

This I Believe

We have been reading several This I Believe essays in class. Now it's your turn! This is your chance to write about something you believe. Your essay does not need to be religious, but it may. It can be a simple belief, a complex belief, something you want to believe.

Tell a story. This story should show how your personal belief was formed. Instead of saying something like, "Ice cream has healing powers," tell me a story about ice cream. For example: When I was growing up, my dad and sisters and I would share a pint of Ben and Jerry's ice cream before going to bed. We would each have a spoon and pass around the pint until it was gone. This is an example of a story. From this I can add details about how I have come to believe that ice cream has healing powers. I can explain how I traveled to Europe when I was in high school and discovered gelato. I might also talk about how eating ice cream always reminds me of those happy times with my family or on my trip, so when I'm sad ice cream helps me feel a little better. Next I might add that when my grandma died I was far away from my family, so they suggested I buy my favorite flavor of ice cream to help me closer to them. I might end by saying that ice cream helps me when I feel sick, too. When you write your story, keep this in mind:

- Tell a story that really happened to you. It can be about a funny event, a sad event, something you learned from, something that makes you happy, sad, laugh, cry. It can be about a time you had fun with your family, a tradition, a vacation. The story should illustrate how your belief was formed.
- What did you learn from this? What belief did it help form? Make sure you use the phrase I Believe... to highlight what you came to believe.
- Tell it in first person. This means you can use I, me, us, we, etc. This is your story.

Look at the This I Believe essays we have read and the notes we've taken in class as models for your essay. You can always look at more essays on www.thisibelieve.org if you need ideas.

Some other important things to know:

- Essay finished length 350-500 words (1 to 1 ½ pages typed)
- Remember to use complete sentences!
- Your essay will be typed. Use 12 pt Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins. If you don't have a computer at home, and you need to finish your essay, you can use a computer any day after school or at the Provo City Library.
- We may have students read their essay to the class; this is optional but encouraged.

Due Dates

First Draft: _____

Finished Draft: _____

Expiration Date: _____



CATEGORY	15	13	11	9	0
Main Idea/ Belief statement	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea (I Believe statement) stands out & is supported by detailed information.	Main idea (I Believe statement) is somewhat clear but the supporting information is general.	Main idea (I Believe statement) is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information.	The main idea (I Believe statement) is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information.	Not there
Show not tell/ Details	-Tells a story about a personal experience and how that experience developed a belief. -Relevant, descriptive details help the reader visualize the experience rather than just telling what's happening (mostly showing, some telling).	-Mentions an experience but some details are missing to connect it to the belief. -Supporting details and information are relevant, but one key issue or portion of the storyline is unsupported (some showing, some telling).	-Mentions an experience but it isn't connected to the belief at all. -Supporting details and information are relevant, but several key issues or portions of the storyline are unsupported (mostly telling, some showing).	-There is no experience mentioned, only a belief. -Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic (not enough details for the reader to connect to what they're reading).	Not there
Voice	-Writer uses their own unique voice to tell their story by using expressive language and by showing emotion. -Writer has a strong sense of audience.	-Writer's voice is sufficiently unique and uses expressive language. -Writer has a sense of audience.	-Writing seems mechanical but somewhat expressive. -Writer has a weak sense of audience.	-Writing is dull and inexpressive. -Writer has no sense of audience.	Not there
So what?	-The conclusion is strong, reflective, and ties the entire essay together. -Clearly answers, "So what?"	-The conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all the loose ends. Sufficiently answers, "So what?"	-The conclusion is recognizable, but does not tie up several loose ends. -Somewhat answers, "So what?"	-There is no clear conclusion; the paper just ends. -Does not answer, "So what?"	Not there
	5	4	3	2	0
Capitalization, Punctuation, Spelling (Conventions)	Writer makes 1 or 2 errors in capitalization, punctuation, or spelling, but the paper is still easy to read.	Writer makes a few (3-5) errors in capitalization, punctuation, or spelling, that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.	Writer makes several (6-8) errors in capitalization, punctuation, or spelling, that catch the reader's attention and greatly interrupt the flow.	Writer makes so many errors that the essay is unreadable.	Not there
Length	Length is 350-500 words.	Length is 250-349 words.	Length is 150-249 words.	Length is less than 149 words.	No essay