

Cathy Zhang, Class of '09

Ever since I was little, I have been a thinker, a seeker of knowledge. I was always trying to understand this or that, even if it was something that I wasn't required to know. While my fellow kindergarteners learned the alphabet, I was already reading chapter books. Before I reached the age of seven, my parents ordered a children's encyclopedia set called ChildCraft. Being an ambitious child, I read all of those fourteen volumes from front to back, storing little bits of information in the back of my mind as I went. All that knowledge actually did come in handy from time to time, such as freshman year of high school, when I was able to recognize the Fibonacci sequence in math class because I had read about it all those many years ago.

I spent my elementary school years in a small town in Washington State, without ever having heard of science, but when I started middle school in a bigger city, a newfound subject called 'science' became the love of my life. From the day I was introduced to science, I thought that I preferred chemistry to all other sciences, since it was the main topic of my first year of science and it always made logical sense to me. Even when I took biology in eighth grade, it never occurred to me that I would ever favor it over chemistry. At last, when I enrolled in AP Biology in my junior year of high school, I began to discover my passion for biology and realized that I loved biology more than chemistry. After all, I used to tell my friends that I loved chemistry, but also that I invariably found myself reading biology books in my spare time. Now, however, I finally understood why biology books were more interesting to me—my passions had been in the field of biology all along.

This term's "Career Options in Biomedical Research" seminar caught my interest because I was and still am interested in a biology-related career. Having never before considered or really explored the option of a medical or health-related career, I thought that the seminar would be a good opportunity to do so. As a result of my time as a part of this seminar, I have been able to catch a glimpse of the multitude of opportunities available in biomedical research, and while I'm not sure that it's the field I want to spend the rest of my life in, I'm not going to count it out completely. Using this seminar as a launching pad into the diverse options offered in the MIT community, I plan to continue to explore the various bio-related careers out there, and in time, find my true calling.