**Essay #4**

Prompt #6: *Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.*

**Draft 1**

Wanting to get into anime, I decided to ask a friend for recommendations. She gave me a long list, but the mention of the title *Cells at Work* caught my ears. In my free time, I decided to give *Cells at Work* a try and watched the first episode. I was beyond amazed. The representation of bodily cells as human beings made human anatomy fascinating. *Cells at Work* catalyzed my passion for biology, and from there, I dove into the Mariana Trenches of it.

Doing deep dives into the many subfields in biology required more than just listening to classroom lessons, even though I took higher-level IBDP biology, a course known for its rigor. While simple questions that I frequently wondered, such as ”why do I have black eyes?”, or “how can plants grow upwards?” could be answered in class, I longed to explore other parts of biology that were not covered in my curriculum.

With that goal in mind, I co-founded an organization with two friends that focused on educating younger generations about the life sciences. One big project I established was a podcast, named the “Life-in-a-Lab Podcast”. Writing episode prompts for this project made me go down internet rabbit holes for hours to look for and verify sources. A memorable episode I did about forensic science taught me about the extremely complicated process of fingerprinting after two hours of research. Watching crime shows is a favorite pastime of mine, and I always wondered how gaining and processing DNA evidence worked, so I simply had to do research relating to forensic work. Although tedious, I thoroughly enjoyed the research process due to my strive to find answers to the questions that constantly pressed my mind.

Biology is a daunting subject to many; the sheer power of memory and understanding required to master the subject has drained the fun out of it for many people I know. Strangely, this has pushed me to become better at biology; my passion and determination to understand intricate biological processes have driven my interest in food microbiology and nanotechnology, areas I hope to pursue.