



Sample Lesson Plan This I Believe

Lesson plan for: **This I Believe**

Date: **Weeks 8 & 9**

Objectives (*1 – 3 things that the learner will know or be able to do at the end of the lesson*):

1. Learners will **identify** the main idea (i.e.: What is the author’s belief) of a piece of non-fiction writing.
2. Learners will **explain** the reasons for the author’s belief.
3. Learners will **write** a GED-style essay on a given topic.

Frameworks utilized (*1 or 2 strands, standards, and benchmarks that capture the ‘big ideas’*):

English Language Arts: R1.4c Identify the main idea or theme in texts of increasing length and complexity of content

English Language Arts: R1.5d Explain how an author’s life and time are reflected in his/her work

English Language Arts: W1.5a Respond to a prompt in essay form with a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt, followed by coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples

See additional Frameworks utilized for Level 4 and Level 5 learners at the end of this lesson plan.

Materials/Resources:

Print copies of an essay from [This I Believe](#) (see www.thisibelieve.org)
Computer with online capability and speakers for audio projection

Additional Resources:

[This I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Remarkable Men and Women From Macmillan Audio](#)

Additional curriculum ideas: <http://thisibelieve.org/educationoutreach.html>

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Activities (include steps and length of time):

Pre-Writing- I Believe in.... **15-20 minutes**

Ask learners to write a list of ten statements that the “believe in” (i.e. I believe that everyone should recycle; I believe that my community is safe; I believe in life in outer space, etc.).

Discussion- What is a Belief? **10 minutes**

Brainstorm answers to “What is a belief?” Write student responses on the board.

Instruction- Vocabulary & Literary Devices **30 minutes**

Introduce uncommon vocabulary and related definitions of words found in the This I Believe essay that the group will listen to and read. Define *literal language*, *figurative language*, *simile*, and *metaphor*. Provide and ask for examples of each.

Pre-Reading- This I Believe **10 minutes**

Introduce the title, author, date of publication, etc. of the essay. Distribute print copies of the essay. Tell students they will have between five to ten minutes to skim and pre-read the essay. DO NOT discuss the content of the essay with the group.

Listening- This I Believe **5-10 minutes**

Play the audio link to the print essay. Learners may choose to read along with the print or to listen only.

Discussion- This I Believe **20-30 minutes**

Discuss the print essay and audio link. What is the author’s belief? Why does he/she believe this? Do you feel the same way as the author? Do you recognize significant metaphors or other literary devices?

Post-Writing **45 minutes**

Provide learners with two topics related to the This I Believe text that they have just discussed. Phrase the topics as if they were GED essay prompts. Ask learners to write a GED essay.

Peer Edit & Sharing- GED Essay **40 minutes**

As learners complete the GED essay, pair them up for peer editing. Ask learners to share all or part of their essay with the large group. Ask learners to respond with positive feedback only. Focus on strong ideas and images in student essays.

Homework- GED essay editing

Ask learners to revise in-class GED essay with peer edits and group feedback. Collect essays for scoring based on the GED rubric.

Suggested follow-up activities

Compile essays into a published book for distribution at local adult education centers.

Record essays onto a DVD for distribution at local adult education centers.

Submit student work to This I Believe, Inc.

2424 Frankfort Avenue

Louisville, KY 40206

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Assessment *(Must directly measure whether or not each objective was met. Use a variety of methods):*

1. Participation in classroom discussion.
2. Accurate answers on questions related to the quote.
3. Completion of a GED essay that is evaluated based on the rubric.

Student wrap-up and reflection	Teacher wrap-up and reflection
<i>(What did students like/not like about the lesson? What did they learn? What would they like to do next time?):</i>	<i>(What worked well? What should be changed? What needs to be remembered about specific learners?)</i>

Additional English Language Arts Frameworks Utilized:

Level 4: Advancing (GLE 6 – 8.9)

R1.4b Identify and interpret common figurative language (e.g. simile, metaphor) and other poetic devices such as alliteration, puns, personification, and hyperbole found in a literary work

R1.4c Identify the main idea or theme in texts of increasing length and complexity of content

R1.4d Summarize ideas and information from texts of increasing length and complexity of content

R1.4f Draw conclusions and make predictions and inferences from information or ideas presented in texts of various genres (e.g. historical documents, newspaper and magazine articles, fiction and non-fiction, job-related materials)

W1.4b Compose a personal opinion (e.g. letter to the editor of a newspaper) that consists of at least three paragraphs

W1.4c Write a summary of an article or story

W1.4d With assistance, compose an essay that includes an introductory paragraph, supporting body paragraphs, and a conclusion

W2.4c Compose complex sentences using a variety of subordinate clauses, appropriate punctuation, and verb tense consistency

W2.4d Use expanded vocabulary with increasing frequency and precision

W2.4e With assistance, proofread and revise an essay to assure correct punctuation, spelling, grammar, verb tense consistency, idea development, clarity, and relevant supporting details

W3.4c Engage in peer editing with classmates

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Level 5: Adept (GLE 9 – 12.9)

R1.5b Evaluate the persuasiveness of a text on the basis of the quality of evidence provided to support its argument.

R1.5d Explain how an author's life and time are reflected in his/her work

R1.5e Describe the literary elements and characteristics of fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry

W1.5a Respond to a prompt in essay form with a clearly focused main idea that addresses the prompt, followed by coherent development with specific and relevant details and examples

***W1.5g** Write a personal narrative that develops a story line in meaningful sequence, describes events and characters to convey a theme or tone, and includes descriptive details and concrete language

W2.5a Use correct sentence structure and follow the conventions of Edited American English (EAE) in all formal writing

W2.5b Use figurative language in appropriate contexts with increasing frequency

W2.5c Proofread and revise an essay to assure correct punctuation, spelling, grammar, cohesiveness, idea development, clarity, and relevant supporting details

W3.5a Observe how other writers express themselves and practice using their techniques