

Common Application Essay: A Life in Music

A wrong decision can be the beginning or end to a lifestyle. In the seventh grade, I nearly ended my music career by opting to select a simple course—*Music in Our Lives*—that met the state music requirement. But this decision would have left me empty. With the help of Ms. Brown, my then orchestra teacher, I was able to not only meet the basic requirement, but also continue the beginning of my musical journey. I am now a violinist who has joyously played for nine years. I also now take music in my life. It is the first self-taught and the longest-course I have ever taken.

Music has become the spark of my intellectual curiosity. I directly developed my capacity to think creatively around problems due to the infinite possibilities in music. There are millions of combinations of key signatures, chords, melodies, and rhythms in the world of music that wait to become attached to a sheet of staff lines and spaces. As I began to explore a minute fraction of these combinations from the third grade onwards, my mind began to formulate roundabout methods to solve any mathematical problem, address any literature prompt, and discover any exit in an undesirable situation. In middle school, my mind also started to become adept in the language of music. Playing the works of different composers, such as *Kol Nidrei* by Max Bruch and *Coriolan Overture* by Ludwig Van Beethoven, expands my diverse musical vocabulary, my breadth of techniques, and my ability to practice in order to succeed in solo performances.

Music has also become the medium for my roles in the community. While on stage as Big Jule of *Guys and Dolls* during my favorite musical, I helped create a wonderful atmosphere in the school auditorium by singing and dancing. Whenever I perform, whether as a bassist in Men's Doo Wop Group or as violinist in Chamber Ensemble, I become immersed in the conversations between performers and the audience. As I become lost in these conversations, I

create blissful memories in which I am truly part of my community's culture—and eventually its history. I would not have the admiration of my teachers and friends if I had not let the charisma of music persuade me to become a performer in my school, town, and state.

Lastly, music has become the education that has taught me the importance of leadership, teamwork, and friendship. It has taught me the importance of order and balance. When I lead a group, I know how strong that group can be if every member puts one hundred percent effort into our task. Leadership is not always about directing others. The most important task of a leader is to create harmony between each member of the group, which reveals the group's maximum potential. With improvement and balance comes success, and music taught me all of these virtues. The bonds I have made throughout my school years endure through stress. These powerful bonds came to be because my friends and I endured against the adversity found in high level pieces of music literature. I thank my teachers, viola, and voice for creating the environments that nurtured these friendships and learning experiences.

My haven for solace in and away from home is in the world of composers, harmonies, and possibilities. My musical haven has shared my character and without it, my life would not be half as wonderful as it is today. It was a wise decision to turn down the course *Music in Our Lives*. The self-guided journey known as music in my life excites my mind every day. My heart sings every day because the journey is already wonderful. Although I hope that my future career is medicine, I love that I still have much to learn about and from the world of music.

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Source: <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2014/04/kwasi-enin-college-essay-worked-on-every-ivy.html>