Prompts

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Draft 1

First, you feel, you sense the whoosh- from instinct almost, the touch of wind sweeping your skin. Then comes the scream. A hundred-mile-per-hour banshee hurtles unceasingly towards me, separated by a few barriers- a world-shaking alien scream. Then, as quickly as it came, it’s gone. That’s my earliest memory of Formula One- F1- watching from the barriers of a street circuit as a child.

From a young age, motor racing- cars going *whoosh* at a hundred miles per hour- has always infatuated me, especially F1. These ‘cars’- I don’t know if you could even call them cars anymore, since they’re intrinsically different- the only things they share with street cars are the basic forms: four-wheeled with brakes, and a powertrain, and a person drives them- about it, really.

In particular, this specific infatuation seems to be an on-and-off relationship- I’ve fallen in love with it so many times, just to break it off when it all felt right. But I don’t know, this time- it feels different.

My latest foray into F1 began in the utterly dominated 2020 season. While watching, alien terms came up to my ears- although in English, which I would consider as my mother tongue, they sounded like gobbledegook gibberish. Grip? Softs? Hards? Downforce? What was the difference between the ‘outside’ and the ‘inside’, anyway? They all look the same. These alien gibberish technical terms one would simply ignore at most, brush away as knowledge one didn’t need to know to enjoy F1, inexplicably and suddenly morphed into key terms of tremendous importance to me.

Despite this, I brushed them away- engrossing my time in school- online at the time, feeling hollower and hollower- and games, and all sorts of other important-not-important distractions- until, around 2021, me and a close friend bonded further over a shared interest we both had: cars. This brought back that childlike curiosity that I lost- brought back some color into my otherwise colorless world. It gave me some motivation to start exploring this little question I had- a spark of motivation that pushed me to do more.

As the days slogged by, I started researching- from casual online sources like Youtube, to even recently reading academic papers after a chance encounter on JSTOR. This was the main reason why I did- and am still trying- to improve myself- both academically and non-academically- I’m picking up (and trying to make and test) models in CFD and Blender, and reducing the amount of time I spend on distractions from work, learning that all I need to motivate myself? My ‘missing piece’? Passion.

So that’s how I found a renewed purpose to improve and explore. All it needed was a friend and watching men racing cars round and round at hundreds of miles per hour.