

“This I Believe” Essay Rubric

	1	2	3	4
Thesis/Focus	Belief statement is not evident.	Multiple beliefs are listed with little development.	Core belief is clearly stated with evidence of development.	One core belief is explicit and developed throughout essay.
Purpose	Tells a story that is not connected to the belief or does not tell a story.	Tells a story that is somewhat connected to the belief, but is difficult to follow.	Tells a story that is connected to the belief.	Tells a story that is grounded in the events of everyday life; links to the essence of daily life philosophy and to the shaping of personal beliefs.
Organization/ Transition	Demonstrates limited or no organization; does not stay on topic; limited or no transitional devices.	Demonstrates ineffective organization; attempts to refer to a single topic; transitional devices are limited.	Demonstrates organization; maintains focus throughout; uses a variety of transitional devices.	Demonstrates unique or effective organization; maintains focus throughout; uses a variety of transitional devices uniquely/effectively.
Details/ Elaboration	Lacks details for the belief or details do not enhance the belief.	Limited use of details; details tell rather than show.	Effective use of relevant details support the belief; details mostly show rather than tell	Unique, rich, insightful, and effective use of details to support belief; details effectively show rather than tell.
Point of View	Uses second person (you) point of view.	Inconsistent use of first-person point of view.	Mostly consistent use of first-person point of view.	Consistent use of first-person point of view.
Writer’s Craft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Voice • Tone • Style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak vocabulary; word choice interferes with meaning. • Lacks writer's voice. • Tone is unclear or negative. • Limited or no use of sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic or limited vocabulary; some incorrect word choice. • Emerging sense of voice. • Tone preaches or judges. • Ineffective use of sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently varied and effective use of vocabulary; clear and appropriate word choice. • Strong sense of voice. • Tone is mostly personal and positive. • Effective use of sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich vocabulary, vivid language; sophisticated word choice. • Powerful sense of voice throughout piece, appropriate for purpose. • Tone is consistently personal and positive. • Effective use of sentence variety to enhance voice and meaning.
Mechanics	Errors seriously interfere with meaning.	Many errors that sometimes interfere with meaning.	Some errors that do not seriously interfere with meaning.	Few errors that do not interfere with meaning.

Overall Score: _____ / 40