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### Most Significant Challenge

*While my peers were focused on their clubs and group projects, I had to navigate curricula differences in my sophomore year.*

*In December of that year, my family had to move from Wisconsin to California after my father secured a new position there. On top of the usual challenges of integrating into a new school, I suddenly found myself lagging behind my peers across several subjects.*

*For example, my new school was teaching Geometry before Algebra 2, while my old one had it the other way around. History and English curricula were also somewhat more advanced, with assignments quickly starting to take a lot longer to complete. Grading policies were also stricter across the board, as I quickly found out when my usual effort resulted in Cs rather than Bs.*

*To catch up on missing credits in Geometry, I had to take extra classes, which added to my already increased workload. As for History and English, even though I wasn't required to earn extra credits, I still spent most of my evenings reading the already-covered material to bring myself up to speed.*

*My efforts bore fruit come spring. My grades returned to their previous levels as I learned how to meet the more stringent grading policies. I earned the required Geometry credits. My History and English grades even rose above the level I achieved at my old school, thanks to all the deep dives into the material I took on my own.*



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*In fact, if it weren't for our move to California, I probably wouldn't have thought of pursuing a degree in English and Literature. The disciplines didn't inspire much interest in me at my old school, be it because of low expectations toward students or the surface-level curricula.*