

Olawale E. Adeshina

ENG1101

Unit 1: Education Narrative Essay

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Born in Nigeria (an Educational Journey)

Looking back, life in Nigeria was very fun; I got to eat very tasty foods, live in the city, watch science fiction cartoons and movies and most importantly, because I had limited access to the internet. I had very little knowledge of how the world around me worked. Ignorance truly is bliss. Even though I was very invested in school, I couldn't tell you a summary of my country's history or leaders even if my life depended on it, the little I knew was from my notebook, just cramming the information so that I didn't disappoint my parents, I didn't really care much about my lack of history knowledge...or geography, all I really had to passion for was the science. Spoiler alert! The science we learned in school wasn't the one that interested me, while we did learn matter, volume and that kind of stuff, the majority of the practical science we learnt was agriculture so I just crammed my notebook so I did good in tests, if u asked me now anything I learnt from that I couldn't tell you a single thing; as a matter of fact I remember community gardening last summer in much more detail than I would have a single lesson of agriculture back in Africa on a given day.

I'd say the advantage in living like I did before in comparison to now had was that I was able to discover scientific principles for myself and now have better grasp for them when it's mentioned. For example: because I made tons of paper airplanes and projectiles to shoot with

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rubber bands, I had a solid grasp on aerodynamics, like how something that's large, low density and flat could fly better than something with less mass and less streamline, but in projectiles-the heavier and streamline, the better, I also had learned about bullet drop. It's funny because now I can't imagine using the restroom without a phone, back then I'd just make paper boats or bring random stuff to the bathroom, fill a bucket with water and just role play a ship captain or water monster, these helped me understand buoyancy and a little fluid dynamics (very little). I thought this was all there was to know and anything other than that was electrical. One random afternoon, we were watching five minute crafts on the television, I don't usually pay attention to it because I thought it was boring but one clip caught my attention. It was a bottle tap that could be made with household items, I told my sister to rewind the video, she did so and I was confused, my mum encouraged me to try it, so I did. After my mum had made the hole on the bottle for me I went to the bathroom, filled it with water, it started leaking but when I made sure the lid was closed air tight.... It stopped. I spent a while playing with it and imagining this must be how our showers and taps worked, I tried to put in the back of my head the fact that water had to be drawn from the ground so I can truly enjoy the experiment. The next day I took it school and my classmates all called it magic, I tried to explain to them how it worked but when they asked for clarification, I was at a loss of words. I remember going home watching teenage mutant ninja turtles that day and it hit different, for the first time I realized that the robots one of the characters, Rafael built was in NYC and now I really wanted to go to America.

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Fast forward to when we got to America, at the airport while waiting for my aunt who had moved here a while ago to pick us up, I was locked in at a plastic bottle rolling in the wind, I imagined it was like the air powered vehicle from Matt Hatter chronicles, one of my childhood shows. Months passed and my parents took me to the school across the street, ps128 to register, the woman at the reception desk asked me if I was ready for a test and my dad smiled down at me, I said “of course we can do it right now” even though I barely learned anything that stuck with me back at home. 1 year later after owning rc cars and a drone, my sister was able to register me for a robotics program during the summer of 2019, I remember stressing because I thought robotics might have been too complicated for me because I was used to seeing simplified versions of mechanics systems on tv.

My first day at the college where the program was carried out, the professor played us a video about Boston dynamics and the robots they were creating, I was amazed and felt really anxious, one thing I do when I’m anxious to try to recall all my previous knowledge on a specific topic but I had no such experience. Over the course of the program, I was paired with the oldest kid in the program likely because I was the youngest one, after being taught about gears and lever systems we were tasked to build an ev3 Lego mindstorm battlebot by the end of the program that will survive the free for all battle divided in teams. While building the robot I

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learned that you couldn't do whatever you want when building robots, you have to consider whether or not your trading power for speed, range for power e.t.c . I finished the program with an A+. I would go on to research how machines like cars and planes worked using my phone although I never got to try my knowledge because we didn't have the materials to test it complex things at home.

Previous to the COVID 19 lockdown I had been a great student, always on top of my grades. After suffering from depression due to bullying I had very little energy for anything. I suffered greatly because of this, I wasn't willing to learn anything I believed didn't help me do what I truly wanted to do in the future, my grades reached an all time low. After everything I realized that skills such as knowing basic math and recalling events from history could be useful in learning about systems and finding new solutions to problems so I decided to comeback to school after the pandemic with new passion. 9th grade still went poorly because of my shyness to speak out but the following years I decided that in order for me to become a great engineer, I was going to have to make up my mind to acquire as much knowledge from the things around as me while forgetting about grades as they put me under stress.

10th and currently 11th grade really opened my eyes to the fact that engineering more than springs and explosions, leading up to that point I didn't understand the purpose of the stuff we did in school. Back to my point, learning about the weight of elements such as helium and

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combustion formula in chemistry had me on edge because I realized that math and knowledge of elements went into converting energy and making things act a certain way, 11th grade physics taught me that simple math formulas were actually useful when variables weren't just x and y but rather force, mass, velocity e.t.c. Nowadays I continue to learn about how things worked on my phone and I've learned to prioritize knowledge over grades.