**Laws of Life Essay Contest**

**Assignment**

**Essay Requirements**

* **Essays should be 500 to 700 words in length, typed and double-spaced.** Students should include a word count, if possible.
* **Essays should be based on a student’s personal experience or observations.**
* **Essays should contain a “law of life” expressed as a maxim, saying, or quotation.** (“Honesty is the best policy” is a *Law of Life*; the word “honesty” is not. Essays that do not contain a saying or quote are not eligible to win prizes

**Writing a Georgia *Laws of Life* Essay**

**Pointers for Students**

* When writing a *Law of Life* essay, students should be original and should “write from the heart.”
* The essay should show how a *Law of Life* applies to a student’s life. Essays that focus on a historical character or that read like a book review are not winning essays.
* A *Law of Life* is a wise saying or quote that contains words of truth, lasting meaning, or inspiration. Examples of *Laws of Life* include:
* “An attitude of gratitude creates blessings.”
* “You are only as good as your word.”
* “To have a friend, be one.”
* “Honesty is the best policy.”
* “When it is dark enough, you can see the stars.”
* “Smile and the world smiles with you.”

Think about a personal experience that has taught you about a Law of Life. The experience may have been a major event in your life, or it may have been a small, private moment when you came to understand something profound about life. Perhaps the experience was something traumatic, such as when you or a family member were in a car wreck. Or perhaps the experience was something that makes you smile every time you think of it – the time your grandmother taught you how to bake a blueberry pie, or the time that you and a friend discovered that laughter was the best medicine.

**Write an essay that relates your experience to a Law of Life. Be sure to clearly state the Law of Life in your essay!**

Remember that the best essays include lots of details. These details make the reader feel as though he or she was right there with you when the event occurred. Let the reader know exactly how you felt, and why.

Your essay should be between 500 and 700 words. Essays that are shorter or longer than this will be disqualified from the contest. Placing the essay’s word count at the beginning or end of the essay is helpful, but it is not required.

**Your essay will be due to Turnitin by 3:30 p.m. on Friday, January 23. Students whose essays will be sent on for the state-wide competition will be notified by the first week of February.**

***Georgia Laws of Life Essay Contest***

**Sample Maxims**

*A “Law of Life” or maxim can be a quotation from a famous person, or a simple saying that you have heard. A “law of life” should be short and easy to remember.*

1. “The highest form of wisdom is kindness.” *- The Talmud*

2. “A cloudy day is no match for a sunny disposition.”

3. “What is success? To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

4. “Strength is a matter of a made-up mind.” – John Beecher

5. “Slow and steady wins the race.” – The Tortoise

6. “Loving someone deeply gives you strength, while being deeply loved gives you courage.” – Lao-tzu

7. “Share a smile with other people and a smile will return to you.”

8. “Fall seven times; stand up eight.” –Japanese proverb

9. “Love is patient, love is kind.” - I Corinthians 13:4

10. “Beauty is a light in the heart.” -Kahil Gibran

11. “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.” – *William Hickson*

12. “Out of adversity comes opportunity.”

13. “Failure is not falling down but refusing to get up.”

14. “No one knows what he can do until he tries.” –*Pubilius Syrus*

15. “Mistakes are doorways to discovery.” – *Anonymous*

16. “To listen, when nobody else wants to listen, is a very beautiful thing.” –*Mother Teresa*

17. “The important thing is this: to be able at any moment to sacrifice what you are for what you could become. “-*DuBois*

18. “One does not discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore.” -*Andre Gide*

19. “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and he'll eat forever.“ - *Chinese Proverb*

20. “Good example is the best sermon.” - *Benjamin Franklin*

21. “Stop and smell the roses.” – *Anonymous*

22. “Strangers are just friends waiting to happen.” – *Anonymous*

23. “Bloom where you're planted.” – *Anonymous*

24. “Courage is not the absence of fear; it is the conquest of it.” - *William Danforth*

25. “We have every right to dream heroic dreams.” *- Ronald Reagan*

**Internet sources: quoteland.com, quotegeek.com, wiseoldsayings.com, and many others**

**It’s better to have a story in mind and then find a Law of Life than it is to have a Law of Life and try to think of a story.**

**If you find a quotation on the internet, it’s probably best to check it against several places to make sure that the person who “they” say said it actually said it.**