The personal statement helps colleges get to know you better as a person and a student. Please provide a 1,250-3,250 character statement discussing your educational path (approx. 250 - 650 words).

*How does continuing your education at a new institution help you achieve your future goals?*

“Team Yellow! Let’s start by introducing our name, age, and where you’re from!” I enthusiastically said. Yet the only reply I could get was an unintelligible mumble. Seeing how disinterested everyone was, I knew it would take a huge effort to get the ball rolling. So I began to take the time to understand each of their individual behaviors. I realized that my role as a team leader wasn’t to tell these kids what to do, but to be a mentor to them. My role working at SuperCamp allowed me to understand that staying attuned to each camper and tailoring my attention to their needs is key. By the end of camp, my campers had explored their strengths, ignited confidence, and developed life skills for years to come. Coming into SuperCamp, my goal was to plant a seed in the young lives of my campers, yet they have done the same in mine. My passion for education and the youth had turned into my life’s ambition.

If a personalized approach was so crucial in this situation, would the same apply to a child’s learning? I decided to dive deeper into the elementary education system to find out. I conducted my research project on how differentiated instruction can help teachers foster students’ self-efficacy and learning motivation. After consulting the curriculum coordinator of Indonesia’s most prominent educational foundations, I situated myself in the educational world through classroom observations and extensive interviews with teachers. From my research, I learned that allowing students to take part in learning methods that leveraged their areas of strengths while catering towards their areas of need showed a positive correlation with their enthusiasm and participation. ~~Hence, exponentially improving student success and enjoyment.~~ (this paragraph should be connected to the college in-classroom learning. Read my comments below)

During my two years in community college, I have maximized my opportunities to explore psychology. The Psychology in Modern Life course was particularly interesting as I learned about the factors involved in personality development and interpersonal relationships. (connect what you learned at community college with the **second paragraph**. I suggest that you talk about how this course helped you during your classroom observations and interview with teachers. Which theories were you able to observe in real life situations? Try to correlate what you learn inside and outside the classroom to make a relevant point).

I strive to deepen my understanding in the psychology of children with hopes to tackle educational issues from its roots because in the future, I aspire to build a preschool that can lay a strong foundation for both academic and life skills that would prepare young children thrive in their day-to-day lives. As these years are crucial for a child’s well-being and development, I want to set up an academy that can provide the right balance of play-based learning and structured learning experiences to promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity.

The Human Development major at Cornell will provide me with a strong foundation in behavioral science along with the opportunity to explore the social, cultural, biological, and psychological development of humans. By taking the HD1155 “FWS Playing to Learn” course, I can learn about the roles of toys, games, and media in shaping a child’s learning capability from infancy throughout childhood. The HD3110 “Educational Psychology” will equip me with the application of psychological principles and concepts to facilitate children’s learning. Pairing my studies with a psychology minor will be optimal so that I can gain a deeper understanding of the varying personalities and behavior of children and how to cater towards each of their needs.

Earning a bachelor’s degree in Human Development with a minor in Psychology would be of great advantage towards my future aspirations. At Cornell University, I will continue to nurture the seed within me through experiential learning and interactions with passionate individuals, preparing myself to transform the lives of future generations.

Hi Amanda,

It’s great to see your passion for early childhood development and learning. It also appears that you’ve made thorough preparation both inside and outside the classroom for your future academic journey.

To make your essay even stronger and more unique, I advise some structural changes:

1. Intro: For the intro, I feel that it is better that you start with your very first encounter with psychology (think “origins” story).

* Is there a particular moment (the "a-ha moment") where you first became curious in this field?
* Have you always been interested in taking care of children and wanting to help them learn better? Why children in particular?
* Growing up, perhaps, did you take care of your younger siblings? Or maybe you had a nurturing tendency in your early childhood—helping your friends get along with each other, and so on?

1. Main: I’m not sure which came first, the camp or the psychology course in college? However, for better coherence, it is more rational to state that you quench your curiosity about psychology by learning it at college. Then, connect this experience with your camp counselor experience. Mention the problem and how you helped one or two campers (name them), how you were able to build genuine connections, and so on. To highlight this part, include an anecdote about how you were able to connect with them genuinely because you’d already gained some understanding about human psychology from your classroom learning.
2. Climax: You can continue your story by talking about your research project. It is imperative that you mention the issues you observed in the classrooms here. Your current paragraph does not state any issues as it mostly focuses on what you observed. However, this may confuse the admissions committee, as you haven’t provided a clear reason why you want to build a preschool in the future. What is wrong with the current Indonesian education system? By mentioning the issues, you will create a backstory for why you want to found an effective children's academy in the future.
3. Ending: I have edited the two last paragraphs to avoid redundancy in ideas.

Best wishes,

Melinda