?
- What volunteer experiences have brought you the most joy?
- How comfortable are you with lying?
- Have you ever taken something you weren't supposed to?
- What could you live without?
- Do you ever feel guilty about what, or how much, you throw away?
- Have you ever eavesdropped?
- How important is your spiritual life?
- Do you believe that everything happens for a reason?
- Can you be good without God?
- Are you less religious than your parents?
- Can you pass a basic religion test?

- What can you learn from other religions?
- Who is your role model?
- Who are your heroes?
- Who inspires you?
- What's the best advice you've gotten?
- Who outside your family has made a difference in your life?
- If you had your own talk show, whom would you want to interview?
- To whom and for what would you like to write a thank-you note?
- What leader would you invite to speak at your university?
- What six people, living or dead, would you invite to dinner?
- What are your longtime interests or passions?
- Do you have a life calling?
- What books have most influenced your career thinking? How?
- What do you want to do with your life?
- Do you think you will have a career that you love?
- What investment are you willing to make to get your dream job?
- Would you consider a nontraditional occupation?
- What hidden talents might you have?
- What do you hope to be doing the year after you graduate?
- What 'back-to-the-land' skills do you have, or wish you had?
- What have you made yourself?
- What would you create if you had funding?
- How did you start doing something you love?
- Did you ever take a break from doing something you love?
- What have you done to earn money?

- Do you have a job?
- Would you quit if your values did not match your employer's?
- What are your attitudes toward money?
- Can money buy you happiness?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
- What do you want to be doing when you're 80?
- Do you want to live to 100?
- What do you want your obituary to say?
- Where in the world would you travel if you could?
- What is your fantasy vacation?
- What would your fantasy road trip be like?
- What crazy adventure would you want to take?
- How has travel affected you?
- What famous landmarks have you visited?
- What's the coolest thing you've ever seen in nature?
- How would you like to help our world?
- What cause would get you into the streets?
- What would you risk your life for?
- When have you spoken out about something you felt had to change?
- What would you invent to make the world a better place?
- Given unlimited resources, what scientific or medical problem would you investigate?
- What event in the past do you wish you could have witnessed?
- What are the most important changes, in your life and in the world, in the last decade?
- What news stories are you following?

- What questions do you have about how the world works?
- What big questions do you have?

Sources: New York Times The Learning Network "Prompts for Narrative and Personal Writing,"
Adaptations from prompts by Kim Kautzer "22 writing prompts that jog childhood memories"