

“This I Believe” - A School-Wide Exhibition
Spring 2011



Assignment Summary: “Based on a 1950s radio program of the same name, Americans from all walks of life share the personal philosophies and core values that guide their daily lives.” It is your turn! You are going to answer the question, what do you believe? This is a project about you and everything you stand for. Some of your beliefs are basic, “I believe that the color green is the best color in the world” and some are more deep, “I believe that education should not be mandatory for children of any age.” Be intelligent, be creative, be beautiful, but most importantly, be yourself!

Purpose: The purpose of any exhibition project is to show the community the work you have completed. This project will specifically require you to look into yourself and show the community and the world (via the world wide web...) what you believe.

Writer's Role: You are writing as the most honest version of yourself.

Audience: You are writing to the world. Anybody and everybody will have access to your essay online, but more specifically, this is an exhibition project.

Form: Your exhibition project will take the following forms (see attached pages for explanations & FCAs):

- ⤴ **Belief Mobile**, hanging above you on exhibition night
- ⤴ **Analysis of an Idol**, in a presentation portfolio for the public to view on exhibition night
- ⤴ Type 5 “**This I Believe**” **Essay**, uploaded to the NPR website and printed for your presentation portfolio.
- ⤴ **Podcast**, uploaded to the GBeCs website for all to have access to.
- ⤴ Oral Component, **discussion group** with four students and two teachers
- ⤴ **3 additional artifacts** from the artifact list to add to your presentation portfolio.
- ⤴ Exhibition night presentation

Artifact List

- ⤴ **15 Song playlist**- choose songs that represent your beliefs. Create a CD and a cover that is appropriate for your beliefs. Include information about the background of the song and why it is on your play list.
- ⤴ **Board Game**- create a game about your beliefs complete with rules and all game pieces.
- ⤴ **Children's Book**- write a children's book about your beliefs, complete it with pictures.
- ⤴ **Diorama**- create a 3-dimensional representation of your beliefs.
- ⤴ **Item of Clothing**- must be school appropriate and you must wear it to exhibition night!
- ⤴ **Seven Wonders of the World**- recreate the Seven Wonders with what you think they should be based on your beliefs. Present this as a newspaper article for your presentation portfolio.
- ⤴ **Web page**- design a web page with information about your beliefs.
- ⤴ **Artwork**- create a piece of artwork that represents something you believe in.
- ⤴ **Interview**- interview an idol or someone with the same beliefs as you. Include a transcript of the interview.
- ⤴ **Other**- You may choose something else with advisor approval. However, no Power Point presentations, Brochures or Posters!

FCAs for additional artifacts:

1. Each artifact must stand on its own. Your beliefs should be evident without any explanation.
2. Evidence supports the represented belief.
3. Artifacts pose a question for others to ponder.

Belief Mobile

- ⤴ This will be a mobile (think about something hanging above a baby's crib...) that displays pictures that represent your beliefs about the following categories. Each picture needs to have a one sentence explanation that starts out "I believe..."

Choose 30 of the following categories to represent on your mobile. If you would like to choose something not on this list, you must have your advisor approve it first.

Animals	Architecture	Art	Colors	Death	Depression
Earth	Economy	Education	English	Exercise	Family
Fashion	Foreign Language	Friendship	Future	Geography	Government
Happiness	Health	Holidays	Intelligence	Life	Literature
Love	Literature	Magic	Mathematics	Money	Movies
Music	Nature	Nutrition	Organization	Outer Space	Past
Philanthropy	Philosophy	Physical Ed.	Politics	Present	Relationships
Religion	Science	Shopping	Social Studies	Technology	Teenagers
Transportation	War	Writing			

FCAs

1. At least 30 categories must be represented and you should be prepared to discuss the mobile in your discussion group and at exhibition night.
2. Each picture and sentence clearly represents one of the categories (there should be no question which category the picture belongs to).
3. The sentences must not have any grammar or spelling mistakes.

Analysis of and Idol

- ⤴ Search the essay database on the NPR website and read at least 10 essays. Keep a log of the essays you read and choose one written by a person you idolize based on the essay. Write a summary of the essay and why you idolize the author.
- ⤴ You may search by name, age or theme for essays. Your log and your analysis will be included in your presentation portfolio for exhibition night.

FCAs

1. Read at least 10 essays and keep track of the name and theme of the essay in the log (you can find the log on Moodle under community events).
2. Your summary should be between 50 and 100 words and should include the theme of the essay and reasons why you idolize the author.
3. No more than four words from the original text. (Include a copy of the original essay in your presentation portfolio.)

Type 5 “This I Believe” Essay

The following are the essay guidelines from the NPR website:

This I Believe Essay-Writing Guidelines

We invite you to contribute to this project by writing and submitting your own statement of personal belief. We understand how challenging this is—it requires such intimacy that no one else can do it for you. To guide you through this process, we offer these suggestions:

Tell a story: Be specific. Take your belief out of the ether and ground it in the events of your life. Consider moments when belief was formed or tested or changed. Think of your own experience, work, and family, and tell of the things you know that no one else does. 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. That’s about three minutes when read aloud at your natural pace.

***Name your belief:** If you can’t name it in a sentence or two, your essay might not be about 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. Tell us what you do believe, not what you don’t believe. Avoid speaking in the editorial “we.” 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.

For this project, we are also guided by the original *This I Believe series* and the [producers’ invitation](#) to those who wrote essays in the 1950s. Their advice holds up well and we are abiding by it. Please consider it carefully in writing your piece.

In introducing the original series, host Edward R. Murrow said, “Never has the need for personal philosophies of this kind been so urgent.” We would argue that the need is as great now as it was 50 years ago. We are eager for your contribution.

FCAs:

1. This is a Type 5 writing assignment so no grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors.
2. Name your belief (see above for more specifics). It should be clear exactly what you are writing about.
3. Seamless transitions between paragraphs.

Podcast

- ^ This is a reading of your essay onto a podcast using technology here at GBeCs. Your podcast will be uploaded to our website for the public to listen to.

FCAs

1. Before reading your essay, state your name and your grade at GBeCs
2. Speak slowly and clearly.
3. Practice reading your essay many, many times so you don't stumble on words.

Oral Component

- ⤴ You will be in a group of about 4 students and 3 adults for your discussion; there will be two teachers and a community member. You will have some choice about which adults are part of your discussion and we hope to give every student their first choice. Student groups will be chosen for you.
- ⤴ Each discussion will be 40 minutes long and will be student led.
- ⤴ Each student should be prepared to lead 10 minutes of his/her discussion group and should have 8-10 discussion questions prepared. Questions will be handed in.
- ⤴ Advisors will go over discussion techniques before the discussions so you can have some practice leading discussions before your oral component.
- ⤴ The date of the discussions will be determined later!
- ⤴ The discussion portion will be a group grade, assessed by the adults in the discussion.

Groups:

Discussion Times

1. 8:15-8:55
2. 9:05-9:45
3. 9:55-10:35
4. 10:45-11:20
5. 12:30-1:10
6. 1:20-2:00

FCAs

1. Each student must use the full 10 minutes for their portion of the discussion and have 8-10 questions prepared to maintain the flow of discussion.
2. All students must participate in the full discussion by responding to questions from peers.
3. Adults ask no more than 4 questions in the 40 minutes.