

Narrative Engagement Index—Short Form
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. The Narrative Engagement Index 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 full scale contains 25 items, and items were developed in part through review of past essay writers' reflections on the impact of the essay, sometimes even years later. The short-form of the measure contains ten items from the original measure (with no loss of psychometric properties).

Reliability & validity: Internal consistency (coefficient alpha) was .94. The first factor accounted for 64% of the variance; all 10 items loaded at .7 or above. The short-form of the scale very strongly correlated with the full scale ($r = .97$).

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 realize you have something important to say?

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

2. 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

3. 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

4. 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

5. 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

6. 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

7. 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

8. 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

9. 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

10. 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