

407/400 words.

I have always had a passion for reading. I remember when I was only 4, I had made some room in the corner of the house and I had filled it up with books. Whenever I had the time, I would walk over, pick a book from the stack and start reading. Reading was like my fortress, it was a relief from my daily routine, and it protected me from all my problems. I had a particular liking for the detective, historical and science-fiction genres and I vaguely remember liking the book series Foundation. Just recently, I got an ICAS medal in English. However, if my parents hadn't introduced me to the wonders of reading, I would not have achieved anything. They also helped me to start reading more **broader** and greatly increased my vocabulary.

I also enjoy chess. When I was 5 when I first came in contact with chess, I was entranced by all the possibilities of chess. But what I love most about chess is playing chess with my friends so we can experience the thrill of winning and defeat. Nothing makes me happier than a few rounds of bullet chess at lunch with my fellow peers. I am still in complete awe at the huge amount of potential positions in chess. It is said that there are even more possible variations of chess games than there are atoms in the observable universe! In fact, I have won quite a few medals in chess already. My coach was extremely motivating and kind and devoted a large amount of his time to refine my chess skills.

Drawing is always my favourite pastime when I'm alone. My motto is: dream big but start small. I remember gazing passionately at artworks like Starry Night or Mona Lisa then glancing back at the shaky stickmen I drew, knowing I would improve one day. One artist that I look up to is Claude Monet. He started very late at age forty, however, he is now seen as the key precursor to modernism. I like Monet mostly because of how defied the traditional customs of art. I have represented my school in several art competitions and go to art lessons weekly. My parents have taken me to many art galleries and have inspired me by showing me what artists can become. I also owe a great debt to my art teachers as they have taught me many skills in art.

Were you able to win these contests, John? If so, please write your placement. If not, that is still okay, but please provide more details here.

Note:

This is an on point response to the interview questions, John! I like that you directly answered them without using flowery words. Then, there were no grammatical errors found in this paper. However, there are two slight detours that you need to work on in order to make this essay perfect. Good work!

Mark: 50/50