

This I Believe

For this assignment, you will be writing an informal essay about what you believe. This essay is based on the Edward R. Murrow project featured on NPR. Here is how they describe it:

This I Believe is an international project engaging people in writing, sharing, and discussing the core values that guide their daily lives. These short statements of belief, written by people from all walks of life, are archived here and featured on public radio in the United States and Canada, as well as in regular broadcasts on NPR. The project is based on the popular 1950s radio series of the same name hosted by Edward R. Murrow. (thisibelieve)

To prepare for this essay, you will need to do the following:

Access the website <http://www.thisibelieve.org/> and browse some of the essays. They are written by all kinds of folk: famous and not.

Read over as many as you can. Select two essays that you really like and TYPE a paragraph (half a page double-spaced) that details what it is about and what specifically you liked about the essays. There should be one paragraph for each essay, so you will have a total of two paragraphs (about one page). **These paragraphs and the links are worth 10 points**

Starting tonight, you should be generating a list of things you believe in. As you can see from the examples on the website, the beliefs can range from the serious to the comical. Feel free to believe in whatever you wish so long as it's school appropriate! But please do take this assignment seriously. What are some things (not material) that you could not and should not do without? You should THINK about what you believe in: what's important to you? You must be able to defend your belief.

Advice:

I've taken (word for word) the following sage-like advice from the *This I Believe* website to help you with your essay.

Tell a story: Be specific. Your story need not be heart-warming or gut-wrenching—it can even be funny—but it should be real. Make sure your story ties to the essence of your daily life philosophy and the shaping of your beliefs.

Be brief: Your statement should be between 350 and 500 words—no more than 2 pages double spaced but AT LEAST one page.

Name your belief: If you can't name it in a sentence or two, your essay might not be about a belief. Also, rather than writing a list, consider focusing on one core belief, because three minutes is a very short time.

Be positive: Please avoid preaching or editorializing. Make your essay about you; speak in the first person.

Be personal: Write in words and phrases that are comfortable for you to speak. We recommend you read your essay aloud to yourself several times, and each time edit it and simplify it until you find the words, tone, and story that truly echo your belief and the way you speak.