

Writing Prompt

American Dream Essay Contest: “What it means to me”

Take a moment to read and reflect upon the “Ten Principles to Live By” as described in James P. Owen’s book, *Cowboy Ethics*:

1. LIVE EACH DAY WITH COURAGE
2. TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR WORK
3. ALWAYS FINISH WHAT YOU START
4. DO WHAT HAS TO BE DONE
5. BE TOUGH, BUT FAIR
6. WHEN YOU MAKE A PROMISE, KEEP IT
7. RIDE FOR THE BRAND
8. TALK LESS AND SAY MORE
9. REMEMBER THAT SOME THINGS AREN'T FOR SALE
10. KNOW WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE
11. CREATE YOUR OWN PERSONAL ETHICAL BELIEF

As you reflect on your life so far, *describe* how one of the “Ten Principles to Live By,” or your own personal ethical belief, has been a driving or guiding force in your life. Whether a part of your internal guidance from within, the decisions you make every day, or how they inspire the decisions you make for the benefit of your future, define ‘what it means to me’ in 300-2,000 words.

Essays will be judged primarily on content (Is the essay based on the Principles above? Does the essay show a respect for life and people? Would most people agree that this is an important law of life?) Presentation is also considered (compelling, flow, and clarity). Grammar, usage and conventions will also be considered but should not weigh heavily on how they rank.