**Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others. (650 words).**

1:54 - 2:11, an unforgettable time interval. With my guitar in hand, I rewound the song to 1:54 for the thousandth time. I was getting frustrated--and physically aching--but I refused to give up.

All my life, I remember always being overshadowed by my peers. At home, I was never the most talented sibling. In school, I was always “Nicole’s friend”. Over time I felt insecure and overcautious. I became shy because I thought nobody wanted to get to know me. However, I discovered a song that changed my perspective. It was titled *Namae Wo Yobuyo*. This was the bridge:

“I was searching for a reason, to be who I am

If there is a “me” that continues to live on within you

Even if it’s through the dark or up a tall hill

I should be able to be someone who can surpass them.”

It was screaming at me to mature, to finally close the longest chapter of my life. So, I did.

Listening to the song assured me that I could be the main character of my story. Coincidentally, that year, I just skipped grade 10 because I was in the accelerated program. In grade 11, I was in a completely different environment with a hundred of my (very intimidating) seniors as my classmates. They all had a cold stature and being 4’11 in height, I was the smallest and youngest among most of them. I felt small and out of place. As the first step to regain my confidence and sense of belonging, I decided to master *Namae Wo Yobuyu* on the guitar.

I had no idea that learning this song would stimulate an awakening within me.

I approached my teacher to guide me in learning it on the guitar. To my surprise, he refused because, “[I] lacked the technical experience,” he said. However, I was determined to learn it. I didn’t want anybody’s words to get in the way of my goals.

I started my learning journey with a determined look on my face. But as three weeks passed, I was starting to dread touching my guitar because I felt that I wasn’t progressing. Without proper guidance, I got lost in the fast tempo and unfamiliar chords. I stumbled over the same notes, plucked the wrong strings. My body ached from how much I practiced. I was discouraged to see that all my efforts had led to a series of jumbled notes and physical pain.

But I persisted.

After 17 weeks of consistent practice, I could finally play at full speed.

For 17 weeks, I ignored the feelings of discouragement and kept practicing. I developed a strategy where I recorded myself playing the whole song every Monday and compared myself each week. This recording made me notice the mistakes I made and how it affected my playing. From small details such as long nails to something more significant like tuning, I’d correct it and see where it takes me. Additionally, these recordings kept me motivated. Seeing how much I improved in a few weeks kept me going.

As I progressed into learning *Namae Wo Yobuyo*, it started to become something more than a sentimental value, it made me learn something valuable: don’t give up no matter the challenges.

I used to be impatient and a quitter. If I were to reach a dead-end in math or an anomaly in chemistry practicals, I would easily lose heart. But now, when I come face-to-face with a challenge and feel doubtful, I’ll look back on this journey — I won’t let difficulties get in the way of my goals because I know I can overcome them with resiliency. Learning *Namae Wo Yobuyo* taught me to take the first step and keep working towards the end goal despite the hardships, because it may progress into something even greater, even if I do not succeed.

*Namae wo Yobuyo* serves as a reminder that I should be the only one who determines my own successes because everyone has their own paths based on their talents and disadvantages. This song finally brought me the confidence to move on from my insecurities and determine my own path. Most importantly, this song marks as a constant remembrance that my persistence allow me to achieve my goals and overcome challenges ahead of me.

Hi! Great to hear that you’re doing well and excited to go through this application process. I know it may seem difficult now, but just keep your chin up.

Although I’m aware that the comments are very lengthy, and please do look through them, just be aware that you’re going above the word limit so chances are: you might have to cut some content or make your sentences shorter.

I think what you need to focus on right now is being very clear about what moral takeaway or personal realization you want to focus on. Because, it seems right now that you’re including several lessons which doesn’t connect well to the specific event you’re emphasizing. Afterwards, keep an eye on the transition and structure of the essay. Make sure it flows and that the reader can instantly follow your train of thought. I know you have a flashback scene in the beginning, so make sure it’s very clear.