Dear essay editor, please find below “Editor’s comments” from All-in Edu the first time. The essay below is revised after the comments.

Thank you,

Raymond

Q: **Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.**

WORD COUNT: 671

“Ayo cepetan mih! Aku mau cepetan masuk kolam renang!”

The same repeated word I would always say to mom whenever I have my swimming lesson, which means “be faster mom! I want to go into the swimming pool!”

Imagine a 5 year old chubby girl wearing a rainbow swimsuit and pink googles getting ready to go to the swimming pool. She impatiently yells at her mom to blow the floaties faster. She grabs the floaties out of her mom’s hand and hurriedly runs into the swimming pool. Her body shivers due to the cold mountain water that washed her in.

That little girl was me.

Since I was young, I spent my weekends in the swimming pool to help me boost my focus

I wasn’t ecstatic at first. Whenever I arrived in the swimming place, I would hide behind the car seat thinking that my mom would have forgotten that she left me at home. However, everything wasn't planned as I thought. My mom carried me inside, while yelling at me to be faster.

Growing up swimming in the same place since I was 4, was full of memories. From hating to liking and from being happy to being sad. It was bittersweet. But towards this experience, it made an eye open for me.

It was that time, after 10 years, that the place was permanently closed. Nobody knows why, even the people who worked there. Then finally came the shocking news that the place was bought by a big company. Within months, I saw this beautiful place gets destroyed; thick big rocks stopped the natural waters coming from the mountain that has left drought since today.

Maybe some people don’t care but I do.

I was too young that I couldn’t do anything to bring it back. I was downhearted that time because the place has reigned for so long- since I was a baby- and was built by nature itself which makes it different than other swimming places. Whenever I passed by the place, I can imagine a picture of the dead trees and the water that has stopped flowing from the mountain.

The bitter experience brought me to a realization that often times, people forget the long term effects of the environment that they are hurting. Since then, I have always wanted to make a small change starting when I was little.

I knew I had to make a change, and I started small. From reading National Geographic kids magazine about endangered animals to melting of the ice caps, which then made me realize that this event was much bigger than what I thought.

This passion kept growing as throughout the years- I gained more knowledge and acted upon my passion. Becoming a leader of the environmental club, started a movement on *Byebyeplastic bags Bandung*, and joining Greenpeace Bandung, led me to be more determined and aware of my surroundings. It was all driven when I read an article about Melati and Isabella Wijsen. They were siblings who successfully made a change in Bali by abolishing the government law to stop down the use of plastics and started the *Byebyeplastic bags* organization. Towards their accomplishment it inspires me to be brave in all things that I want to aim and finally at one point I got the chance to meet Melati Wijsen in person. She came to my school and told her experiences being a young influencer. Afterwards, it made me realize that things which  may seem impossible do may come true and due to that I became more determined in my passion and wanting to go further in. At the end I decided to join the *Byebyeplastic Bags Bandung* and met a lot of young people who have the same passion as I do.  I also joined Greenpeace Bandung to gain more knowledge about the environmental issues in Indonesia and also meeting new people who have become one of the volunteers of making a change. These influences from the people that I made friends with, shaped me for who I am today to be more passionate and determined on my dream.

**Editor’s comment:**

Hi Andrea!

I love how you started with a conversation between you and your mom, and included a descriptive narrative that would allow the admission committee to picture you at that time.

Overall, I think this realization and experience is great!

Here are a few suggestions that I think would help to elaborate it more:

1. I can see that you started off disliking swimming (you would hide) but grew to love it (hurried your mom so that you can go into the swimming pool faster) – and I think perhaps there is a story to this. Perhaps you could elaborate more so that the admission committee could see your passion more.

* I think it would be great if you can mention something like “I started off hating swimming, and would hide……(your story of hiding in the car seat), but eventually, I loved it.” – to make it clear that there was indeed a transition on how you view swimming.
  + Could be included after you mentioned, “That little girl was me.”
* In my opinion, it would be great to explain/describe the transition from hating, to loving it – and include the nature factor. Was it because throughout time you realized the beauty of nature (mention was it because the greens, the sound of water flowing from the mountain, the breeze) and that was why you eventually loved it? – and when you were enjoying and loving it, it got permanently closed, so maybe something inside you went missing?
  + Could be added right after the previous point. A possible way to start it would be something like “However, throughout time I started to enjoy it….”

I feel that elaborating on this would make the admission committee be able to imagine how nature has changed your view on swimming and how when that was taken away from you, made you realized your passion for the environment.

Perhaps, we could focus more word count on this.

1. I think it’s amazing how you are involved in two different communities – really shows how you care about the environment! Now, I think you can briefly mention both in terms of your involvement, but I would suggest that we focus on one of them – which in my opinion, the *Byebyeplastic bags Bandung* would be great because you mentioned about what you learned from Melati and Isabella Wijsen briefly.

* Here, I would encourage you to talk about any growth in your passion since you first realized it and when you joined *Byebyeplastic bags Bandung*. A few thoughts to consider could be:
  + How did you view your passion and your possible involvement at first?
  + How did that change after joining *Byebyeplastic bags Bandung*?
  + Did it grow even more after meeting Melati Wijsen in person?
  + What did you want to do first, and after joining the community? Was there any difference?

I think these reflections would allow the admission committee to gain more insight of your personal growth in this area.

All in all, you have a great experience! Can’t wait to know more about it ☺

Fedora Gracia

All-in Essay Editor

**Editor’s comment:**

Hi Dea!

Reading your CV and profile gave me a lot of insight to you, your life and what you’re passionate about. Your passion for the environment is amazing and it’s great that you want to continue what you do by studying environmental sciences.

Overall, it’s great how visual your story is. I think it’s smart that you chose to tell your story in a narrative rather than a “formal essay” because it makes you more memorable to the admission committee.

Here are some steps you can take to make your essay stronger:

1. ( X)   Try to elaborate more on the “**a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others**” part. You could talk more about when you joined Greenpeace Bandung and about your *Byebyeplastic bags* movement.

These are two unique experiences that many people can boast about. Try developing them in details and make sure to explain how they helped you grow and understand yourself or other people better.

You currently have shy of 500 words (and the max is 650 for common app) so I think you can add more to it without having the essay word count over the limit.

For the next draft, do not worry about going over the word limit. We’ll see which one of the two stories (Greenpeace / Byebyeplastic) is stronger and we’ll trim your essay down to size from there.

1. (X)  I do think that you should open your essay with a stronger hook that could intrigue the reader further. You could try opening the essay with your mom yelling for you to stop hiding and get out of the car or something conversational (along that line).
2. (X)  For the paragraph that I highlighted in green, my suggestion is to be consistent with your narrative as a first person or third person. What I would do if I were you is to write:

“Imagine a 5 year old chubby girl wearing a rainbow swimsuit and pink googles getting ready to go to the swimming pool. She impatiently yells at her mom to blow the floaties faster. She grabs the floaties out of her mom’s hand and hurriedly runs into the swimming pool. Her body shivers due to the cold mountain water that washed her in.

That little girl was me.

 …….. “

Looking forward to reading the next draft!

Matahari Kinanti

All-in Essay Editor