**1. Tell us about one activity or personal goal you have worked on in the past year. How did you approach it, what was the outcome, and what impact did it have on you and those around you? (200 words maximum)**

Introduced to a community service in Kei Island, a remote island in Maluku, Indonesia by my dad, I willingly signed up. After a briefing with Dr Vanessa, head of the doctorSHARE compound, I was told that their water contained white residues.

Asking for several liters of water to be sent to Jakarta and bringing it to the Indonesian Government’s water testing facility, I found out that the water contained relatively high levels of calcium carbonate. I immediately thought of making a water filter and consulted with a water specialist to ask for his advice on the layers.

I spent several weeks prototyping the filter and testing it out on Kei Island’s water sample. When the filtered water was retested in the lab, the percentage of contaminants decreased. In order to distribute it to the locals when I get there, I made a brief instruction manual on how to make the water filter.

Upon reaching the island, I conducted a demonstration on how to build a scaled-down model to the residents of the doctorSHARE compound and a few boarding school seniors and encouraged them to teach it throughout the island.

Currently, the residents of the doctorSHARE area are building their own water filter and the students are presenting this idea starting from their school and their nearby areas.

In the end, not only did I get more understanding about water safety, but I also felt self-accomplished  for being able to help Kei Island with its water issues, even though the impact may not yet be very significant.

**3. We all have challenges that we have to work to overcome. What is something you have struggled with, and how have you addressed it? (200 words maximum)**

My interest in guzheng, known as the Chinese harp, started during the instrument exhibition at my school. From the right hand's string-plucking to the left hand's pushing of the string to alter the pitch and generate vibrato, everything about how it was performed screamed elegance.

Of course, learning new things isn’t easy, especially when your teacher doesn’t speak your language. To add on to this, COVID-19 happened. I simply couldn't grasp any of the techniques being taught through Zoom. Music class became my dreaded weekly lesson, where all of my frustrations would coalesce and my motivation to perform well would vanish.

At this point, my life skills teacher introduced me to the Gibbs Reflective Cycle, a framework that assists individuals in identifying their areas of improvement, and actions they can take to learn from their experiences.

“If language barrier is the main issue,” I thought, “isn't it something that I can overcome? Can't I just put in more effort and devote more time to learning Chinese and practicing instead of complaining about my situation?” I asked myself.

Ever since then, I resolved to devote more time and effort into learning the instrument. I also put in hours and hours of hard work into learning Chinese textbooks and flashcards to understand my instructor, specific guzheng terminology, and increasing my practice time. Rewardingly, I managed to get a solo performance two years later.

**4. Tell us about a time when you helped someone. Who were they, what help did you provide and what was the outcome? (200 words maximum)**

During grade 10, I decided to volunteer for a buddy tutor program, a program which pairs up volunteers with struggling students to help them with specific subjects. I was assigned to a grade 9 student, Darren, for the subject of biology.

At first, the meetings started off a little awkward as we were unfamiliar with each other, he would always hesitate to ask questions. Hence,often begin the meetings with small talks, starting by asking how his day was and cracking a few jokes here and there.

Meeting once or twice a week, I would assist him for the upcoming exams: helping him with homeworks, discussing the teacher’s materials or notes before the class, sharing and discussing potential test or quiz problems. To go to the extent, I would usually provide my personal study notes for his personal review sessions.

By the course of a few months, he would inform me that his grades were progressively getting better. Although it may not be perfect yet, what’s important is that there were improvements.

I experienced an inner fulfillment when I learned that I was genuinely contributing to his academic improvement. This encouraged me to reapply for the buddy tutor program in grade 11, where I tutored students in chemistry and mathematics. In my opinion, helping others not only improves the world, but also helps me develop as a person.