**Essay prompts from the most recent SAT administration**

Below are essay prompts from the most recent SAT administration in **January 2014**.

**Prompt 1**

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

Frederick Douglass once said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle." He was right. Progress is something that must be fought for; without conflict, progress simply does not occur.

**Assignment:** Does progress result only from struggle and conflict? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

**Prompt 2**

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

There are two false assumptions about experts. One is that they see more clearly and think more intelligently than ordinary citizens. Sometimes they do, sometimes not. The other false assumption is that these experts have the same interests as ordinary citizens and hold the same values. In fact, the important decisions of society are within the capability of ordinary citizens. Not only can ordinary people make their own decisions without the help of experts, but they ought to.

Adapted from Howard Zinn, *Declarations of Independence*

**Assignment:** Should people make more decisions on their own and rely less on the advice of experts? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

**Prompt 3**

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

For many people, the traditional path to success involves graduating from high school and college before working their way up in a particular profession. However, many of society’s most successful individuals taught themselves the skills they needed to start their own businesses, invent new technologies, or create works of art. For these individuals, the nontraditional path turned out to be the path to success.

**Assignment:** Are people who do not follow society’s traditional paths to advancement more likely to be successful than those who do? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

**Prompt 4**

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

Some see printed books as dusty remnants from the pre-electronic age. They point out that electronic books, or e-books, cost less to produce than printed books and that producing them has a much smaller impact on natural resources such as trees. Yet why should printed books be considered obsolete or outdated just because there is something cheaper and more modern? With books, as with many other things, just because a new version has its merits doesn’t mean that the older version should be eliminated.

**Assignment:** Should we hold on to the old when innovations are available, or should we simply move forward? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.