I have always been in awe of how words can be so beautifully strung together to form sentences or phrases that serve as a means of expression. When brought together, the multitudinous layers of meaning that can be revealed through careful dissection is undoubtedly something that amazes me. Simply scratching the surface of a work doesn’t satisfy me until I dig further, which is why I want to study English Literature.

My zeal for the language itself accelerated when I was 14, while studying Oscar Wilde’s “The Importance of Being Ernest”*.* I was struck by how satire and paradoxical wit were used to depict the Victorian aristocracy, and was amazed by how Wilde could mould a society through his clever epigrams. As a result, I pored over more of his works, fuelling my knowledge with ideas such as duality and deception. My nascent interest for the Victorian elite in general, gradually developed into a more specific intrigue for their Aesthetics- an idea highlighted in “The Picture of Dorian Gray” that now forms the basis of my IB Extended Essay. Independently exploring the Aesthetic theory in the novel has not only burnished my research skills, but has also illustrated my undeniable passion for Literature.

The bitter battle between the spheres of art and life that I saw in Wilde’s works impelled me to read other 19th Century texts that propound similar notions, such as Honoré de Balzac’s “The Unknown Masterpiece”. Their embellishment of actuality with a fusion of Gothic and Aesthetic ideals made me realise that there was a confusion regarding reality and illusion during the time, also seen in “The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.” This idea has drawn me into Modern plays such as “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf” and “A Streetcar Named Desire”, which transform the horrific concepts of reality of the 1800s into something more palpable. The techniques used by playwrights to propel such themes, such as lighting, became apparent to me, as they differed from those of 19th century novelists. Therefore, I became more interested in the literary effectiveness of theatre.

Having interned at a professional film studio in 2015, I was fortunate enough to have had first-hand experience with exploring drama as a form of expression. As an avid scriptwriter, I discovered that conveying emotions and character traits solely through stage directions and dialogues is challenging. While I realised that that a lot can be revealed through words alone, I understood that a thespian’s dramatic ability can completely alter the original text, as they add their own voice and feeling to it. By regularly participating in poetry slams and starring in school productions, I have seen into how binding voice with text can significantly affect our interpretation of a text.

Similarly, I have explored how illustrations and narration can unite to shape our interpretations. I have recently delved into the world of graphic novels, initially reading them for pleasure. Works such as Art Spiegelmen’s “Maus” and Marjane Satrapi’s “Persepolis”, however, made me curious about how visual representations and language can coalesce to project interiority. I love seeing how artwork can accentuate various literary symbols, and this has expanded my view on what constitutes the literary canon.

My ability to think critically is not just confined within the walls of a classroom. As Editor for the literary magazine ‘Moledro’, and for my School’s Newspaper, I apply my critical thinking skills to the real world- making judgements on numerous articles regularly. I have honed this in a dynamic environment with different people and opinions, learning to justify my decisions while respecting theirs. While I believe that I will be a valuable addition to university because of this skill and my creative flair, I believe that university will be valuable to me because it offers a wider expanse to build my reasoning, and will give me exposure to more artistic platforms.