

# On Demand Writing Packet: Child Beauty Pageants

Texts chosen and Processes created by Robin Atwood, SMWP

## Contents of Packet:

- Three articles about child beauty pageants
- Writing prompt
- Note-Taking/Planning packet
- Finding Evidence Sheet
- They Say/I Say Templates
- Three Sample Essays

## Directions:

1. Read the three articles about child beauty pageants. Take notes on the note-taking grid as you read.
2. Read the prompt below. Study the prompt closely to be sure you know the purpose and audience for your writing.
3. Plan your own writing using the materials in the planning packet.
4. Write your response using your plan.
5. Read over your writing to be sure you have addressed the prompt.

**Prompt:** You have been asked to write an article about child beauty pageants for a parenting magazine. In your article, make a claim about participation in child beauty pageants and provide evidence for your claim. Acknowledge counterclaims and provide evidence for those as well. Be sure to use the three articles included in this packet as sources for evidence.

Remember, a strong and effective piece of argument writing:

- *Takes the audience into account*
- *Has a clear introduction*
- *States a focus/position statement clearly, precisely, and thoughtfully*
- *Uses specific evidence from the texts to support and develop the position, and explains that evidence logically*
- *Takes into account what people who disagree with you might think and tries to respond to that*
- *Concludes effectively*
- *Uses precise language*
- *Shows control over conventions*

## Article 1

### **Child Beauty Pageants Have Good and Bad Points Parents Should Consider Before Competing**

Child pageants get a lot of bad press, and some of it is warranted. All of it, however, is not. Toddler beauty pageants pros and cons are numerous. Child pageants are like just about everything else - there's good and bad. Some pageants are better than others, but most of the problems that occur are often the fault of the parents themselves, and not the pageant or pageant system.

**Cons of Child Pageants:** What are some negatives of beauty pageants for kids?

Some pageant parents don't adequately prepare their kids for pageants, so the girls don't really know what to expect. If they don't win, they might take it personally and get hurt feelings. The child might end up feeling unattractive or inadequate in some other way.

Child pageants are also time-consuming. To be competitive in the larger pageants, contestants have to spend hours practicing their smile, their walk, and their turns. The day of the pageant, the child has to spend time in a chair for hair and makeup. Tanning will likely be involved, too.

Child pageants can be very expensive, too, and the entry fee is just the tip of the iceberg. Appropriate child pageant dresses are costly. You'll also need the right shoes, socks, choker, and hair bow to compliment the dress. Wigs, wiglets, and/or hair pieces will have to be purchased if you compete in the "Glitz Pageants", along with a flipper to create that perfect smile. You'll likely have to pay someone to do the contestant's hair, makeup, and tanning, too. I have detailed some of the most common child beauty pageant costs and fees lower down on this page for your reference.

Sometimes pageant moms can be pretty nasty. A handful of pageant parents think their daughter should always win. When they don't, the parent might blame the judges, the director, or even the other contestants. Thank goodness though, not many parents are like the stereotypes often seen on a certain TV show to make it more 'entertaining' for viewers.

**Pros Of Child Pageants:** There are lots of positive things about children entering pageants.

Beauty pageants and self-image often go hand in hand. Pageants can be a wonderful experience for children. For one thing, they get comfortable being in front of crowds. This can carry over into a multitude of other activities, like dance, drama, music recitals, and future public speaking. A pageant girl usually learns to be comfortable in front of strangers, giving her self-confidence a big boost.

When parents have the right attitude, the children will, too. In these cases, child pageants can teach kids to be gracious winners and good losers. They'll learn the aspects of rules and fair play.

## **It's Up to the Parents**

Child beauty pageants pros and cons depend largely on you, as the parent. You have the capacity to make competing in a pageant a positive experience for your child, or to make it a miserable time for your daughter.

Article by Helene Malmsio

<http://helene-malmsio.squidoo.com/child-beauty-pageants-pros-and-cons>

## **Article 2**

### **5 Reasons Child Pageants are Bad for Kids**

By The Week Staff | March 14, 2012

Mark Fix/ZUMA Press/Corbis

John Ramsey and his family skyrocketed to national prominence in 1996, when Ramsey's 6-year-old daughter JonBenet, a frequent child pageant contestant, was found murdered. (The case was never solved.) Now, in an interview with Good Morning America, Ramsey concedes that he was wrong to put JonBenet in pageants in the first place. It's just a bad idea "to put your child on public display," he says. And shows like *Toddlers and Tiaras* that chronicle child pageants are "bizarre," Ramsey says, as pageants encourage young children to develop problematic levels of competitiveness, and focus too much on their appearance. Ramsey's warning brings to light an ongoing debate about the detrimental effects that pageants can have on children. Here, five more reasons why pageants are bad for children:

#### **1. The girls are too young to say no**

"There are examples of young girls screaming in terror as their mothers approach them with spray cans," Australian lawmaker Anna Burke tells the Sydney Daily Telegraph. Clearly, pageants risk "the exploitation or potential exploitation of very young children who really do not have the capacity to express their own views."

#### **2. Pageants sexualize young girls**

French lawmakers want an all-out ban on child pageants, says Henry Samuel in Britain's Telegraph, accusing the media and reality TV of "promoting stereotypes that transform young girls into 'sexual morsels.'" Just look at the growing number of "schoolgirls as young as 8 [who] wear padded bras, high heels, or makeup, and strike suggestive poses." Really, what is this telling our children about how they present themselves to society?

#### **3. They cause cognitive and emotional problems**

A 2007 report by the American Psychological Association found that the objectification of young girls is strongly associated with eating disorders, low self-esteem, and depression, says Melissa Henson at CNN. It can also even lead to fewer girls pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

#### **4. Too much hair spray can stunt growth**

One of the most widely used products in child pageants is hair spray, which contains phthalates, or plasticizers, that can act as hormone disruptors, says Travis Stork of CBS's *The Doctors*. For an adult beauty contestant, this is no biggie. But for a growing girl, the effects could prove detrimental. Excessive exposure to phthalates has been linked to stunted growth and even lung cancer.

#### **5. High heels aren't made for small feet**

If you're Suri Cruise, wearing high heels as a toddler is just a part of life. But when little pageant contestants wear heels, Stork says, it unnecessarily pushes their weight forward, causing lower back pain and hindering proper development of the feet. In some cases, these girls are forced to continue wearing heels outside of pageants because their feet have grown in a way that makes wearing other kinds of shoes very uncomfortable.

Article by : The Week Staff

<http://theweek.com/article/index/225572/5-reasons-child-pageants-are-bad-for-kids>

### **Article 3**

#### **Glitter and glamour: Inside children beauty pageants**

When most people think of normal activities for a six year-old girl, they picture a sea full of Barbie dolls, coloring books and dress up clothes. However, television channel, TLC has been the leading pioneer in the introduction of reality television children beauty pageants. Popular shows such as “*Toddlers and Tiaras*”, which revolves around exaggerated filming of child pageantry shows America one narrow view of what the pageant world is all about. For young girls, beauty pageants can be a positive life experience. The media distorts how society views pageants but they can be beneficial because they give children contestant’s useful life lessons and they can be viewed on the same positive level as other popular competitive sports.

The American pageant world has become an estimated five billion dollar industry. In order to enter a contest, many financial dues are needed from contestants, such as entrance fees, hair and makeup styling, wardrobe costs and other pageant tools. By the expansion of the beauty pageant culture, it shows people that pageantry is becoming more common and traditionally accepted

within American society.

The Miss America pageants have become such a popular television event, beauty pageants have become its own genre of television. Because of “Toddlers and Tiaras”, beauty pageants have been made to seem unnatural and as a form of child exploitation.

On these shows children are shown being rude to their parents, being extremely physically altered and parents doing anything to make sure their child wins the ultimate title. The problem is the portrayal and producers’ editing of the shows which creates the drama and, in turn, produces ratings. The media distorts the way society sees beauty pageants because all they are trying to do is achieve ratings which, in turn, raises their financial profit.

Because of reality television, most of America does not know the advantages of entering one’s child into beauty pageants. Life lessons are taught and children are exposed to different situations they will also see in the future. Being exposed to these lessons early in life will give children the upper hand during school and in the work field.

Similar to other competitive sports or organizations, beauty pageants have formed their own network. In order to advance in the world, it is all about who knows who.

Rhonda Sharper, a self-proclaimed pageant expert, says that winning various titles at different pageants allows children to gain more than just cash prizes but also scholarships, letters of recommendation, and name recognition in the world. She explains that beauty pageants are just another form of children being able to get their name out to the world to be able to receive more opportunities in life. This is the same as if a college student wanted to be a journalist; they would submit pieces to be printed in the local newspaper to expose their name so that major editors can read their work. Having connections results in people being able to gain opportunities they may not have been able to without knowing that person. These connections would be gained no matter what activity a child is involved in.

Recently, there has been a spiking rise in the number of children who participate in competitive sports. It seems as though every parent wants their child to ‘keep up with is the Joneses’ on the athletic stage; however, when it comes to beauty pageants, parents do not understand that the values of sports and pageants go hand in hand.

Educator and pageant parent, Andrea Hermitt, shows her internet audience how competitive sports compare to beauty pageants. The players and beauty contestants must have the will power to eat properly and stay in a healthy but also, top physical shape to perform their best. This teaches children whether they compete on the field or on the pageant stage, that to be successful one must have self discipline. Self discipline is shown in many aspects of one’s life outside of sports and pageants. When entering college, students are left to fend for themselves to study and make the right decisions about their lives. No one is there to tell them what to do and what not to do. When young children need to practice self discipline at a young age through pageantry, they

are more easily able to continue that trend and be successful in college and their future.

When children compete in group sports, they practice very hard and sometimes all that practice still turns out in a loss. The same is true in the pageant world. Little beauty queens learn how to lose graciously and to keep composed while they watch the other contestants win the crown. These are life lessons for any young child to learn: they cannot always get what they want and even with practice and hard work, a young contestant may still not be crowned with top honors. This lesson will come up thousands of times within a person's life.

Many people are set to believe that beauty pageants are a solo competition and do not teach children teamwork or sportsmanship. They think pageants teach the kid to be self-centered, when in fact, beauty pageants are excellent ways to teach children both of these life lessons. When preparing for a pageant, in order to be successful, a contestant must have a whole team to back her up, such as a coach, hair and makeup stylists, and cheerleaders in the audience to support her. Also, whilst competing in the pageant circuit, contestants make friends back stage and are able to socialize with other children their age. When a child loses against her fellow contestants, she must respectfully watch them be crowned while they are standing upon stage with nothing in hand. In life, people cannot always get what they want and others are going to have things that they want. This is another one of many life lessons learned from pageantry.

Beauty pageants have become a part of America's culture. The pageant world previously had a negative connotation, but it can also be said that beauty pageants are a positive way for little children to learn life lessons and give them the building blocks to become winners for the rest of their life.

Jackie Salzano

Email: [jsalzano@radford.edu](mailto:jsalzano@radford.edu)

Short URL: <http://www.rutartan.com/wordpress/?p=5459>

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Topic: Child Beauty Pageants

**1. Take notes:**

	“Child Beauty Pageants Have Good and Bad Points Parents Should Consider Before Competing”	“5 Reasons Child Pageants are Bad for Kids”	Glitter and glamour: Inside children beauty pageants
What is the writer’s claim?			
What evidence does the writer use to support the claim?			

## **2. Plan your writing:**

My Own Claim:

Which article(s) supports my claim?

Which article(s) does not support my claim? (counterclaim)

Which quotes do I want to use from the articles to support my claim? (underline or highlight them in the actual article)

Which quotes do I want to use from the articles to give evidence of the counterclaims?

What are some reasons and evidence of my own to support my claim? (These can come from your own experience, the experience of your classmates, family members, etc.)

When you've finished your draft, use the Finding Evidence sheet for your grade level (or beyond) to ensure that you've included evidence of all key aspects of argument writing. Be sure to pay attention to elements of craft as well.



**The Most Important Templates:** On the one hand, \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, \_\_\_\_\_. Author X contradicts herself. At the same time that she argues \_\_\_\_\_, she also implies \_\_\_\_\_. I agree that \_\_\_\_\_. She argues \_\_\_\_\_, and I agree because \_\_\_\_\_. Her argument that \_\_\_\_\_ is supported by new research showing that \_\_\_\_\_. In recent discussions of \_\_\_\_\_, a controversial issue has been whether \_\_\_\_\_. On the one hand, some argue that \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, however, others argue that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Introducing Standard Views:** Americans today tend to believe that \_\_\_\_\_. Conventional wisdom has it that \_\_\_\_\_. My whole life I have heard it said that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Making those Views Something You Say:** I have always believed that \_\_\_\_\_. When I was a child, I used to think that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Writing a Summary:** She demonstrates that \_\_\_\_\_. In fact, they celebrate the fact that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Introducing a Quote:** X insists, “\_\_\_\_\_.” As the prominent philosopher X puts it, “\_\_\_\_\_.” According to X, “\_\_\_\_\_.” In her book, Book Title, X maintains that \_\_\_\_\_. X complicates matters further when she writes that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Disagreeing:** I think that X is mistaken because she overlooks \_\_\_\_\_. I disagree with X’s view that \_\_\_\_\_ because, as recent research has shown, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Introducing Your Point of View:** X overlooks what I consider an important point about \_\_\_\_\_. I wholeheartedly endorse what X calls \_\_\_\_\_. My discussion of X is in fact addressing the larger matter of \_\_\_\_\_. These conclusions will have significant applications in \_\_\_\_\_ as well as in \_\_\_\_\_.

## Finding Evidence of Writing Standard 1: Argument

### 7th Grade

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	<b>Record evidence of the standard from the piece of writing:</b>
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<p>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p>	
<p>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text..</p>	
<p>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.</p>	
<p>d. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p>	
<p>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>	
<p>Other interesting/effective tools or craft elements used by the author. (Try to name the craft: personal anecdote, hypothetical story, etc.)</p>	

**Finding Evidence of Writing Standard 1: Argument**

**8th Grade**

<p>Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence</p>	<p><b>Record evidence of the standard from the piece of writing:</b></p>
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<p>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p>	
<p>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p>	
<p>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p>	
<p>d. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p>	
<p>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>	
<p>Other interesting/effective tools or craft elements used by the author. (Try to name the craft: personal anecdote, hypothetical story, etc.)</p>	

**Finding Evidence of Writing Standard 1: Argument**

**9th/10th Grade**

<p>Write arguments to support claims in an</p>	<p><b>Record evidence of the standard from the piece of writing:</b></p>
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<p>analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</p>	
<p>a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p>	
<p>b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns.</p>	
<p>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</p>	
<p>d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p>	
<p>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>	
<p>Other interesting/effective tools or craft elements used by the author. (Try to name the craft: personal anecdote, hypothetical story, etc.)</p>	