

## **Title: Growing Up in the Valley**

Growing up in Silicon Valley has definitely shaped how I think about success. A lot of people here are really into tech, and it's common to hear classmates talk about internships, programming, or what colleges they're aiming for. It creates this feeling that you're supposed to follow a certain path — usually something related to computer science, engineering, or business.

For a while, I thought that was what I had to do too. I tried out a coding class and joined some tech-related clubs because I felt like I was supposed to. But I didn't really enjoy it. I wasn't bad at it, but I also didn't feel excited or motivated like some of my peers seemed to be.

Over time, I realized I had other interests. I liked working on creative projects, like video editing and graphic design. I enjoyed writing too. Those things just felt more natural to me. Even though they're not what most people around me focus on, I've learned to accept that success looks different for everyone.

Sometimes I still feel pressure when I see other students doing big things in tech, but I remind myself that not everyone has the same goals. Growing up here definitely pushes you to think big, but it can also make you feel like you're not doing enough. Now, I try to focus more on what I enjoy doing, instead of what I think I'm "supposed" to be doing.