

Personal Statement—Under 500 Words

As I plunged into the frigid water, my body froze in shock. The smell of the ocean engulfed me as I relaxed and took deep breaths from the mouthpiece of the snorkel tube. Wearing a snorkel set that resembled the glasses of an eighty-year-old man, I adjusted my breathing to allow myself to enjoy the surroundings. A few moments later, as I swam rapidly toward a rock island, a rush of water swept underneath me. Excitement engulfed me as a brown denizen of the island glided through the water. Suddenly, its head popped just above the surface of the ocean, and several others joined us from nearby. These wild sea lions of Mexico majestically twirled around the humans like “dogs of the ocean.”

I loved the rush of swimming just feet away from wild animals, observing part of their world instead of forcing them to enter mine. I soon realized that I had not just witnessed sea lions in their natural habitat, I had embarked on a journey of self-discovery. This timeless moment in my life spawned the realization that I aspire to help our environment. I want to repay their hospitality by trying to benefit the natural parts of our world and make it a better place for future generations of humans and animals alike.

Even as a small child, I fantasized that one day I would save horses and bring them to acres of fertile land in the protection of my arms. As I matured, I learned that this was a somewhat unrealistic goal, but in altering my aspirations, I realized that making a mark on the world we live in involves cooperation and a unique balance of the organisms that occupy it. My experience of swimming with sea lions inspired me. They had qualities and feelings closely resembling ours. The connections of most animals in nature to everything around them amazed me, and I began to hope that my actions would someday echo through generations to come. Humans sometimes harm animals despite their best intentions, resulting in devastating effects on entire ecosystems. By doing this, we harm ourselves as well by denying future generations the opportunity to observe and experience diversity on our planet. Given the opportunity, I hope to protect the beautiful organisms of nature and make a difference in the environment.

Seeing the beauty of the wild inspired me to want to preserve endangered wildlife and make sure it remains intact. I have longed ever since to pursue a degree in biological or environmental studies, and to travel with like-minded people far and wide with the goal of conserving the diverse wildlife on Earth. I envision working for a non-profit agency that studies and closely works with animals of all varieties, in their natural habitat, applying these skills to protect the resources of the natural world.