

## Candidate 3 evidence

### Lessons on guitar, experiences for life

From an early age, I have always been surrounded by music. Whether that was hearing my brother play guitar around the house, or various music channels that always seemed to blaring constantly, or family occasions where there always seemed to be a soundtrack in the background. It has consistently been a part of my everyday life in some way or another. I've always adored the ways that instruments sound. The thundering kick of a drum. The low rumble of a bass guitar. Even the mellow and relaxing notes of a saxophone. But there was one instrument that really grabbed my attention much more easily than the others, and that was the guitar.

A guitar is one of those instruments that simply can't be ignored. I'm sure it doesn't come to surprise many people that some of the greatest songs ever written contain a guitar at the forefront. Whenever I heard a punchy, in-your-face guitar riff when I was young, or a breathtaking guitar solo, I was instantly sucked into the music. I was transported to another place entirely. Hearing different instruments had such a colossal impact on me mainly because I was young, and hearing something so new and unheard of me filled me with excitement. So by that point I was convinced. I knew I wanted to learn the guitar.

Frustrated. That's how I felt when I began learning guitar. I remember being so convinced that I could simply pick up a guitar and be able to play whatever I wanted, no matter how difficult. Unfortunately, I quickly learned this wasn't the case. When learning anything, you have to start from scratch. Having to stretch my fingers to every note that seemed exhausting and sore was a real struggle, especially since my hands were much smaller back then. However, not for one second did I let this dishearten me. I was determined to learn and my passion and newfound interest in music is what guided me along. By the end of my first lesson, I had managed to pluck out a tune that almost resembled "Smoke on the water", an infamous song that almost any beginner will have learned. My family must have been sick of hearing it over and over as I tirelessly tried to perfect that small section of the song. But that electricity that always seems to flow through me when I pick up a

guitar has never really left me. To this day, although I'm more of an experienced player, the concept of learning and practising a song can still be challenging. But that's what I feel learning an instrument is all about, and that challenge is one of the main parts I love so much about it.

Learning guitar was something initially for myself, but as time went on I began to discover my passion for music was something I could share with other people. You can watch bands play as often or as much as you like on TV or in real life, but the experience of actually performing within a band is so drastically different and it makes you view music from a new perspective. The very first time I performed in front of an audience was quite daunting to say the least. Looking back, it may have been a smaller venue, but to my 11 year old self, it felt like I was headlining a massive festival and I was getting ready to play for my thousands of fans. I can laugh at the thought of that now, but that's how important music was to me and still is to this day. It was time to perform. Countless hours of sitting in my bedroom plucking and strumming away, while hearing the muffled shout of my mum telling me to either keep the noise down or to come get my dinner, and how my brother would teach me new chords and introduce me to new music, it was all leading up to this moment. I remember how my nerves consumed me, and how the electricity of my excitement was battling with the nerves of playing in front of other people for the first time. The second I began playing, my anxiousness began to fade away and I felt like I was transported to another place yet again. It seemed my excitement had ultimately won the battle. Stage lights that beamed down on me with sweat dripping down my face, trying to look out into the crowd but seeing nothing but darkness and only the slight silhouettes of those in attendance. Picking up the guitar from its stand, with the buzzing of the amplifiers and the emphatic fusion of the band that reverberated right through me. The proudest moment for me playing in bands and performing without a doubt has to be when I took part in a Battle of The Bands a couple of years ago. I remember being backstage in the practise room where all the instruments of those competing were kept, and hearing the laughter of my bandmates as we waited to go on that stage. Maybe we were laughing and joking to distract ourselves from our nerves, but really it was the excitement we felt to

be playing together. It was time. Those striking stage lights were on and ready to beam down on me. Goosebumps all over, I hear the calling out of our names. The roar of the crowd was that of a Roman colosseum, and how I felt like a Gladiator getting ready to battle. Once I was on that stage, it was really a blur. The moment of walking on the stage and picking up a guitar to walking off feels like seconds. But that just shows you how fun it really is. I suppose it would feel like a million years would have gone by if you made a mistake, or sang the wrong lyrics, or even worse, tripping and even falling off the stage. Thankfully, I've not experienced the latter. But even when I forgot lyrics or played the wrong chord, I never once felt embarrassed or wanted to run off stage, the confidence I gained playing in front of others allowed me to simply move on and keep playing. I felt truly unstoppable. In fact, the times where I've felt the most confident is when I've been on a stage, sharing my passion with other people and performing. Learning an instrument can be truly tough and frustrating, but massively rewarding, as it's helped me to grow as a person and enhance my passion for music.

No matter where I am, however I'm feeling, I find great comfort in being able to pick up a guitar and begin playing whatever comes to mind. The power of music is truly unparalleled to anything I've ever experienced before. Why I play guitar nowadays, although I'm older, is for pretty much the same reasons. People like to use escapism to distract them from any problems in their lives, and I certainly feel this way about playing guitar. Like anyone, it's never an easy time growing up, and I can truly say my love for music and playing guitar has got me through some tougher times and has had the greatest impact on me as a person. My first guitar lesson wasn't just the start of me learning an instrument, the impact of that day is far greater than just that. Music opened up a new world for me in so many ways.

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