

# My hobby and passion - playing chess



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

I stared at the black and white squares covered with kings, queens and pawns after two hours of silent contemplation. Courageous warriors, displaced in a heated encounter were stretched across the table. Across from the battlefield was a man who had dedicated his own life to a hard fought war, whose crucial decisions determined victory or defeat. I skimmed through the board one more time, searching for an escape, but my brave warriors were determined to stand their ground, refusing to be intimidated.

I fell in love with the game of chess when I was seven years old. My Asian grandfather offered to teach me the game when the heavy snow trapped us indoors for most of his two week visit. I accepted his offer to show courtesy, as I had seen plenty of others observing their chess sets for hours, and I had no interest in wasting my time with something I considered tedious. My interest, however, escalated from the moment we began our first game. As an inexperienced player, I had no idea how to organize my chess pieces, and I could only watch in admiration as my grandfather destroyed my defenses and crushed me within fifteen moves. I repeatedly asked for a rematch with a competitive attitude. My grandfather always accepted and over the next few days, we must have played more than fifty games of chess.

After each game, my knowledge about chess slowly increased, but despite my best endeavors, I did not win a single game. Before returning to China, my grandfather injected a powerful message in me with his inspirational words. ‘ Give it everything and you will be successful.’ Over the past ten years, I have tried to fulfill his goal. After my grandfather departed back to China, I stopped at a nearby chess shop and purchased a beginner’s chess manual that outlined the basic fundamentals of the game. I spent countless

of hours on learning from the book through the next few nights. Later, I gathered more than fifteen chess books that were specific to many different aspects of the game including opening advances, middle game tactics, endgame strategies. I educated myself with all the information from the books with enjoyment. As my passion for the game increased, my appetite for the game also increased. I joined numerous online chess servers and entered numerous statewide and national chess tournaments. I improved rapidly, learning from my mistakes after each game.

For me, chess is more than a game, it is a philosophy. From playing chess, I learned that persistence pays off in the end. Victory at the chess board depends upon my skill at analyzing complicated positions for numerous hours a day; success in the real world remains possible on my ability to plan ahead and think for the long term. By carefully considering the consequences of every move I made, on and off of the board, it would lead me to make better decisions in the future. I glanced back up at my opponent, then looked back at the board one more time. After a long pause, I offered my hand to my opponent with a smile and broke the silence. We agreed to end the game in a draw because our positions were similar in strength. In life, you can't always be victorious, but if you try your hardest, you can turn every endeavor you undertake into a success.