**What have you done to make your school or your community a better**

**place?**

I never knew hatred can develop into passion. For all my life, I’ve loathed feeling ill, let alone physical discomfort. I had always wished to escape the series of ailments, however due to my fragile physique, the condition was inevitable.

For the first time at 8 years old, I was introduced to the internet. I recalled the birth of the little researcher in me: as I was curled up in excruciating gastric pain, I desperately searched up “How to heal gastric pain”, and eventually, “Why use antacids to cure gastric pain?”. I was enlightened with how the basicity of antacids will neutralize the acidity of stomach acid that the sting in my stomach seemed to vanish. The topic of self-health research stemmed from gastric pain to hormone regulation and stem cells. The science of health never fails to intrigue the curious soul in me.

Self-study and junior high biology and chemistry classes were not sufficient; I starved for more knowledge, which is why I decided to pursue the higher level biology and chemistry courses of the IBDP. Despite being faced with challenges, those classes were a bliss. Asking questions beyond the syllabus, but related to the subject, and receiving answers was the best part of it.

After some thought, I felt the need to share my knowledge with others also willing to break free from an unhealthy lifestyle, and wanted to do so through a platform. This is where my health science research club, Somnolence, emerged. Prior to its establishment, I identified a prevalent problem: the importance of sleep is not acknowledged enough by the people around me. Hence, my club started off with advocating sleep science through Instagram posts and webinars. Although not many followed us, I was more than satisfied as two of our followers expressed their gratitude for the content we make, and how helpful and fascinating they are. They reminded me of how I was back then as I started to appreciate health sciences and technology. This fueled me to expand the scope of content to the science of biohacking in health, where we share about shortcuts to improve health and eventually, wellbeing. Regardless, I still wish to reach a wider audience and be presented with more research opportunities in the future. Still, looking back made me appreciate the unfortunate events that had brought me to

Notes:

The premise of your essay is compelling and the reader can definitely sense your passion in health science!

Structure wise, I think you want to focus more on telling your story on sharing that knowledge (the last paragraph) and less on the background (the first three paragraphs). This takes into account the word count and what the prompt is asking.

Remember that the prompt wants you to show 1) what you have done to 2) make your school or community a better place. A background story can compose around 1/4 of the essay, and the rest should address those two elements.

**Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.**

It’s been an ongoing tradition for me to surprise my parents with handmade crafts annually as a present or a gesture of gratitude. It started off with simple A4 paper cards, where I drew and clumsily colored stick figures of my parents and I holding hands. Through the years, I felt as if basic two-dimensional handmade cards weren’t enough. I then experimented with pop-up art, pleating sheets of paper to create interactive paper cards with puppets of people and planes, a functional picture frame, or confetti poppers, to name a few. Working with paper was just a portion of the gifts I had to offer. Every time I’ve executed and ticked them off of my “Gift Ideas” list, more and more ideas start to spring up. Ultimately, the medium diverged in the course of time. Acknowledging my father’s fascination for music, I decided to make use of my ability to play instruments to synthesize a recording of a self-orchestrated *Happy Birthday.* It comprised of violin harmonies, the pianica, as well as my own vocals, specially dedicated for my father’s birthday two years ago.

This does not end there. For my high school public art exhibition, I created a work named “Bloom”, a digitally drawn piece depicting how fragile masculinity prevails over toxic masculinity. Despite being a female myself, this piece holds great value in my heart as an artwork devoted to my beloved brother and males alike who are relentlessly told off for not being “masculine” enough. As an artist accustomed to realism, this piece was another product of trial and error since it was my first geometric art, yet one of my most impactful. Even so, it wasn’t the visuals of my work that made it the selling point; it was the message behind it. Right after the exhibition, parents, students, and teachers approached me enthralled.

Nevertheless, irrespective of art as a mere hobby, I pride myself in being able to utilize my creativity to express and share my love towards the people around me.

Notes:

I think the essay’s content is relatable and very heartfelt!

To start, it might be tempting to convey a story that we believe relates to the prompt but kind of deviates from the exact wording of the prompt. In this case, the prompt specifically asks how you *express creativity*. You started with expressing love through creativity – which is related, but it doesn’t directly address the prompt. You can still tell your story about how you express love creatively, but you still need to go back to the exact wording.

**Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time.**

While leading organizations is one thing, leading beyond my circle was something else. As a president of the research club I founded, vice president of a fund-raising organization, and an ex-Head in a mental health initiative, I still feel that the film group project back in 11th grade gave me a taste of what it means to become a leader. I intend not to dismiss all the efforts I had as a leader in the clubs I am part of, however obstacles between group members who might not share the same values as you do might pose greater challenges between members, as compared to club members who possess similar motives.

This group was particularly unique to me as it consisted of two batchmates my other peers complained were the least cooperative and unpleasant to work with. Not to mention, other groups had four to five members while ours were only three. However I was not discouraged and wanted to do well on this film project, so I constantly took initiative to become the ‘glue’ of our group. Representing myself as the ‘leader’ would actually dissuade the members from partaking in the project, as the label alone may appear intimidating, imposing, and repulsive to indifferent individuals such as my groupmates. Rather than allocating tasks in a forceful manner, I listen and gently ask for input, thoughts, and ideas. In addition to working on the project itself, I reassured my members can execute their roles, telling them it’s alright if they need assistance from me., and facing my members with an open mind, putting myself in their shoes. Instantly, we went from starting off as strangers, and in the end, became mutuals, and thankfully, we aced the project together.

Once again I repeat, this project was unique, *not* unlucky because it has equipped me with the experience of successfully working with “difficult” people. The leader isn’t supposed to be in any higher position than the rest. In fact, I believe that leaders are meant to mediate members in humility and fuel members to cooperate and allow the group to thrive.

Notes:

In leadership, we will find people who are not on the same page as us and your story is definitely relatable to many people, including the reader :)

I think you started off on a very wise note – that it is not easy working with people with different values. However, it is very important to be able to tell your story without portraying others in a subjectively negative light. Try to focus on the fact that *people have different point of views, values, ways of working, etc.* It doesn’t mean that we’re right and they’re wrong, or that we’re positive and they’re negative. The reader will no doubt understand your position in working with ‘difficult’ people, but objectively, there are always two sides (or more!) to every story.

Secondly, long sentences usually cause the reader to get lost in its meaning. Try to break long sentences down into two.

Overall, it is apparent that you have learned a very valuable lesson in leadership and in doing so addressed the prompts. Try to focus on that lesson and draw that into how you portray other people in your essay.

All the best!