

Grade 6

Writing Prompt:

Many schools districts across the United States and Canada have begun to require students to do community service as way to contribute to society. Our district has considered the idea of requiring 6th grade students to complete 75 hours of community service as part of their promotion requirements. This would mean students would need to complete these community service hours outside of the school day. Some districts have implemented this policy with much success, while others have met with criticism.

Should our school district require all 6th grade students to complete 75 hours of community service as part of the graduation requirements? Write a persuasive essay directed to the principal clearly defending your position. Make sure to give reasons to support your position on this issue. Use your ideas from your brainstorming to help you write.

Rubric Score 3

“There is trash everywhere!” It’s on the beach, park and on the sidewalks.” If there was no such thing as community service, that is what will happen. Children at many schools are required to do seventy-five hours of community service to advance to seventh grade. This is a great idea because community service helps out everywhere. It helps out neighborhoods, parks and beaches, community service keeps things up and running.

“Ouch!” I stepped on a piece of glass.” That is what will happen if trash isn’t ever picked up. A good thing about picking up litter is that it will help nature. It keeps everything looking clean and good. People would much rather see a nice clean park instead of a park infested with rubbish. Cleaning up will keep places smelling better. Trash would make a place smell like a dump. One of the worst things about trash is that it can hurt people. They could step on glass and be boldly hurt. Picking up trash is a great thing to do, but helping out older people is a good idea for community service.

The older people at the retirement home like to see children. Just spending time with them makes them happy and more confident. Children could also help them do things they can’t do themselves. Bringing them food and help them move around is something children can help them do. And if children wouldn’t like to make them happy, they could give them cards. Helping out people is a good thing, but community service can help out animals too.

Animals like nice clean homes. Community service can help them out. If children clean up nature, animals won’t be getting sick from eating trash. They also wouldn’t die. Animals wouldn’t also be getting hurt as much. Like humans, animals could be cut by glass. If children picked it up, that wouldn’t happen. Community service is a great thing to help the environment, but what would some people say about children doing community service?

Some people might say that community service can take time off important things like school work. But helping out the envornment is just as important. Others might say that community service would make children tired. But it shouldn’t be too bad if you use the time for things like cleaning up.

Community service should be a requirement and move up to seventh grade. Cleaning up nature and helping the older peopled is a great idea. If children save the envirnment, they would be heroes to the world.

Teacher Commentary Score Point 3:

This response generally defends a position and uses relevant evidence. The central idea is presented in the first paragraph (“Community service helps out everywhere.”). Although the writer fails to make a connection of how community service would benefit a sixth grader, s/he does communicate a belief that community service would benefit nature and older people. The writer addresses reader’s concerns with two counter arguments in the fifth paragraph (“...can take time off important things like school work” and “...would make children tired.”).

The writer addresses all parts of the writing prompt, maintains a consistent point of view and focuses on how community service is a good idea because it helps others. The essay cites picking up trash, helping older people, and helping animals as three examples of community service. Picking up trash to help animals in the fourth paragraph is very similar to picking up trash to help nature in the second paragraph. (“If children clean up nature, animals won’t be getting sick from eating trash.”) Further development of the animal idea would make it more distinct.

No persuasive tone or language is used (e.g., “I believe...”, “In my opinion...”, “Clearly...”, or “I recommend...”). Instead, the writer uses fictional dialogue to help the reader imagine a trash-filled world. (“There is trash everywhere! It’s on the beach, park, and on the sidewalks.” and “Ouch! I stepped on a piece of glass.”) No dialogue is used to help the reader imagine how community service could affect older people or animals.

This six-paragraph essay uses transition sentences between body paragraphs (“Community service is a great thing to help the environment, but what would some people say about children doing community service?”). It also employs a variety of sentence types, including simple sentences (“One of the worst things about trash is that it can hurt people.”) and compound sentences (“Picking up trash is a great thing to do, but helping out older people is a good idea for community service.”).

This response contains few errors in the conventions of the English language (“envornment,” “envirnment”), but they do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.