Topic: 1.What was the environment in which you were raised? Describe your family, home, neighborhood, or community, and explain how it has shaped you as a person.

**Word Limit:**

If you are submitting your essay online, it must be no longer than 120 eighty-character lines of text (including spaces and blank lines).

For the past 7 years, I have been living in one of the most diverse and populous

countries in the world: India. Although we Indians tend to confront each other

on many issues, We are united in our unique cultural. Ourdiversity has been oneof our greatest strengths. On the surface and sometimes in the portrayal of the media, one may fall under the misconception that every community is pitted against the other one, but when one goes to the heart of every city, village or town, they will be surprised to find the brotherhood and unity that prevails among Indians withoutany political or religious discrimination.

We all live peacefully together in the same neighborhoods, run around and play together. Delhi, India’s capital, boasts of having one of the largest mosques in India, the Jama Masjid, where a person of any religious descent is graciously welcomed. We have learnt to respect eachother’s differences and to accept them in a whole hearted way. I was raised in an environment where we take great pride andhave a strongbelief in our roots and culture.Wecelebrate all our festivals with great fervor, the most famous of them being Diwali, which we celebrate with much pomp, happiness and unity. Elders hold a special place in our culture. We are taught to touch their feet and greet them with respect whenwe meet them. We also take great pains to make sure that our guests feel at home and welcome whenever they visit us.

When I first shifted to India after living in Indonesia for nearly 11 years, I noted that we Indians have a competitive streak in our blood. We strive to gain admission in the most prestigious universities and try to get the most highest of positons in global organizations. Our economy is propelled bythe hard workingand successdriven youth of our country who never treat work as worship, literally.

We were also taught that no matter how huge a success we achieve, ourhumblebeginnings, our struggles should never be forgotten. My parents had to work very hard to get our family where it is today. However, moving out from a small rural town in India to one of most premier condominiums in one of India’s biggest metropolitan cities didn’t rob them off their humility and down-to-earth nature. A reason why they never thought twice in rebuildinga local temple on an isolated islet. They havealways inspired me to work as hard as I can and to help the community in any way possible. My family has alwayspushed me to dream big, but theyhave also taught me the importance of having the courage and determinationto work hard.

“Some people dream of success while other wake up and work hard at it” – Napoleon hill