*This I Believe* Essay

We’ve spent some time in class reviewing your personal beliefs. We’ve also read and listened to a few essays written by others explaining their own beliefs, so now it’s time to write your own *This I Believe* essay. You need to choose one specific belief and write an essay following the format of the sample essays we read in class. Your belief should be easy to figure out, but not necessarily specifically stated. You need to have some specific experiences showing why you believe what you believe. Remember, you are not persuading anyone to believe what you believe, you are simply telling them why you believe what you believe.

Your grade on the essay will be based on the six-traits of writing. The following is the grade breakdown:

**Ideas (5 points each/ 20 total)**

* The belief is clear without saying *This I Believe*
* Ideas are supported with valid details
* Ideas are fresh and original
* Gets the reader’s attention with a strong lead and holds the attention

**Organization (5 points each/ 20 total)**

* Has a clear lead, avoiding cliché
* Sequencing is logical and effective
* Solid conclusion pulling together the ideas and showing the belief
* Creative title

**Voice (5 points each/15 total)**

* Commitment and compassion on the topic are respectful
* Voice is engaging and enthusiastic
* Writing is personal

**Word Choice (5 points each/15 total)**

* Lively verbs, specific nouns
* Striking words and phrases create imagery
* Language enhances meaning

**Sentence Fluency (5 points each/ 15 total)**

* Vary in length as well as structure
* Flows well; not choppy
* Purpose in sentences variations

**Conventions (5 points each/ 15 total)**

* Spelling and punctuation are correct
* Stylistic devices are correct (font type, size, spacing,)
* Any grammatical errors don’t interfere with the reading

**Total 100 points**

The rough draft of this essay will be due on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. You need to bring three copies of your essay to class. There is no make up for your rough draft. We will be doing a peer edit in class with your rough draft. If you don’t have one in class, you cannot earn the points. You can earn a few bonus points by e-mailing me one paragraph of your essay before this date.

The final draft of this essay is due on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. . You must also earn at least an 80% on the essay, or you will need to do revisions. The essay MUST be typed, 12 pt font, 1 inch margins. You will need to turn in one copy of your rough draft with your final draft. I will not grade an essay that does not have a rough draft attached to it. If the revisions are not obvious, you will need to revise again.

I do not accept the excuse that your printer crashed, your computer died, you didn’t have access to a computer or it didn’t save. Westlake High School has a great computer lab available before school, during lunch, and after school. You can always bring your essay to class on a jump drive and print it in the lab. If you come to class without an essay printed, plan on using one of your hall passes to go to the computer lab to print the essay. If you e-mail me the essay, I will send you a reply saying I got it. If you don’t get that e-mail, I didn’t get the essay and you will not get credit for the assignment. Please plan ahead and be responsible.