“Believe in yourself to believe in others.”

By Dellarule Tarpah

With the slogan "One book, one school community" this aims to bring the students, parents, faculty, and citizens of West Haven together through literature. This I Believe is a book that contains the personal philosophies of remarkable men and women written in the form of mini essays. Featuring works from known figures such as: Benjamin Carson, Albert Einstein, Hellen Keller, Bill Gates, and more, This I Believe not only helps readers form their own personal beliefs, but guides them towards how they should share it with others. Students are given the opportunity to engage in the book in multiple ways. During Advisory, students were approached with the idea to share their own belief statements. Through visual arts, shirt essays, and infomercial, etc; students can explain what values and philosophies they govern. In addition, they can also win cool prizes.

I believe that the "This I Believe" initiative will be beneficial for the community. It not only allows people to bond over similar stories of interest, but opens the door for communication and an exchange of personal stories and beliefs.

It is with great pleasure that the WHHS School Governance Council announces a very exciting community initiative. The West Haven community and our West Haven High School community will be joining the This I Believe public dialogue. This I Believe: The personal philosophies of remarkable men and women is a compilation of essays of the personal philosophies of more than 70 individuals. All students received a copy of the book in advisory today. Please ask them to share it with you. All WHHS students will be encouraged to join in this project, by conducting belief statement and essay contests based on the concept of “This I Believe”. Please like us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter - Westies Believe. Special thanks to the West Haven Public Library for their donation of all of the books and the Rotary Club of West Haven for the contest prizes.

The Inside Scoop
- This I Believe Contests
- Pi Day
- Indoor Track
- Women in STEM
- Cabaret
- Book Reviews
- Nutmeg Book Awards

For more details, go to the next page!
Contests for WHHS students for This I Believe Essay, Slogan Contest, Infomercial and Visual Art Contest

West Haven High School

**Open to WHHS Students Only**

This I Believe Essay

What is a This I Believe Essay?
A short (350-500) word statement of the belief that is most important to your worldview.

Guidelines for Writing Your Essay:

Tell a story: Be specific. Take your belief out of the ether and ground it in the events of your life. Your story need not be heart-warming or gut-wrenching—it can even be funny—but it should be real. Consider moments when your belief was formed, tested, or changed. Make sure your story ties to the essence of your daily life philosophy and to the shaping of your beliefs.

Be brief: Your statement should be between 350 and 500 words. The shorter length forces you to focus on the belief that is central to your life.

Name your belief: If you can’t name it in a sentence or two, your essay might not be about belief. Rather than writing a list, consider focusing on one core belief.

Be positive: Say what you do believe, not what you don’t believe. Avoid statements of religious dogma, preaching, or editorializing.

Be personal: Make your essay about you; speak in the first person. Try reading 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 example essays and more information about the This I Believe organization, go to thisibelieve.org

Slogan Contest Rules
Write a slogan that addresses the beliefs behind “One book, One Community”. For judging purposes, the slogan must be an attention-grabbing word or phrase that expresses This I Believe, Believe, or #westiesbelieve.

Infomercial Contest Rules
Maximum running time of the said infomercial is two (2) minutes only and must not be lower than 30 seconds.

The info-commercial focus on This I Believe, Believe, or #westiesbelieve.

Any forms of multi-media devices are allowed in creating the infomercial. Any form of video-camera is permitted. Entries can be a simple slide show of pictures and captions but they can also create a video production of themselves and all inserted pictures or video must not have a copyright issue.

Criteria for judging: Story, originality, relevance to theme.

Visual Art Contest Rules
Visual Arts include many art forms that are visual in nature. The artist captures their own thoughts and ideas to create a visual piece of art related to This I Believe, Believe or #westiesbelieve.

Accepted forms of visual art include: original print, drawing, painting, collage, metal etching or punch work, fiber work or computer-generated artwork, sculpture, ceramics and other three-dimensional artwork, stained glass and jewelry, regardless of thickness, reproductions or enlargements of other artwork and PowerPoint files.

An explanation of the art form and its connection to This I Believe, Believe or #westiesbelieve must be included with the submission.

Submissions will be judged on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme, originality and creativity.
Westie students have been learning all about Pi. They have been memorizing and studying Pi, which is so essential as a solid function in Math. The symbol used by mathematicians to represent the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter is the lowercase Greek letter π, sometimes spelled out as pi, and derived from the first letter of the Greek word perimetros, meaning circumference. To let everyone get excited about Pi Day, our teachers created a pie contest. The students were challenged to write on the board as many digits of Pi as they could memorize. The teachers were good sports. For all the students hard work, they let the winners pie them in the face! WHHS held its Pi Day Contest on Pi Day on Monday, March 14th, challenging students to write on the board as many digits of Pi as they could memorize. Our contest mascot, Pi Guy, was a new addition this year—check out his calculator belt and his protractor necklace on the shirt! Thank you to our student participants and our teachers, and congratulations to sophomore Betsy Magana, who won with 287 digits of Pi memorized. (Last year, she came in 2nd place with 236 digits.) Pi Day is celebrated each year on 3/14, as Pi is the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter, nearly equal to 3.14159...
It’s a #NewEngland Season!

During the beginning of indoor track season, Senior Drew Highsmith suggested to his coach Moddy Vaughn, “I think we should put the two fastest guys first so we get the lead right away for our 4 x 200 relay.” She said “Sure, we can try that.” But was not convinced this was the best way. Drew also told Assistant Coach Ryan Knight that one of his motivational tools for his relay team was a simple twitter hashtag: #NewEnglandSeason.

Through the season, the relay team did really well. At one of the meets at Yale, the team broke the school record and ran a 1:33.34. The winning continued. At the State Opens at Hillhouse, the group again competed and slated some of their best times. The team that finished with the best time, Windsor, was disqualified because of an illegitimate runner. The Westies were the team with the next best time and won. This qualified them for the New England Regional Championships in Boston, MA. Here they finished 6th. What an amazing accomplishment. Finishing 6th and competing with some of the fastest high school teams in our region. Pictured above are Abdoul Aremu, Talon Butler, Jeff Flores and Drew Highsmith, at the New England Regionals held in Boston. The team hopes to be as successful this Spring in outdoor track and back to Regionals for the outdoor season. Congratulations Westies!!
Ms. Barnes and Mrs. Woychowski accompanied 10 freshman and sophomore girls to the Women in STEM Expo at Gateway on March 14th. The President of Gateway Community College welcomed girls from several area high schools. Students then learned about the many careers open to them in the STEM fields. The girls were broken up into groups and attended hands-on workshops led by professors from Gateway's science and engineering departments. Before and during lunch, a fair featured employers and non-profit organizations. The girls used a scavenger hunt style exercise to meet each of the representatives.

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**Skip the Difficulties for a Better Future**

By Fatima Alrashed

Each word had different letters, meanings and has a different effect, depending how it is used. We all have a place we are from, a culture, developed habits, language and religion. When a word is from your native land, it has a certain meaning. This has a big role in your life. When one decides to learn all that behind and start a new life, the experience becomes challenging.

It is very hard to leave your homeland. It takes a very strong and patient person to do this. Often goals are set to reach to try to make life better. Often, the poor conditions of a homeland force one to do it and leave behind everything. There are both pros and cons, good and bad. But, it takes a very strong person to do this, even though you do not know what you will face in the future. You will always see good things and sometimes bad things. Things you like and things you dislike. There are pros and cons in the new situation.

The positives are that we see and meet new people and make new friends. We meet new people in friends and learn the culture of the new country. We meet new people at all different places like school or religious events. We learn a new language gaining more experiences about life. This teaches me to be a strong person and teaches me to solve more problems. It helps me understand life more too. Of course some I have to face some difficulties too, especially in the beginning. A new language, a good home, finding a job, trying to continue traditions and even achieving hopes and dreams. As time passes, things start to get back to normal.

One of the places I find a mix of different cultures is West Haven High school, especially in my history class with Mrs. Bruneau. We are all from different countries and speak different languages. We feel similar in our goals and sometimes in our ideas regardless of our cultures because we are students and all of us faced difficulties when we came to America. "One of the hardest problems is the language," says one of the Spanish students. "It is hard to live with people who have a different culture than you," a Pakistani student said.

In closing, I want to say to everyone, be an adventurous person, do not be afraid, you will not fail because you are strong and you are able to do a lot. Take the good things and leave the bad things behind, and be careful about what you do and what you say because you represent your country, your culture, your religion, and your family. You are a symbol for all these things. When you succeed and excel you will achieve and represent yourself, your family and your country.

Fatima is from Iraq and has been in this country for 9 months. Her English and work ethic are fantastic!! -Mrs. Lynch
By Susie Beyl

“Cabaret” Article: The Rostrum

This spring, a different sort of musical is hitting the West Haven High School stage: “Cabaret.” You know, “Life is a caaaaabaaaareet!” Yes, that one. Instead, the glitz and glam of the infamous cabaret scene is seen from another aspect. The show peers into the lives of individuals in Berlin, Germany during the rise of the Nazi Party. Themes of discrimination, government, politics, love, and humanity run strong through the hauntingly beautiful production. The only thing more captivating than this incredible show is the fact that high school students possess the talent, dedication, and focus to perform it with utmost perfection.

As a member of the cast, I speak for everyone when I say that this production will live on in our memories forever as one of the most important performances we have all taken part in. Cast members have done endless research in an effort to portray our characters most accurately. Steven Christensen, a senior and fellow cast member, called Cabaret “the Holocaust story you’ve never been told,” and it could not be more true.

Everyone has learned about the devastation of the Holocaust in school, but to perform in a show that details the lives of those directly affected is chilling. All cast and crew members have the pressure of saying their lines, singing their songs, costuming their cast members, and creating their sets as honestly as possible. Yes, the content of the show is mature and heavy, but so was the time period. To sugarcoat this show is a disservice to those who endured Nazi Germany. West Haven High School Theatre Workshop (WHHSTW) prides itself on its ability to handle such material with eloquence, professional, and artistry.

Once it was announced that WHHSTW would be doing “Cabaret” this year, its members’ faces lit up: Lights! Glitter! Black heels! Big dance numbers! As a group, we have gotten that and so much more. We have all learned lessons that extend far beyond our own lives and have thus grown as individuals during production. To see your fellow student, usually laughing and joking, on stage singing of the horrors of Nazi Germany under a single-spot, has been mind blowing for all of us. I have no doubt that audience members will feel the same exact way: a mixture of heartbroken and amazed. Everyone is truly better off having taken part in West Haven High School Theatre Workshop’s “Cabaret,” and so is everyone who had the privilege of seeing it.
“Ender’s Game” by Orson Scott Card
Review by Librarian Sam, WHPL

When I was in high school, one of my friends recommended “Ender’s Game” to me. I have never been much of a science fiction reader. I always thought sci-fi meant those large meandering series, with multiple prequels and changing narrators between books. It seemed complicated and convoluted – intimidating, if I were more honest. Instead, I liked the absurdity of the “Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy,” the lack of depth. But I’m trying to revisit some of those long discarded book recommendations, and these two books are gems.

Eighty years before the start of the book, there were two alien invasions and ever since earth has been preparing for an interplanetary war. The International Fleet (IF) was given powers to recruit, train and command soldiers for the coming war. Andrew “Ender” Wiggins, a young boy, is a potential trainee for the IF’s Battle School, which orbits the earth.

The Battle School is a harsh place for young soldiers to study and train for war. There are fierce rivalries, egos and demanding challenges all the time. Ender rises in the rankings, earning the ire of many and making dangerous enemies. The IF has taken a special interest in Ender and gives him particularly difficult challenges to see if he may become the commander they need to fight the coming war. It is psychological warfare, traumatic stress and inconceivable pressure all directed at a prepubescent boy. Will Ender endure the strain? Will he become the war hero against the aliens? It was hard to tell how this book would end – where Ender would end up, but “Ender’s Game” was a satisfying dip into science fiction.

“Feed” by M.T. Anderson
Review by Librarian Sam, WHPL

I cheated. I was going to review this other awesome book, a book that I picked out specifically for this review. But I didn’t have time to read; November comes with holidays and obligations I always forget about. November is deceptive that way, I always think I have more time than I do. I did, however, have time to listen to an audiobook on my rides in and out of work. I listen to a lot of books while I drive, because otherwise I’m listening to silly pop songs that I’m just too old to relate to anymore.

Anyway, I read/listened to “Feed” by M.T. Anderson. It’s an older book that came out in 2002, but it’s still relevant and still so good. “Feed” takes place in the future, where people now have a “feed” installed on their brain that connects them to an advanced form of the internet. They can mentally check out sites, shop, share each other’s memories and privately “chat” with each other over the feed as if they’re communicating telepathically. People live in a hyper-connected world where stores blast your feed with customized ads as you shop around the mall and the feed suggests synonyms when you can’t think of the right word.

Titus and his friends go to the moon for spring break and they meet Violet. Over the feed, they hear about a great club and go. A strange man is there and with a touch Titus, Violet and others are suddenly hacked, controlled by the strange man into screaming uncontrollably, “We enter a time of calamity!” The police come and they shut down the victims, turning off their feed until they are repaired. Titus and company go dark and wake up in the hospital hours later. As they wait for their feeds to be repaired, Titus and Violet become closer. Afterwards, back on Earth, Violet suggests resisting the feed. Titus was inconvenienced by the hacker’s touch, but Violet is inspired by the hack. The book includes bits of the advertising that Titus experiences, but the audiobook has entire tracks of advertising. It creates a disjointed listen, but it immerses you into the world of the feed. This book messed with my sense of independence, am I just a consumer to companies? This as black Friday ads spammed my email.
**Serving on Nutmeg**  
By Mrs. Jillian Woychowski

“The Nutmeg Book Award encourages children in grades 2-12 to read quality literature and to choose their favorite from a list of ten nominated titles. The Nutmeg Book Award is jointly sponsored by the Connecticut Library Association (CLA) and the Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL). The Nutmeg Committee is comprised of members of these two entities.” (nutmegaward.org)

Mrs. Woychowski, Library Media Specialist at WHHS and member of the CT Association of School Librarians, is serving on the 2018 Nutmeg Committee for High School. She is joined by 9 other High School and Youth Services Librarians and 3 student readers.

**Process:**

- **October 2015**  Mrs. W. applied to be on the Committee for 2018
- **December 2015**  Notified of selection for 2018 High School Committee
- **January 2016-September 2016**  Reading of 80-120 novels (a list of 10-12 is given to the committee members at a time, already 21)*
- **Weekly online discussion board participation via Wikispaces**
- **Monthly meetings at the West Hartford Public Library in the evening when titles are debated to be eliminated or move on to the next round**
- **September 2016**  10 final Nominees and 2 Alternates chosen
- **Publishers notified (if mass paperbacks for a title cannot be ready in time, an alternate takes the place)**
- **February 2017**  Public and School Librarians receive confidential list of nominees to prepare orders and promotional materials
- **May 2017**  Nominees announced to general public
- **May 2017-March 2018**  Students read the nominees, including during 2017 Summer Reading programs and throughout the school year 2017-2018
- **April 2018**  Students vote online for winner at each level
- **May 2018**  Nutmeg winners announced (grades 2-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-12)

*Mrs. Woychowski and her husband are purchasing the reading list titles (all 80-120) and donating them to the WHHS Library after the 2018 award process cycle is completed.


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**About the Nutmeg Book Award**  The Nutmeg Book Award encourages Connecticut children in grades 2-12 to read quality literature and to choose their favorite from a list of nominated titles. Jointly sponsored by the Connecticut Library Association (CLA) and the Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL), the Nutmeg Committee is comprised of children's librarians and school library media specialists who are members of our sponsoring organizations.