**Why this major? (250-300)**

“Hey Siri!”

“Are you alive?”

I first received an apple phone when I was 9 years old. Fascinated by the fact that maybe a fairy was stuck inside the phone, I'd talk and interact with her every time I got back from school. As a 9 year old who barely knew anything about programming, Siri felt real, almost alive to me. It wasn’t until middle school that I learned it was artificial intelligence that powered Siri. This prompted my interest in computer science.

Since then, I’ve taken rigorous courses in and outside of school, pursued independent studies and developed projects like an AI tic tac toe player. Last summer, I interned at Sinar Himalaya where I studied the software that was in operation and assisted in developing their website. My time at the company opened my eyes to how artificial intelligence can be applied to numerous industries, societal structures and how businesses operate. In my internship, this was evident in the instance of chatbots for customer service, product analysis and creating marketing strategies.

Studying computer science will allow me to explore my interest in artificial intelligence at a collegiate level and its many subfields (machine learning, natural language processors, machine learning etc.). During my internship, I learnt that Artificial intelligence isn’t merely automating systems or robots but also allowing effective synergy between machines and humans. For humanity to move forward, this human-machine model is essential as it utilizes AI’s ability to understand complex data and human’s creativity that looks beyond raw strategical calculations.

At UT Austin, I would love to continue my studies in research groups like the AI and Data Mining Laboratory as it provides me an environment where I can learn alongside other enthusiastic students and professors, enhancing my growth and long term development in computer science.

Hi Joe:

Your passion and curiosity in computer science from a very young age is remarkable. Your story shows how much you learned about AI and computer science.

My suggestion would be to focus or start your essay with an idea of something you can see yourself doing in the future that ties into your life story (your internship, your independent learning, your discovery of Siri).

This is my suggested structure:

* Intro/hook: Your discovery of Siri.
* Independent studies, projects, and internship: I can see that you have learned a lot during this period, however it seems very vague and general. Be more specific by focusing on your long-term goal so that you know what to highlight from your experiences here.
* Thesis: why computer science and what you will do with that degree (long-term plan). What exactly about the application of computer science that you think prompted you to pursue this study further and how do you see yourself applying that knowledge in the future?
* Conclusion: look back to your introduction (Siri) and look to the future (your long-term dream)

By no means does your long-term goal need to be something definite. The reader understands that you are still exploring. However, having a long-term goal or dream will be a plus point. It shows that not only are you curious to pursue the learning aspect, but you know the importance of applying the knowledge you have gained after your studies.

All the best!