

***Narrative Engagement Index***  
***Roberts, Hamby, Grych, & Banyard, 2015.***

The Templeton Laws of Life Essay contest was started in 1987 and is designed to be a character building exercise in which participants are asked to reflect upon and write about a value, experience, or inspiration. Initially, it was only offered to adolescents (typically starting around high school) in Franklin County, TN, though it has since been offered to all age groups on an international scale. This measure was designed to gauge the effects of participation in this particular contest, though it may be adapted to further assess other similar narrative, autobiographical writing experiences. The items were developed in part through review of past essay writers' reflections on the impact of the essay, sometimes even years later.

**Reliability & validity:** Internal consistency (coefficient alpha) was .96. The first factor accounted for 54% of the variance; all 25 items loaded at .6 or above. Note: items 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 21, 22, and 23 may be used as a brief version of the scale.

**Scoring:** Answer categories were assigned a value and summed, with higher scores indicating higher levels of narrative engagement.

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1. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to spend some time thinking about something that has been on your mind?

Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1

2. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to think about how you really felt about someone who is important to you?

Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1

3. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to focus on the values that are most important to you?

Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1

4. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to express your thoughts and feelings?

Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1

5. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to share your story with other people?

Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1

6. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay let you think about how things that happened helped you become the person you are today?

Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1

7. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to feel better about yourself as a writer?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

8. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to realize you have something important to say?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

9. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay give you a chance to share some things you had hesitated to tell anyone before?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

10. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you face difficult feelings?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

11. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you set goals for yourself?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

12. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you understand yourself better?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

13. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay increase your sense of who you are?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

14. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you feel in control of important parts of your life?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

15. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you feel like you could make a difference in your community?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

16. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you cope with something stressful that happened to you?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

17. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help your relationships with your family or friends?

Very much ..... 4

Somewhat ..... 3

A little ..... 2

Not at all ..... 1

18. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you understand your family or friends?

Very much ..... 4

- Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1
19. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you feel more optimistic about the future?  
Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1
20. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you to reach out to other people?  
Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1
21. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you make your own decisions?  
Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1
22. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you learn to be yourself and not who others want you to be?  
Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1
23. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you learn to work through problems and not just give up?  
Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1
24. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you learn to be open to new information and ideas?  
Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1
25. How much did writing the Laws of Life Essay help you learn to be more honest with others?  
Very much ..... 4  
Somewhat ..... 3  
A little ..... 2  
Not at all ..... 1